Academic Research Student Handbook

Master of Science
in Digital Humanities

RIGA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

Academic Research Student Handbook

Master of Science in Digital Humanities

Platonova M., Smirnova T., Seņko Z. (2021). Academic Research Student Handbook for the Students of Academic Master Study Programme “Digital Humanities”. Riga: RTU Press, 89 p.

The Academic Research Student Handbook has been designed as the manual providing guidance on curricular and extracurricular academic research activities, focusing particularly on the development of the Master Thesis.
The book is intended for students, academic staff, scientific advisers and reviewers of graduate papers and the members of the final examination commission of the Academic Master Study Programme “Digital Humanities”, Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities, Riga Technical University.

Handbook has been developed by the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities team headed by Professor Marina Platonova.

Corporate authors: Tatjana Smirnova and Zane Seņko.

Handbook has been crafted following best practices approved in the leading universities and taking into account the existing regulations of the Republic of Latvia and the internal documents of RTU on the development of the graduate papers.

Approved at the meeting of FELT Council on 7 April 2021, Minutes No. 80.

Literary Editor Professor Larisa Ilinska
Design Paula Lore
Cover Design Paula Lore

Publisher
RTU Press
1 Kaļķu Street,
Rīga, LV-1658
Latvia
Tel.: +37167089123
E-mail: izdevnieciba@rtu.lv

© Riga Technical University, 2021

ISBN 978-9934-22-611-3 (pdf)

Contents

Welcome from the Head of the Study Programme 7

01 INTRODUCTION 8

1.1. Topicality of the Field of Digital Humanities 9
1.2. Needs Analysis 11
1.3. Aims and Tasks of the Study Programme 12
1.4. Learning Outcomes of the Study Programme 14
1.5. Alumni Takeaways 15
1.6. Study Requirements 16
1.7. Attendance Requirements 18
1.8. Technical Requirements 18
1.9. Research Ethics 19
1.10. Academic Integrity 20

02 FIELDWORK 21

2.1. Fieldwork Organisation Procedure 22
2.2. Aims and Tasks of the Fieldwork 24
2.3. Role of Fieldwork Supervisor 25
2.4. Fieldwork Progress Report 26
2.5. Fieldwork Report 26
2.6. Fieldwork Examination 27

03 MASTER THESIS DEVELOPMENT 28

3.1. Organisation Procedure 29
3.1.1. Familiarisation with Guidelines and Instructions 30
3.1.2. Formulating Idea 30
3.1.3. Finding Supervisor(s) 30
3.1.4. Filling the Initial Master Thesis Proposal Form 31
3.1.5. Scheduling the Meetings with the Supervisor(s) 31
3.1.6. Studying the Mainstream Literature 32
3.1.7. Submitting the Final Master Thesis Proposal Form 32
3.1.8. Attending Seminars on the Master Thesis Development Progress 33
3.1.9. Submitting the Theoretical Part 33
3.1.10. Submitting the Analytical Part 34
3.1.11. Submitting the Practical Part 34
3.1.12. Receiving the Final Approval by the Supervisor(s) 35
3.1.13. Submitting the Final Draft 35
3.1.14. Appointing the Reviewer 35
3.1.15. Pre-Defence 35

3.1.16. Introducing Corrections 37
3.1.17. Submitting the Hard-bound Copy of the Master Thesis 37
3.1.18. Uploading the Digital Copy to ORTUS E-Learning Platform 38
3.1.19. The Viva Voce Examination 38
3.1.20. Approval of the Results 38
3.2. Word Limits 38
3.3. Late Submission and Non-Submission: Mitigating Circumstances 40
3.4. Interdisciplinary Approach to Research 41
3.5. What Makes a Good Master Thesis? 43
3.6. Aims and Tasks of the Master Thesis 44
3.7. Contents of the Master Thesis 44
3.8. Abstract 46
3.9. Introduction 46
3.10. Theoretical Substantiation 47
3.11. Multifaceted Analysis 48
3.12. Empirical Study 48
3.13. Conclusions 49
3.14. Role of Master Thesis Supervisor(s) 50
3.15. Frequency of Supervision 52
3.16. Progress Report 52
3.17. Binding the Thesis 53
3.18. Submission and Review 53
3.19. Sample Titles of the Developed Master Theses 54
3.20. Reinstatement 56
3.21. Viva Voce Examination 56

04 Extracurricular Research Training 59

4.1. Guest Lectures 61
4.2. Seminars 62
4.3. Summer Schools 63
4.4. Scientific Conferences 64
4.5. Publications 65
4.6. Research Projects 67

05 BIBLIOGRAPHY 68

06 APPENDICES 70

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 **Study Module Selection Form**
Appendix 2 **Fieldwork Reference Form**
Appendix 3 **Fieldwork Progress Report**
Appendix 4 **Initial Master Thesis Proposal Form**
Appendix 5 **Final Master Thesis Proposal Form**
Appendix 6 **Sample Word Limit Extension Form**
Appendix 7 **Claim for Mitigating Circumstances**
Appendix 8 **Declaration of Academic Integrity**
Appendix 9 **Work Performance and Assessment Sheet**
Appendix 10 **Master Thesis Reference Form**
Appendix 11 **Master Thesis Progress Report**
Appendix 12 **Master Thesis Sample Cover Page**
Appendix 13 **Master Thesis Review Form**
Appendix 14 **Inquiry Form for Organising Closed Viva Voce Examination**
Appendix 15 **Inquiry Form for Summer School and Recognition of Obtained Credit Points**

Acknowledgements

This book aims at promoting research and educational excellence in the emerging field of Digital Humanities. In pursuit of this aim, the authors have acknowledged and summarised best practices and experience of the leading universities and research centres. The authors would like to sincerely thank all institutions, *inter alia*, the University of Cambridge, the School of Advanced Study of the University of London, King's College London, the University of Jyväskylä, the University of Southern California, Rice University, the University of Edinburgh, Lapland University of Applied Sciences, the Western California University, that have invested considerable effort in promoting research excellence, academic integrity and education quality for being such a great source of inspiration.

Welcome from the Head of the Study Programme

Pioneering interdisciplinary excellence

Irrespective of the fact whether you are a new or returning student, I would like to welcome you to the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities of Riga Technical University.

The Faculty is a great example of successful synergy of engineering sciences and humanities. Here, interdisciplinary research is implemented at the internationally recognised research institutes and centres in close cooperation with other faculties of Riga Technical University. The motto of the Faculty is "Pioneering interdisciplinary excellence", and it reflects our values and aspiration – to offer our students and the members of academic staff challenging the multifaceted study and research environment.

We are the only institution in Latvia implementing the Master Study Programme in Digital Humanities (DH). Thus, we strive to contribute to promotion and strengthening of DH research and academic community in Latvia and enhance international visibility, recognition and appreciation of the achieved results.

We appreciate your initiative and desire to explore and exercise your talents at our Faculty pursuing academic and research excellence, acquiring and sharing your knowledge and experience with others. This handbook is intended to provide you with complete information about what to expect from the research-related curriculum and extra-curriculum activities. We believe that you shall find this handbook a valuable and handy reference tool.

We are glad that you have recognised that the Master degree in the field of Digital Humanities is what you really need to move up the self-development ladder and we are happy to learn that you have chosen the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities to plot your career trajectory.

Professor Marina Platonova
Head of the Academic Master Study Programme
"Digital Humanities"

01

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Topicality of the Field of Digital Humanities
1.2. Needs Analysis
1.3. Aims and Tasks of the Study Programme
1.4. Learning Outcomes of the Study Programme
1.5. Alumni Takeaways
1.6. Study Requirements
1.7. Attendance Requirements
1.8. Technical Requirements
1.9. Research Ethics
1.10. Academic Integrity

1.1.
Topicality of the Field of Digital Humanities

Great value of RTU Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities" is determined both by the necessity to stimulate the development of Digital Humanities as an evolving area of research and by a considerable demand for specialists with multiple qualifications and a degree in cross-disciplinary field, who are able to demonstrate advanced skills in knowledge management, content management, e-learning technology management, as well as advanced foreign language skills, IT, programming, web design, communication skills, and creative approach to work.

The emerging field of Digital Humanities is a great source of inspiration and creativity, as it forms a platform for numerous interdisciplinary combinations,

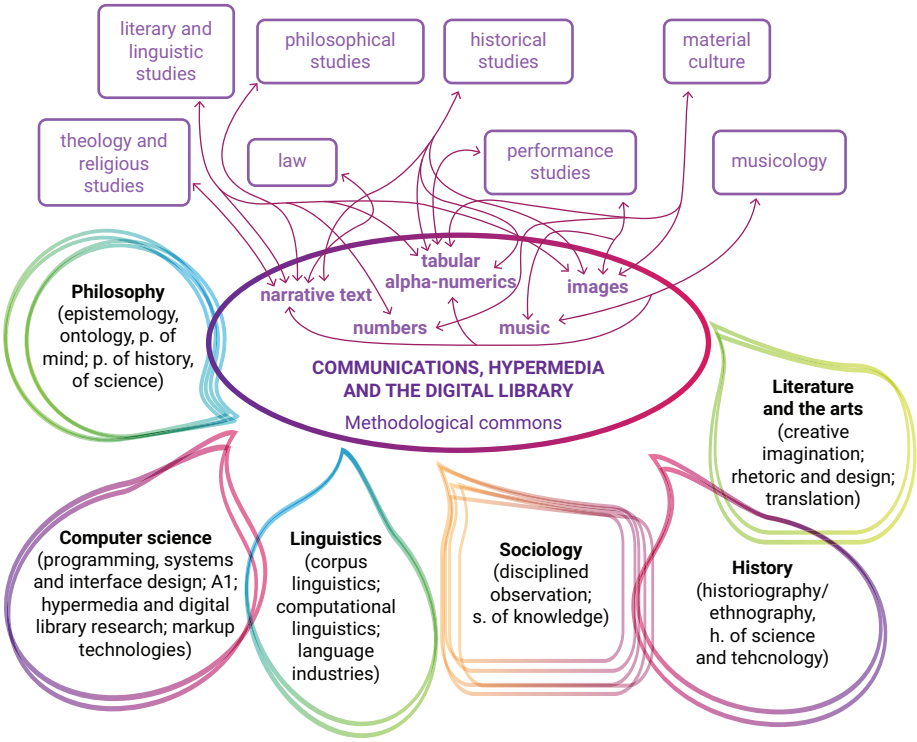


Figure 1. Digital Humanities methodological commons (Anderson, Blanke & Dunn, 2010).

which might share methodological tools and approaches. The figure created by Anderson, Blanke and Dunn in 2010 inspired by McCarty and Short (2002) illustrates some aspects of this phenomenon. It is significant to note that the competitive advantage of the given field is hidden in its high valency, i.e., in its ability to attract new scientific and academic disciplines to establish yet other methodological commons, explore yet other research and learning challenges and discover more winning points the interdisciplinary field can provide.

In order to pursue excellence in such a versatile field, the range of diverse and well-balanced educational initiatives are offered within the Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities". Programme curriculum includes custom designed study courses, guest professor lectures and modules, workshops and tutorials delivered by field specialists, summer schools (within the framework of well-established credit point recognition system), conferences and seminars, including also publishing opportunities, etc.

Students are invited to choose one out of four specialisation modules listed below by submitting an application form (Appendix 1).

Within the framework of each specialisation module, students obtain certain theoretical and practical skills. Students are free to choose any of the study modules (limitations regarding the minimal number of students per module apply) and even tailor their curriculum to the needs of the student group undertaking a particular module (limitations regarding the minimal number of students per group apply depending on the study course) mixing and matching study courses from various categories (compulsory electives, free electives, languages, etc.).

We offer our students an excellent opportunity not only to acquire field specific knowledge in an evolving research discipline and new industry with immense business potential, but also to enhance their English language and

Figure 2. Specialisation modules in the programme "Digital Humanities".

international communication skills, since all classes are implemented in English in the linguistically mixed groups.

Therefore, the students of the study programme may tap the opportunities offered by a multicultural learning environment and a variety of study contexts, develop their digital literacy skills through hands-on training, pique their intellectual curiosity, raise their cultural awareness, acquire advanced language skills and other interdisciplinary competences required to promote their international career.

1.2.
Needs Analysis

The alumni of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities" are specialists with a multifaceted qualification and a degree in a cross-disciplinary field, who are able to demonstrate multiple competences,

Figure 3. Potential occupations of the specialists with the Master degree in Digital Humanities.

and are therefore in great demand in both local and international labour markets. Specialists with the Master degree in Digital Humanities may seek employment in media agencies, publishing houses, archival institutions, libraries, museums and galleries, data agencies, marketing bureaus, higher education institutions, enterprises (joint ventures in particular), foreign projects in Latvia, state and municipal establishments, and other institutions.

The list of the potential occupations is impressive yet not exhaustive – new occupations are constantly added along with the development of the field. The Master degree in Digital Humanities aims at bringing out the best qualities of the students; it paves the way for successful career development rejecting any boundaries and breaking glass ceilings.

1.3.
Aims and Tasks of the Study Programme

The region's leading Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities" has been designed to educate and train specialists in the emerging interdisciplinary scientific field. The concept of the given study programme differs from the programmes of a similar profile in either engineering or humanities, as it envisions that students simultaneously acquire advanced knowledge and skills in numerous fields of study.

Cross-disciplinary nature of the study programme and the diversity of the provided study courses allow developing multiple competences simultaneously, as well as improving theoretical knowledge and practical skills of the students in their previous major. We put forward ambitious **aims**, which comprise the desire:

- to educate highly professional specialists whose knowledge and skills meet demands of the contemporary labour market and research-intensive economy;
- to implement an open and flexible study process, which would provide integration of the latest information technologies into humanities in the broad understanding of the given concept and advanced mastering of the theoretical background and practical skills within the chosen scientific and technical field;
- to ensure individual advancement and deepening of the theoretical knowledge and practical competence within the field of Digital Humanities and related knowledge domains;

- to expand and develop students' engineering, linguistic, technical, creative, and research skills for independent work in the field of Digital Humanities;
- to develop excellent cognitive skills for conducting research, including advanced analysis, synthesis and evaluation competences;
- to develop students' advanced cognitive flexibility skills and higher orders of awareness;
- to develop students' independence, initiative, as well as an ability to adapt to the constantly changing environment;
- to ensure the necessary level of competence and research skills that would give students an opportunity to continue their studies at Doctoral study programmes.

In order to confirm our statements of intent, we set the variety of **tasks** to be completed within the study programme:

- to provide students with the necessary theoretical knowledge as well as the body of practical skills and competences required in order to perform high-level programming, network administration, content development, processing, and management for independent performance in the field of Digital Humanities;
- to provide comprehensive knowledge in Digital Humanities, developing specific competences and skills necessary to work in the multidisciplinary environment and operate with multimodal information;
- to develop students' logical and cognitive skills, enhance their creative abilities that might advance students' professional growth and make them part of the life-long learning process;
- to develop students' critical, strategic, divergent and convergent thinking and analytical skills;
- to develop competences and skills in digital cultural heritage management, coding in humanities/cultural contexts and map, app development;
- to improve and develop precision of expression in the oral and written English for special purposes;
- to update the technical and methodological base, to adapt the content of the programme and teaching methods in accordance with the changing requirements of the labour market, adopting newest developments in the field of e-learning, technology enhanced learning and distance learning;
- to promote cooperation among academic staff and students in conducting scientific and applied research in accordance with international standards and tendencies in the field of Digital Humanities.

1.4.
Learning Outcomes of the Study Programme

Both students holding a Bachelor degree in humanities and the related areas and the students with a Bachelor degree in engineering can be enrolled in the study programme. Different custom designed study courses are provided for the students depending on their previous degree, which ensures that the students acquire the necessary knowledge and develop the required competences in the *second* major.

The proposed study courses ensure that students develop sound theoretical basis in Digital Humanities and acquire the skills necessary to conduct professional activities. In the course of studies, students learn about, e.g., research methods used in Digital Humanities, stages of research design and development, e-learning technologies, Python language programming, natural language processing, cultural heritage management; consider the role of artificial intelligence in humanities, analyse topical issues in interdisciplinary semiotics, digital discourse and rhetorical strategies, as well as study software metrologies and planning models.

The acquired expertise allows our graduates to exhibit a dedication to creative academic and scientific excellence and to demonstrate multiple capabilities, including the following abilities:

- to recognise and compare sociological macro and micro theories, and apply these theories in empirical data analysis;
- to use a range of knowledge management technologies (information transmission, storage and processing technologies), to identify and structure elements of e-content and knowledge management;
- to work across various disciplines performing a range of multidisciplinary tasks (information mining, content management, web document creation, teleworking, business applications of social networks, internet marketing, cultural studies, etc.);
- to develop e-learning courses, technologies and applications, evaluate test application possibilities, as well as quality and usability of e-learning content;
- to use methods of natural language processing and heuristically informed search algorithms;
- to develop and manage projects according to the provided guidelines;
- to design, improve and assess multimedia models of natural science processes;

- to digitalize textual data;
- to process audio and video data, conduct research considering data representation, visualisation, archiving, and transfer operations;
- to use the acquired technical skills in solving interlingual communication related problems in general and professional contexts;
- to demonstrate basic skills of proofreading and copyediting;
- to independently use theoretical concepts, methods and problem-solving skills to conduct research in the field of IT, e-learning content development, cognitive linguistics;
- to independently make decisions within one's own scope of responsibilities;
- to evaluate the relevance of one's own professional competences and skills to the occupational standard and the requirements of the international labour market;
- to work according to the principles of professional ethics.

Our alumni acquire knowledge, skills and competences to work in the field of Digital Humanities in the chosen major, exhibiting full understanding of professional ethics, constantly challenging themselves to widen their horizon, as well as developing solid foundation necessary for further academic studies and professional advancement.

1.5.
Alumni Takeaways

A well-pronounced focus of the Faculty on interdisciplinarity and constant development of new learning and research horizons enhances graduate employability and allows for greater career adaptability.

Our graduates are motivated to acquire cutting-edge knowledge and skills through diverse academic experience, competitive fieldwork and traineeship opportunities, as well as cross-border training and mobility. Study programme graduates who have already acquired the Master of Science Degree in Digital Humanities have named the following winning points as their biggest takeaways.

We believe that learning from the leading local and international faculty, exchanging ideas with highly-motivated and dedicated group mates and investigating topical issues from interdisciplinary perspectives foster the creation of a versatile environment of unlimited possibilities, where everyone is provided an opportunity to professionally advance and mature.

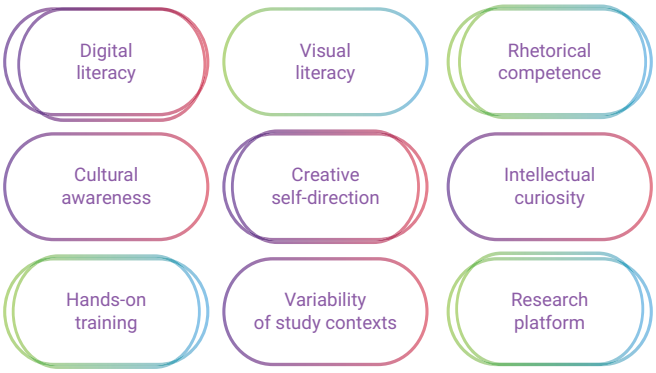


Figure 4. Main takeaways of the Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities".

1.6.
Study Requirements

In addition to meeting general admission requirements of Riga Technical University, the students of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities" are required to respect specific study requirements imposed based on the unique interdisciplinary nature of the study programme.

One of the key prerequisites for enrolment in the study programme is that the students are expected to exhibit advanced information processing skills and should be highly motivated to self-advance and conduct independent research. Students should dedicate a certain number of out-of-class hours for completion of autonomous tasks and independent reading within the framework of each study course.

Please note that the number of out-of-class hours per credit point (1.5 ECTS) is not more than 40 hours per term at the Master level. Since each term comprises 20 credit points (30 ECTS), it makes up to 800 out-of-class hours per term in total.

Out-of-class activities the students might be asked to perform include reading tasks, writing tasks, comprehension tests, individual assignments, group work assignments, study projects, assessment tests, research assignments, presentations, etc.

The out-of-class tasks are intended to monitor students' involvement in the study course and evaluate students' progress, and/or engage students in the

study process. Curriculum of many theoretical courses implies extensive reading, with the number of pages amounting up to 4000 pages per term (based on the mainstream literature data), bearing in mind that the purpose of reading may vary from mere skimming and scanning of texts to gain overall impression of the existing body of research to detailed inquiry in order to build a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

Students are invited to read professional literature in any language at their convenience; however, it is important to stress that the language of instruction at the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities" is mainly English, except for some study courses.

The Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities" has been conceived as a platform for interdisciplinary research, international cooperation and interindustry innovation. In order to facilitate adoption and sharing of good practice, experience exchange and knowledge transfer, as well as to create an environment promoting cross-fertilization of ideas across industries, the programme is implemented in English. Apart from apparent advantages of exposing students to international learning environment, it also provides opportunity to involve the leading international field experts in the education process.

In order to gain full benefit from the study programme, students should demonstrate at least B2 level of the English language proficiency following the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) guidelines. If the students' proficiency in English is slightly below standard (e.g., B1/B2; B1.2), the students are recommended to enrol in the English Language Advancement Study Course, which is offered as a free elective.

Please note that other recognised certificates of the English language proficiency are also considered.

At the same time, in order to promote diversity, receptivity and open-mindedness of the student community and to provide the forum for different voices, some lectures are delivered in other languages – Latvian, German, Russian, French, Spanish, etc., providing synchronous interpreting of the lectures, when applicable. During the individual tutorials the instructor may agree but is not obliged to provide consultations in other languages but English.

Please note that all interim and final tests, fieldwork presentation and Master Thesis Viva Voce Examination, as well as all written tasks and case studies, shall be carried out in the language of instruction of the programme – in English.

1.7.
Attendance Requirements

Following the norms and regulations of Riga Technical University and obeying the requirements imposed by the respective state authorities, both local and international students of the study programme are expected to centre their research and academic activities at the Faculty. Should these requirements be changed and pronounced otherwise, the students shall be notified about any exceptions valid during the time of their studies.

If any part of the study programme is going to be spent 'off-campus' with a desire to participate in a mobility programme and/or to carry out research activities required to develop the Master Thesis, the students are expected to maintain regular contact with the administrative and supervisory body of the Faculty.

Prolonged absence caused by sickness must be reported to the administrative body of the Faculty, providing medical evidence in full capacity.

Please note that distance learning activities included in the curriculum of the study programme should not in any case be treated as vocational training events!

1.8.
Technical Requirements

In order to be able to perform all learning activities in full capacity, students have to make sure that their device and internet access requirements correspond to the requirements defined for each study course. Information about minimum technical and computer proficiency requirements is provided at the beginning of each study course and/or module.

Should students experience any technical difficulties both 'on-campus' and 'off-campus', IT support is available to resolve all issues quickly and efficiently – please contact *it@rtu.lv* or call 67089999.

Should the students choose to perform the assigned tasks using software other than specified by the instructor, there is no guarantee that all functionalities will be implemented as intended. This would particularly

concern using diverse mobile devices in the capacity of personal computers, as well as choosing alternative operating systems.

Unless instructed otherwise, for the study courses implemented online, the students should make sure their work station is equipped with a webcam, microphone and speakers and that their computer has full access to the Internet.

Please note that hardware and software malfunction and unstable internet connection may present challenges in the cases, when employer-provided computers, public computers and public internet hotspots are in use.

Notwithstanding that instructors of any study course work for you to succeed, we kindly remind you that in order to experience rewarding online classes and be able to perform all the tasks in unabridged capacity, all students must demonstrate above-average general computer literacy skills.

Please note that programming skills are considered a comparative advantage.

1.9.
Research Ethics

The Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities expects the students of the study programme to comply with the University research ethics policy.

The Code of Ethics of RTU Students, Academic Personnel and Staff has been devised in order to promote the sense of community and togetherness, stimulating the development of open and favourable working environment. In the preamble of the Code, it is stated that its main task is

"... to encourage students, academic personnel and staff to be reliable and fair; to be responsible and honest in performing one's duties, to follow the guidelines outlined in the Code in their professional conduct, interpersonal communication and personal conduct."

The document is based on universal human values and lays out the main principles and norms of ethical behaviour, which should be observed by the students, academic personnel and staff.

Information on the latest version of the Code of Ethics and Breach of Academic Integrity and Breach Consideration Procedures can be found by the active students on the intranet platform ORTUS (see Bibliography).

1.10.
Academic Integrity

The fundamental purpose of any higher educational institution is the pursuit of knowledge in academic and research environment, which is best achieved demonstrating commitment to the principles of academic integrity. Without any exception, all members of the academic community, i.e., students, academic staff, administration, are fully responsible for upholding the highest standards of honesty. We expect everyone to adhere to the principles of the Code of Academic Integrity of Riga Technical University approved by RTU Senate on 29 February 2016.

The Code of Academic Integrity is supported by the principles expressed in the Code of Ethics of RTU students, academic staff and employees.

The main goal of the Code is to strengthen the academic culture and honesty, clarify the concept of academic integrity and the related activities, define the main procedures in consideration of the breaches of academic integrity.

Please note that "dishonest academic behaviour causes discredit to the name and reputation of Riga Technical University, undermines its values and reduces competitiveness".

Information on the latest version of the Code of Academic Integrity and other binding regulations can be found by the active students on the intranet platform ORTUS. Please consult the Dictionary and General Guidelines of Academic Integrity for further reference.

FIELDWORK

02

2.1. Fieldwork Organisation Procedure
2.2. Aims and Tasks of the Fieldwork
2.3. Role of Fieldwork Supervisor
2.4. Fieldwork Progress Report
2.5. Fieldwork Report
2.6. Fieldwork Examination

Fieldwork, internship or practical placement is an integral part of career advancement activities aimed at boosting graduate employability and professional growth. Students advance their professional skills, knowledge, and competences in the professional environment, developing their track record and establishing professional network.

Please use the time spent at a host organisation, be it enterprise, institution, laboratory or state agency, wisely. Do not practice skills you already possess, do not complete routine and habitual tasks. Even if you undertake fieldwork at your current employer, challenge yourself, look for new opportunities and come up with novel solutions to new problems!

Fieldwork may also become an inspiration for further research activities, since students may consider industry-related challenges, novel projects in Digital Humanities, engineering and design solutions and hands-on industry experience acquired during fieldwork in the development of their Master Theses.

Please note that advisory services to the students on professional career development and fieldwork opportunities are provided by RTU Career Support and Service Centre. Please visit *www.karjera.rtu.lv* for more information.

2.1.
Fieldwork Organisation Procedure

Fieldwork is implemented in accordance with the Methodological Guidelines for Internship, which are developed and approved by the Faculty, as well as Regulation on Internship Management Procedure at Riga Technical University approved at the Meeting of RTU Senate on 28 January 2019.

According to the Guidelines and the Regulation, fieldwork organisation procedure comprises the following main stages, which are summarised in Figure 5.

Please note that it is the full responsibility of the student to follow and monitor whether all the stages of the fieldwork have been completed timely.

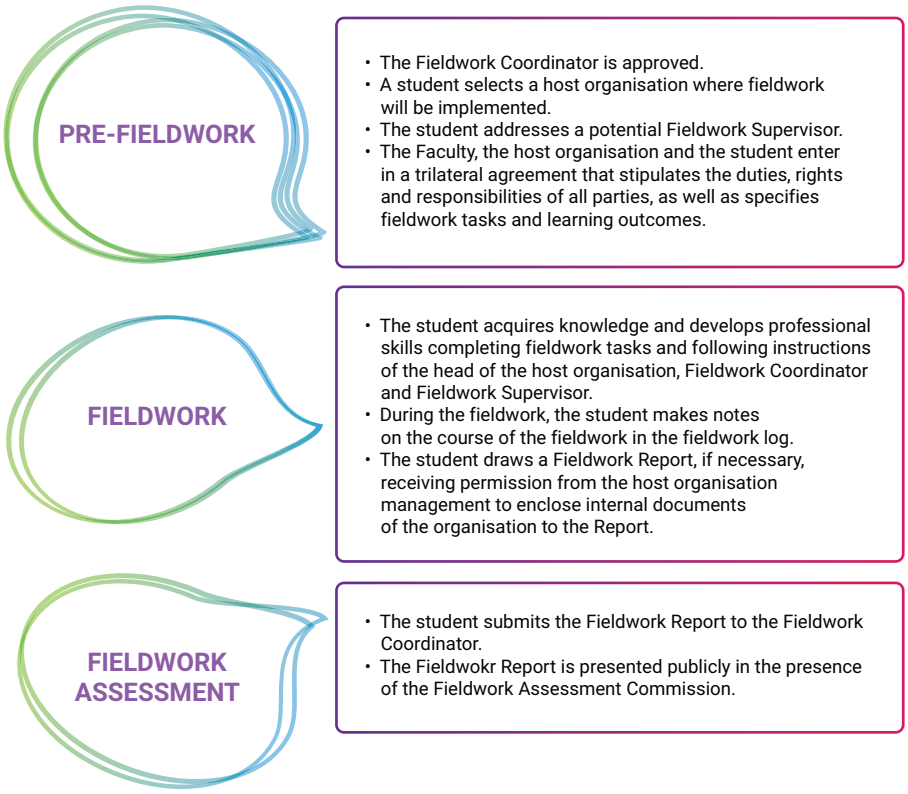


Figure 5. Fieldwork organisation procedure.

The detailed information on the main stages of the pre-fieldwork activities, fieldwork organisation and fieldwork assessment are provided below:

- The Dean of the Faculty appoints one or several Fieldwork Coordinators;
- Fieldwork is supervised individually for each student by the Fieldwork Coordinator and Fieldwork Supervisor;
- The Faculty, a host organisation and the student enter in a trilateral agreement that stipulates the duties, rights and responsibilities of all parties. The agreement is generated by ORTUS Document Management System;
- In order for the system to generate the trilateral agreement, the student has to submit the following information: name of the company or organisation; registration number; company acts in accordance with statutes, by attorney or franchise; company address; company representative with signatory powers; his/her position; Fieldwork Supervisor; his/her position; e-mail address; fieldwork dates;

- The student's posting for fieldwork is done by the order of the Dean of the Faculty in the Study Management System;
- 7 (seven) days prior to completion of the fieldwork, the Study Management System generates and electronically sends to the Fieldwork Supervisor an access link to the reference form (Appendix 2). The Reference on the student's performance during the fieldwork is completed online and the student can access it in ORTUS e-learning environment; in turn, the Fieldwork Coordinator can access it in the Study Management System.
- Upon completion of the fieldwork, the student submits the Report to the Fieldwork Coordinator that is drawn up in accordance with the requirements set in the Methodological Guidelines for Internship;
- The Fieldwork Coordinator by signing acknowledges the conformance of the Report to the requirements set in the Methodological Guidelines for Internship, as well as draws up a review of the Report and assesses it according to a 10-point grading scale;
- The Fieldwork Report is presented publicly in accordance with the requirements set in the Methodological Guidelines for Internship;
- The Dean of the Faculty appoints the Fieldwork Assessment Commission comprising a minimum of two persons. The Commission shall comprise the members of academic personnel of the Faculty, it may also include one or several representatives of professional industry associations or employers;
- The Commission assesses the student's fieldwork performance according to a 10-point grading scale. The summative assessment includes the assessment of the Report by the Fieldwork Coordinator, as well as assessments by the Fieldwork Supervisor and the Commission.

2.2.
Aims and Tasks of the Fieldwork

Fieldwork is an essential part of the study programme aimed at improving professional skills and competences of the student in the professional environment, as well as advancing and improving their knowledge. The tasks of the fieldwork, which are assigned to each student individually, include but are not limited to:

- development, practical application and approbation of a technology, web application or model;
- analysis of the challenges pertaining to meaning representation exploiting, tailoring, approbating and developing a technology, web application or model;

- development of innovative solutions in Digital Humanities: multimodal content creation, graphic design, cartography, archive digitalization, etc.;
- representation, processing and transfer of multimodal and intersemiotic information;
- graphic data analysis and visualisation;
- building a professional network;
- establishment of a professional track record;
- getting familiarised with the industry standards and legislation;
- building awareness of sustainable, ethical and inclusive business practices;
- getting familiarised with the code of professional ethics.

Please note that active and focused involvement in the fieldwork will help students find their research area, consider research cooperation opportunities and even establish new interdisciplinary fields of research in Digital Humanities.

2.3.
Role of Fieldwork Supervisor

Fieldwork Supervisor is an employee appointed by the host organisation, who has higher education in the respective field and/or proved record of professional experience in the respective field, and who holds a certificate in the respective field, if this is required by the effective legal enactments of the Republic of Latvia.

The Fieldwork Supervisor makes sure that the tasks are set in accordance with the latest development trends in the given industry. The student contacts both the Fieldwork Supervisor and Fieldwork Coordinator on a regular basis for relevant updates on the results and challenges faced within the framework of internship. The main tasks of the Fieldwork Supervisor are as follows:

- to supervise and manage student's fieldwork in order to make sure the student reaches the aim of the fieldwork and completes its tasks in accordance with the Fieldwork Agreement and the Methodological Guidelines;
- to provide the student with the facilities, information and other resources necessary for successful fieldwork;
- to monitor and guide the student in order to help the student acquire all necessary work competences and skills;

- to get familiarised with the student's Fieldwork Report and provide objective feedback on the student's performance.

If the student violates the Code of Conduct of the Organisation, occupational safety regulations or does not follow the instructions of the fieldwork supervisor, the fieldwork supervisor is eligible to initiate termination of the Fieldwork Agreement.

2.4.
Fieldwork Progress Report

In compliance with the Regulation on Internship Management Procedure of Riga Technical University approved at the Meeting of RTU Senate on 28 January 2019, fieldwork undertaken by the student of the University is subject to strict monitoring procedures. In the course of fieldwork, students should continuously complete a Fieldwork Progress Report (Appendix 3), carefully listing the tasks they complete, the time they spend for completing these tasks as well as results they achieve. The Fieldwork Supervisor shall acknowledge successful completion of the tasks. The Fieldwork Progress Report should be submitted to the Fieldwork Coordinator at least 5 (five) business days before fieldwork examination. Should the students fail to timely submit the completed Fieldwork Progress Report, they are not allowed to participate in the fieldwork examination.

Please mind that a Fieldwork Progress Report is not just a formal document. Please provide sufficient detail on the tasks you complete so that the Fieldwork Assessment Commission can appreciate your effort and contribution during the fieldwork.

2.5.
Fieldwork Report

Fieldwork Report is a document drawn up by the student in writing that describes the tasks completed and results obtained during the fieldwork, in accordance with the tasks set in the syllabus of the fieldwork study course included in the RTU Study Course Register and the tripartite Fieldwork Agreement signed by the student, the Faculty and host organisation. The

Fieldwork Report should be submitted to the Fieldwork Coordinator at least 5 (five) business days before fieldwork examination. There are no specific requirements regarding the volume of the Fieldwork Report, but it is recommended that it is not shorter than 3 (three) pages and should not exceed 10 (ten) pages.

2.6.
Fieldwork Examination

Upon completion of their fieldwork, students publicly present the results they have achieved, emphasising specifically the skills and knowledge they have acquired during the fieldwork, at the fieldwork examination. Student's performance is assessed by the Fieldwork Assessment Commission chaired by the Fieldwork Coordinator and/or other responsible person appointed by the Dean of the Faculty.

Please mind that only the students who have timely submitted the Fieldwork Progress Report and Fieldwork Report are eligible to pass the fieldwork examination.

Students shall present the results of their fieldwork using either PowerPoint or any other compatible presentation format. There are no specific time limits as per the timing of the presentation; however, students are recommended not to exceed a 15-minute time slot. Depending on the number of students participating in each fieldwork examination, the time limit may be reduced, but it shall not be less than 7 (seven) minutes.

Presentation is followed by the question-and-answer session, so the student shall be ready to answer any fieldwork related questions and explain any details, unless they are confidential or constitute a trade secret, which should be stipulated in the Fieldwork Report. In this case, students may require organising a closed fieldwork examination. Fieldwork is assessed according to a 10-point grading scale, in case of a draw, the Fieldwork Coordinator has a casting vote.

03

MASTER THESIS DEVELOPMENT

3.1. Organisation Procedure
3.2. Word Limits
3.3. Late Submission and Non-Submission: Mitigating Circumstances
3.4. Interdisciplinary Approach to Research
3.5. What Makes a Good Master Thesis?
3.6. Aims and Tasks of the Master Thesis
3.7. Contents of the Master Thesis
3.8. Abstract
3.9. Introduction
3.10. Theoretical Substantiation
3.11. Multifaceted Analysis
3.12. Empirical Study
3.13. Conclusions
3.14. Role of Master Thesis Supervisor(s)
3.15. Frequency of Supervision
3.16. Progress Report
3.17. Binding the Thesis
3.18. Submission and Review
3.19. Sample Titles of the Developed Master Theses
3.20. Reinstatement
3.21. Viva Voce Examination

This section of the Academic Research Student Handbook provides information on the procedure of development of the Master Thesis, its content, structure, and layout, as well as describes Master Thesis supervision and reviewing process, paying special attention to the Viva Voce Examination.

3.1.
Organisation Procedure

The development of the Master Thesis is a well-planned activity, which is implemented following the prescribed stages. The schedule a student is expected to follow, including the particular dates, is the subject for yearly update.

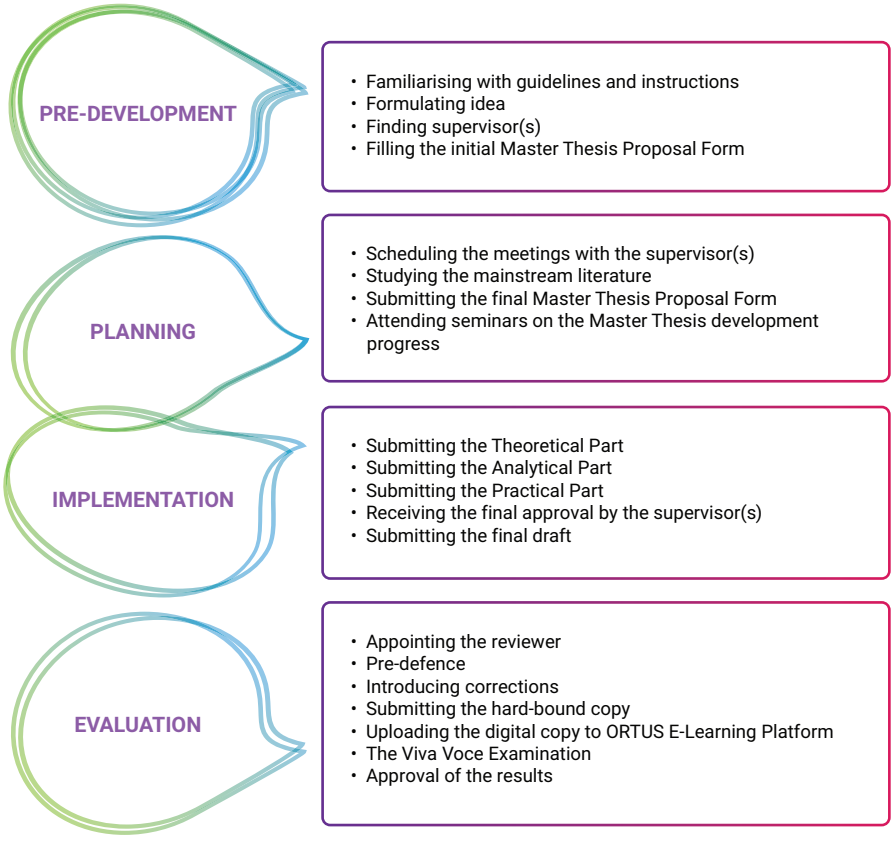


Figure 6. Master Thesis development stages.

3.1.1.
Familiarisation with Guidelines and Instructions

Completing the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities", students develop a Master Thesis amounting to 20 credit points, i.e., 30 ECTS points.

There is no doubt that developing a Master Thesis and choosing a supervisor and a research theme in the major, students have the opportunity to approbate the acquired theoretical knowledge in solving creative tasks, thus establishing a closer connection between theoretical and practical knowledge systems, integrating theoretical framework with the results of practical research.

The Master Thesis consists of three main parts: theoretical, analytical and practical part; it is developed following the general regulations of Riga Technical University and observing the rules and procedures outlined in the given handbook.

Please note that the formatting guidelines stipulated in "Formatting and Style Guidelines for Study and Graduate Paper" should be fully respected.

3.1.2.
Formulating Idea

The Master Thesis development process shall be initiated with a solid understanding demonstrated by the student on how original research is organised and conducted independently and how the results of this research can be communicated and further translated into the research papers published in the recognised and reputable local and international scientific journals.

Do not be afraid of setting ambitious goals!

3.1.3.
Finding Supervisor(s)

We invite our students to remember that the initially formulated idea will help them decide, who could be addressed as the potential supervisor of the Master Thesis.

We kindly remind our students that when meeting a possible supervisor(s), the students should suggest their own idea instead of asking for one from the supervisor(s).

The members of the academic staff will certainly provide valuable feedback, which might help narrow the study, identify the focus, reformulate an idea or in any other way help you progress.

Once the students have identified the potential supervisors, they are personally responsible for contacting them, either by consulting them during their office hours or by emailing them to make an appointment.

If the students fail to find the supervisor(s) in the required period, it will be appointed by the Head of the study programme.

3.1.4.
Filling the Initial Master Thesis Proposal Form

Having identified the potential research theme and having found the supervisor(s), the students are required to fill the initial Master Thesis Proposal Form and submit it to the Head of the study programme. The Proposal Form should contain the provisional theme and should be signed by the supervisor(s) (see Appendix 4).

Please note that the initial Proposal Form should be submitted by the end of the second semester.

3.1.5.
Scheduling the Meetings with the Supervisor(s)

Students develop their Master Thesis independently during the second year of their studies consulting the supervisor(s). The role of the supervisor(s) is explained in detail in Section 3.14. The students take full responsibility for organising the meetings with the supervisor(s) during the whole period.

Notwithstanding the fact that supervisor(s) are responsible for guiding the development of the Master Thesis, please remember that supervisor(s) are there to supervise your work, not do it for you.

3.1.6.
Studying the Mainstream Literature

During the third semester, the students are encouraged to explore the subject of the research, bearing in mind that the more focused the subject is, the greater the opportunity to produce a creative, interesting and independent research paper.

The most important outcome of the third semester is that the students should be studying relevant literature for their Thesis, taking notes and finally have the outline of the Master Thesis crafted.

We invite our students to gather the materials, which they believe might constitute the primary sources of research. Consulting the supervisor(s) on a regular basis will help the students identify both primary and secondary sources. Having studied the mainstream literature, the students should be ready to compile a working bibliography.

There are no exact requirements regarding the number of entries in the working bibliography; however, since we expect our students to respect the Code of Ethics and avoid plagiarism, we kindly remind the students to provide a reference source for every quote and paraphrase.

3.1.7.
Submitting the Final Master Thesis Proposal Form

At the end of the third semester, students are required to fill the final Master Thesis Proposal Form (Appendix 5) and submit it to the Head of the study programme. The Proposal Form should contain the formulated theme of the Master Thesis and should be signed by the supervisor(s).

3.1.8.
Attending Seminars on the Master Thesis Development Progress

Throughout the entire Master Thesis development process, students are invited to participate in different seminars, which are seen as the central form of supervision and guidance.

Seminars ensure monitoring of Master Thesis development progress. They provide a platform for the students where they can ask questions and receive comments on their work from the supervisor(s), members of the academic staff and their peers. Participation in seminars is a great opportunity to receive valuable feedback and discuss further activities.

At the beginning of the fourth semester, students are invited to participate in the introductory seminar on the implementation of the main research part. During the seminar, the students are provided with information concerning the exact dates of Master Thesis development stages.

Please take this stage seriously and be ready to ask questions prepared beforehand!

At the interim seminar(s), students are invited to discuss challenges they experience developing the theoretical and analytical parts of their research. The first interim seminar is scheduled at the beginning of the fourth semester. The number of other interim seminars is discussed with the members of academic staff and is subject to change.

At the final seminar, students discuss the issues concerning the development of the practical part. The focus of the final seminar is made on presenting the preliminary results. We kindly remind our students that since the seminars are public, the students have to take into account that any confidential materials related to the research must be withdrawn to avoid further complications of legal matter.

3.1.9.
Submitting the Theoretical Part

In the Theoretical Part of the Master Thesis, students research a certain issue in the field of Digital Humanities and provide a survey of relevant literature. Following the Master Thesis Progress Report provided at the beginning of the

fourth semester, the students submit the draft of the Theoretical Part of the Master Thesis to the supervisor(s) for evaluation and further correction and editing.

3.1.10. Submitting the Analytical Part

Upon completion of the Theoretical Part of the Master Thesis, the students are expected to develop the Analytical Part, which is dedicated to the analysis of a definite challenge in the field of Digital Humanities and might concern the issues related to:

1) meaning representation using, adjusting, approbating and developing technologies, web application software or models;
2) practical application and approbation of technologies, application software or models, for example, description of a new e-study course, application software, web page design;
3) multimedia and intersemiotic data reproduction, processing and transfer;
4) multimedia data storage and archiving;
5) graphic data analysis and visualisation.

Please note that the list is not exclusive and can be complemented.

The students are required to submit the Analytical Part to the supervisor(s) according to the terms stipulated in the Master Thesis Progress Report.

3.1.11. Submitting the Practical Part

Upon completion of the Analytical Part, the students are expected to develop the Practical Part. The Practical Part of the Master Thesis may include a particular digital model, anticipated practical strategy, project part, calculations, technical specifications and technological solutions and is aimed at substantiating how the solutions to the challenges proposed in the Analytical Part are going to be practically implemented.

The Practical Part should be submitted for assessment to the supervisor(s) before the deadline stipulated in the Master Thesis Progress Report.

3.1.12.
Receiving the Final Approval by the Supervisor(s)

Having completed the research, the students submit the full Master Thesis for evaluation and final approval by the supervisor(s). Taking into account that the evaluation of the Master Thesis is a time-consuming process, we expect our students to observe the deadlines stipulated in the Master Thesis Progress Report.

3.1.13.
Submitting the Final Draft

When the students receive the approval by the supervisor(s), they are invited to submit the final draft of the Master Thesis as a soft-bound copy to the Curator of the study programme, observing the deadlines specified in the Master Thesis Progress Report. The final draft of the Master Thesis should be signed by the supervisor(s).

3.1.14.
Appointing the Reviewer

Master Theses submitted observing the deadlines set in the Progress Report are further appointed the reviewers. The reviewers are expected to assess the research providing critical evaluation of the submitted Master Theses, following the guidelines provided in Section 3.18 of the given handbook.

3.1.15.
Pre-Defence

Should the students submit their Master Theses observing the deadlines, they are admitted to the pre-defence. The Pre-Defence Committee is led by the Head of the study programme and comprises the supervisors of the Theses and other members of the academic staff.

The purpose of the pre-defence is to consider if the Master Thesis has been developed in compliance with the terms stipulated in the Progress Report and is ready to be presented to the Viva Voce Examination Committee for

awarding the Master of Science Degree in Digital Humanities. The possible outcomes of the pre-defence are listed in Table 1.

Each pre-defence presentation should last up to 15 minutes and should be further followed by the questions from the Pre-Defence Committee. The presentation should explain the topicality of the research, the challenges the research was designed to address, provide information on the relevant theoretical background and in detail describe the student's contribution.

During the pre-defence, students are asked multiple questions, which should be addressed properly. Since the pre-defence process, just as the entire study process, is organised in English, should the students experience difficulties in understanding the questions, they should admit it immediately, asking for additional clarification.

Table 1. Possible Outcomes of the Pre-Defence

Outcome	Recommendations to the student	Recommendations to the supervisors
Immediate pass	No further work on improving the Master Thesis is needed. However, the student should continue developing the research observing the other stages outlined.	The supervisors are responsible for monitoring the progress of research, but should not remind the student about the procedural tasks.
Pass with minor technical and/or content related corrections	The student is responsible for introducing the required corrections into the Master Thesis in the terms specified by the Pre-Defence Committee.	The supervisors are responsible for monitoring correction and editing process and should confirm the final result.
Deferred pass (3 months) with major corrections	The student is required to introduce major amendments and resubmit the Master Thesis for the Viva Voce Examination in 3 months.	The supervisors are responsible for continued guidance of the student in the process of conducting research.
Redevelopment of the Master Thesis (6 months)	The student is demanded to develop a new Master Thesis, which will be the subject to examination following the stages stipulated in the Progress Report. At this point, the student may apply for amending the theme of the Master Thesis and/or changing the supervisor(s).	Should the student decide to continue conducting research under the guidance of the same supervisors, they will be responsible for supporting the student during the whole process stipulated in the given handbook.
Failure	The given Master Thesis fails with no rights for resubmission. The student shall be exmatriculated from the study programme and can apply for reinstatement observing the procedure stipulated in Section 3.20. of the given handbook.	The supervisors are not responsible for guiding the student, but can continue performing their tasks upon the agreement with the student.

Please note that asking for clarification is not considered to be a drawback and does not influence the decision made by the Pre-Defence Committee.

The questions from the Pre-Defence Committee might be emotionally neutral, or might contain the scathing criticism, be encouraging and motivating, express like or dislike. This does not, however, mean that the research is of poor and/or excellent quality.

We expect our students to treat all questions politely, explaining their ideas clearly. We respect every individual commitment to the development of the Master Thesis and believe that if the students worked hard on the research, they will certainly respond to all inquiries.

Please note that pre-defence is a discussion of the preliminary results of your research, not a battle to win.

The pre-defence is a compulsory part of the study programme and cannot be omitted or replaced unless the mitigating circumstances are accepted.

3.1.16. Introducing Corrections

Should the students get a positive decision after the pre-defence, they receive their Master Theses for introducing final minor corrections suggested by the supervisor(s), the members of the Pre-Defence Committee and the reviewer. The time that the students are given for making the corrections is stipulated in the Progress Report. The students should inform the supervisor(s) upon completion of the correction and editing process.

3.1.17. Submitting the Hard-bound Copy of the Master Thesis

Once the Master Thesis is developed and approved by the supervisor(s), it should be printed out, bounded and submitted as a hard-bound copy to the Curator of the study programme at least 15 (fifteen) business days before the Viva Voce Examination. The hard-bound copy should be signed by both the student and the supervisor(s). The detailed instructions on binding the Master Thesis are provided in Section 3.17.

3.1.18.
Uploading the Digital Copy to ORTUS E-Learning Platform

Following the general requirements of Riga Technical University concerning the development and submission of the graduate papers, the students are required to upload full digital copy to ORTUS e-learning platform 15 (fifteen) business days before the Viva Voce Examination. The system generates the unique submission approval report to be printed out and signed and further submitted to the Curator of the study programme.

Please note that only the students who have managed to upload the Master Thesis to ORTUS are admitted to the Viva Voce Examination.

3.1.19.
The Viva Voce Examination

The Viva Voce Examination is the final step completing the study programme "Digital Humanities". The students are required to present the results of their research in the form of oral presentation to the Viva Voce Examination Committee, which should last up to 15 minutes and is followed by the question-and-answer session. The detailed information on the organisation of the Viva Voce Examination is provided in Section 3.21 of this handbook.

3.1.20.
Approval of the Results

Following the regulations, the Viva Voce Examination results for the graduates of the academic Master study programmes are approved at a contemporaneous meeting of the Council of the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities.

3.2.
Word Limits

Although the volume of the Master Thesis in terms of word count varies greatly depending on the research object, we invite our students to elaborate

their Master Thesis for obtaining the Master of Science Degree in the field of Digital Humanities in the volume not exceeding 40,000 words.

The length includes the number of words contained within the main body of the text which includes the titles, headings, abstracts, summaries, in-text citations, quotations, footnotes, but excludes the bibliography, acknowledgements, declarations, list of acronyms (if any), list of tables and figures, as well as any appendices. We kindly ask you to include in the appendices only the materials, which can be used as the sources of advisable, yet voluntary reference.

Please note that the purpose of introducing the word limit is to make sure students can produce a high-quality research within the framework of the Master Thesis, which corresponds to the general requirements imposed by the University and the Faculty, meets the top standards guiding the field of Digital Humanities and conforms to the particular specifications for the development and assessment of the Master Thesis in the given interdisciplinary study programme.

If you can draw valid good arguments, the word limit can be exceeded. The sample Word Limit Extension Form is given in Appendix 6. We normally allow up to 20 % over the word limit. It must be fully substantiated and supported by the supervisor(s). Otherwise, over-length Theses will be subject to penalties, which might range from the inquiry to reconsider the volume of the Thesis to the decision to apply mark deduction (up to 20 %) if the inquiry is ignored.

Please note that the length of the paper may be exceeded only due to extra volume required to perform research in the analytical and/or practical part and if it contains information, which is considered the inseparable part of the research and, thus, cannot be moved to appendices.

Although there are no specific penalties for the Master Thesis that is under-length, we invite our students to avoid submitting the Theses, which are shorter than 28,000 words, unless provided that the Thesis contains sufficient suitable content.

All Master Theses subject to a penalty should be revised and can be resubmitted for the Viva Voce Examination at the next available opportunity (consult the administrative body).

The information on the length of the Master Thesis should be provided in the Abstract. Should students provide the substantiation for the over-length Thesis, it should be enclosed to the Master Thesis.

3.3.
Late Submission and Non-Submission: Mitigating Circumstances

All Master Theses submitted after the deadline without accepted mitigating circumstances are not going to be considered and can be resubmitted for the Viva Voce Examination at the next available opportunity (consult the administrative body).

Non-submission of the Master Thesis by the approved date will lead to the exmatriculation of the student from the study programme.

Please note that mitigating circumstances are discussed and assessed individually upon submission of the official claim. If accepted, the student shall be notified on the distinct submission date, which, however, does not excuse student from any of the Master Thesis development stages.

We respect the fact that most of our students are fully-employed professionals with well-established reputation; however, extensive workload is not considered a mitigating circumstance.

Please note that mitigating circumstances are short-term, exceptional, unpreventable and unforeseen circumstances, which have a clear negative influence on the general ability of the student to study or to complete assessments. The mitigating circumstances relate to non-academic issues only.

Being aware of the fact that all Faculty students respect the Code of Ethics and the Code of Academic Integrity, we expect our students to avoid speculations over the claims for recognising mitigating circumstances.

For your convenience we kindly remind you that minor computer problems, failures to treat the documents appropriately, poor time management, minor seasonal ailments, misreading the timetables, submitting the wrong document in error, transport difficulties (strikes, traffic jams, delayed transports, etc.), celebrating national holidays and/or domestic events, going to business trips and/or being outside the country for any other reasons are considered to be unacceptable mitigating circumstances (the list is not exclusive).

On the other hand, should the students submit the documents proving illness or injury, severe family crisis related problems, participation in the court and/

or being involved in police work related issues, exceptional financial issues, admitted school IT problems resulting in the failure of the system and leading to inability of the student to fulfil the task on time, the claim for mitigating circumstances is going to be satisfied.

We invite our students to inform the administration of the study programme upon the occurrence of any mitigating circumstances immediately, as only contemporaneous circumstances will be accepted. In other words, only circumstances occurring at the time of the assessment or in the period immediately leading up to the assessment are considered being mitigating.

The students submit claim (Appendix 7) for mitigating circumstances to the Head of the study programme "Digital Humanities", who is responsible for making decisions on mitigating circumstances and/or making adjustments to the assessment process of a particular claim if the involvement of the Office of Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and/or Head of the International Cooperation and Foreign Students Department is required.

We respect your intention to provide extensive explanation of the situation, but we invite you to be as concise and precise as possible, specifying only sufficient details on the nature and timing of the circumstances and their impact.

Please note that all claims must be accompanied by original and contemporaneous documentary evidence.

Should a student experience any difficulties submitting the documents in person due to illness or other circumstances, the students can authorise someone to submit the claim on their behalf.

3.4.

Interdisciplinary Approach to Research

We invite our students to benefit from the opportunity of conducting the interdisciplinary research in one of the selected fields of Digital Humanities. We realise that pursuing original research in the emerging field with the constantly evolving theoretical background and diversified empirical perspectives is a very challenging, yet a very thought-provoking task.

The students are expected to make a significant contribution and exhibit a full understanding of the materials in the field of research, relating their Master

Thesis to the general body of knowledge in the given field and presenting the results of their investigation in a critical and intellectual way.

Proceeding from formulating a challenge to its complete understanding, the students have to, first of all, identify the disciplines, which make the research an interdisciplinary construct. At this point, it is important to develop and demonstrate a full understanding of the principles governing the organisation of the theoretical and empirical research in each relevant discipline and evaluate the necessary theoretical background.

Having identified the merging disciplines, it is necessary to craft the common methodological ground. The students are encouraged to perform interdisciplinary research casting their gaze across all relevant theories, methods, phenomena and paradigms (cf. Repko and Szostak 2020, *78*). This stage is required to proceed with the formulation of the relevant research methods further used in the process of developing the Master Thesis.

We share the idea expressed by Repko and Szostak (2020, *78*) that "interdisciplinary research is a decision-making process that is heuristic, iterative and reflexive".

The students will greatly benefit from discovering new knowledge and learning innovative skills. We kindly remind our students that organising the research process in a clear procedurally repetitive way by no means compromises freedom and creativity of the conducted research.

When conducting the interdisciplinary research, the students develop high orders of awareness and self-awareness, which are absolutely essential exploring the insights of all the disciplines involved and deciding, which theories to adopt and which to discard.

Please note that interdisciplinarity is a great umbrella term for multifaceted research, but not another name for chaos. Introduction of multiple unsubstantiated ideas does not contribute to the interdisciplinary nature of the Master Thesis, but vice versa makes it rather convoluted and difficult to follow.

The students need to develop advanced cognitive flexibility skills in order to evaluate whether the acquired information is significant, can be used as the source of creativity and inspiration, as well as forms the solid foundation for further theoretical and empirical research.

3.5.
What Makes a Good Master Thesis?

During the development of the Master Thesis, the students quite frequently find themselves under pressure recognising what the main aspects making their Master Thesis an excellent piece of research are. The most important aspect is to identify the exact areas of evaluation, which might be treated as the starting points for self-assessment and might include such aspects as:

- **Management of the theme of the Master Thesis**, which includes analysis of the topicality and novelty of the research; evaluation regarding whether the research process was conducted in a self-directed, logical manner; examination of the hypothesis and/or research questions, aims and tasks of the Thesis.
- **Assessment of the theoretical framework, data basis and data processing**, which comprises analysis whether the main concepts are defined comprehensively and analytically; whether the sources of information are diverse, reliable and modern; whether the students have employed diversified sources of information wisely, but not for the sake of increasing the number of the bibliography sources; whether the bibliography contains the mainstream literature characterising the interdisciplinary nature of the research.
- **Methodological basis of the research**, which involves inquiry whether the students have chosen the reliable and corresponding research methods and have applied them creatively and wisely; whether the students made the independent and innovative use of the collected data.
- **Validity and reliability of research**, which encompasses examination whether the students have managed to substantiate the conclusions; whether the conclusions follow from the analytical and practical results of the research; whether the validity of the data used is ensured; if there is a perspective for further development of the research; if the students have conducted the reliability evaluation carefully and critically.

We invite our students to consider these self-assessment points upon completion of the draft copy of the Master Thesis to avert the necessity to introduce corrections in future.

3.6.
Aims and Tasks of the Master Thesis

The main purpose of the Master Thesis is to give students opportunity to exhibit their full individual creative and professional capacity to develop a voluminous piece of independent academic and/or scientific research on a selected theme in the field of Digital Humanities.

We invite our students to remember that they are going to be assessed with regard to their capacity:

- to demonstrate research and analytical skills developing the Master Thesis;
- to develop high orders of awareness and self-awareness required to evaluate and employ research data;
- to define the main theme of the research;
- to articulate a coherent scheme for conducting research on the selected theme;
- to exhibit advanced cognitive flexibility skills;
- to demonstrate a full understanding of how to apply digital humanities-related skills acquired within the framework of the Master study programme;
- to perform manifold analysis of the challenges in the chosen research area;
- to gather and process the necessary information in accordance with the postulated hypothesis and/or research questions;
- to improve scientific writing skills;
- to consolidate the skills of identification and solving of interdisciplinary problems in the field of Digital Humanities;
- to advance the skills of delivering academic presentations.

3.7.
Contents of the Master Thesis

The sections of the Master Thesis may be conditionally grouped into two parts – obligatory and additional sections, which can be included in the Master Thesis if the students find it necessary. Additional sections comprise acknowledgements, list of tables, list of figures, list of acronyms, glossary of the working terminology and appendices.

Please note that lists should be crafted only if the Master Thesis contains more than 10 (ten) items of a similar kind.

The Master Thesis should comprise the Declaration of Academic Integrity (Appendix 8) and Work Performance and Assessment Sheet (Work P and A sheet) (Appendix 9). The obligatory sections included into the Master Thesis are provided in Figure 6.

Title page	• Features the title of the Master Thesis, the name of the student and student ID number.
Work P and A Sheet	• Signed by the student and supervisor.
Declaration of Academic Integrity	• Confirmation that all materials presented in the Master Thesis are original and that the Thesis does not contain any information from unacknowledged sources. The Declaration should be signed and the valid submission date should be provided.
Abstract	• Provides a brief statement (not more than 300 words) of the main findings of the Master Thesis. The abstract should be drawn up in English and Latvian. The abstract should contain information on the volume of the Thesis.
Table of Contents	• Lists the contents of the Master Thesis by chapters, with sections where appropriate, and page number for each.
Introduction	• The volume of the introduction should not exceed 3 (three) pages and should contain relevant data on the hypothesis, aims, tasks, topicality, novelty and research methods.
Theoretical Part	• The volume of the Theoretical Part comprises approximately 1/3 of the main text of the Master Thesis. The Theoretical Part presents the survey of the mainstream literature necessary to substantiate the ideas expressed in the Master Thesis.
Analytical Part	• The volume of the Analytical Part comprises approximately 1/3 of the main text of the Master Thesis. The Analytical Part provides extensive data on the approaches and strategies applied in the investigation of the selected research subject.
Practical Part	• The volume of the Practical Part comprises approximately 1/3 of the main text of the Master Thesis. The practical Part includes the empirical data needed to substantiate the analysis and the hypothesis stated in the introduction.
Conclusion	• The volume of the conclusion should not exceed 3 (three) pages; it should contain information on the main theoretical findings and empirical results of the research.
List of References	• The list of references must list all works used in the development of the Master Thesis.

Figure 7. Obligatory sections of the Master Thesis.

3.8.
Abstract

The students should provide an abstract in two languages, i.e., English and Latvian. The abstract is basically a greatly reduced summary of the research; it provides concise information on the content and scope of the writing. The abstract should include the following information:

- the title of the Master Thesis;
- the name of the author;
- the main focus of the Master Thesis;
- the number of sections of the Master Thesis;
- the number of pages in the Master Thesis;
- the length of the Master Thesis (number of words);
- the number of references;
- the number of appendices, if any.

Please note that the abstract should not contain any new information, but simply summarises it.

The abstract in each language should not exceed 350 words.

3.9.
Introduction

In the introduction, students provide information on the research conducted within the framework of the Master Thesis. The students should specify the topicality and the novelty of the given research, formulate the hypothesis or research questions to be further addressed. In addition to the above-mentioned considerations, the introduction should cover the following issues:

- substantiation of the research theme;
- formulation of the challenges to be addressed;
- formulation of the research subject;
- the aims and tasks of the given research;
- observation of the potential risks fulfilling the tasks and achieving the aims, or limitations of the research;
- list of the research methods employed;

- identification of the research period, which is of particular importance if the research has a sociological perspective and includes social data collections;
- evaluation of the reliability and validity of the accumulated data.

We realise that the specificity of the research theme might demand formulating aims and tasks in a more general or a very particular way; however, we invite our students to formulate their aims and tasks in a concise and intellectual manner avoiding unnecessary wording and convoluted linguistic constructs.

Particular attention is paid to the choice of the research methods. Taking into account the fact that research methods might be very different and serve as instruments for attaining definite aims, the students might choose a research strategy, which is needed to conduct a research project in a thorough way.

We expect our students to clearly identify the research period, which is needed to substantiate the validity of the research.

The volume of the introduction should be up to 3 (three) pages.

3.10.
Theoretical Substantiation

The Theoretical Part of the Master Thesis represents a detailed and systematic survey and analysis of the mainstream research literature in the chosen theme in the field of Digital Humanities.

Depending on the scope of the chosen theme, the analysis might be either general or more specific; however, we invite our students to avoid making too general observations and/or sink in details.

Supervisors might help students identify the primary and secondary sources to be addressed as well as provide wise and constant guidance in literature search, narrowing of the theme or organising ideas.

Notwithstanding the fact that every part of the Master Thesis is significant, a well-organised, methodological and comprehensive theoretical substantiation is essential in determining the ultimate success or failure, as it establishes a solid foundation for the entire research.

The formation of the theoretical background contributes to broadening the perspective of the research, specifying what has been done, what are the current activities, and what future perspectives the field brings.

Please note that the Theoretical Part of the Master Thesis should craft the frame of the research, provide diversified context for analysis and contribute to formulating the winning research perspective.

3.11.
Multifaceted Analysis

The Analytical Part of the Master Thesis is seen as the multifaceted analysis of the chosen research theme in the field of Digital Humanities.

Please note that since Digital Humanities is an interdisciplinary field, no research methods can be treated in isolation and should be traced in all merging disciplines.

We invite our students to benefit from the use of different research strategies, which might include conducting experimental, comparative, historical, hermeneutic, extensive theoretical, ethnographic, longitudinal, cross-sectional, phenomenological, and/or narrative research.

The students should also provide clear evidence of the methods applied for data collection, which might include making experiments, organising surveys, recording interviews, exploring archives and data collections, relying on the self-generated data, sampling, etc.

Depending on the research challenge addressed, the students may choose various methods of data analysis, which might comprise causal, correlation, descriptive, semiotic, discourse, intercultural, time-series, phenomenological, narrative, network, thematic, epistemological, statistical, mathematical, numerical, edutainment, gamification and other types of analysis.

3.12.
Empirical Study

The Practical Part of the Master Thesis is aimed at describing the results of the student's analysis conducted within the framework of the given research paper. This section should contain information about the data, i.e., how the data were collected, what kind of data variables should be considered, and what data are especially significant for the given research.

We invite our students to provide information on how the data selection and data-based empirical research could influence the validity, representativeness and interpretation of the overall Master Thesis results.

Please note that the Practical Part is not an independent collection of different calculations and should establish a profound correlation with the ideas discussed in the Theoretical Part and should clearly substantiate the analysis accomplished in the Analytical Part.

The Practical Part should explain how the adopted methodological approach has led to the achieved results, whether there are any violations, unforced errors and/or standard errors, as well as the pronounced instances of variability and result interpretation.

We expect our students to state whether the hypothesis or research questions formulated in the Introduction of the Master Thesis have been confirmed by the empirical findings; and/or whether the obtained results contradict theoretical findings in any aspect.

The Practical Part is anticipated to contain information on the limitations of the results and discuss possible perspective for application of the obtained results in further academic and scientific fundamental and/or applied research.

3.13.
Conclusions

Students might benefit from exploring a variety of sources on the development of conclusions. This section enlists the main conclusions of the research, which should be well-substantiated and aim at proving the validity and reliability of research.

We recommend our students to draw interim conclusions upon completion of every part of the Master Thesis. The main conclusions should specify that all aims and tasks have been achieved and the hypothesis has been proven.

The conclusions should substantiate the theoretical and empirical significance of the conducted research and should not include any complimentary information as well as any quotes and the data, which do not belong to the given research.

We invite our students to formulate recommendations for further research and explore if there is a potential for development of research papers based on the Master Thesis for their publishing in scientific journals. The volume of the conclusions should be up to 3 (three) pages.

3.14.
Role of Master Thesis Supervisor(s)

The Head of the study programme is responsible for monitoring the supervision process, ensuring the observance of the appropriate administrative procedures, whereas the Curator of the study programme is responsible for collecting the necessary data from the students and supervisors.

The supervisors for each student are appointed by the Order of the Dean of the Faculty following the information submitted by the Head of the study programme.

Since within the framework of their studies the students conduct interdisciplinary research, for the supervision of every Master Thesis a team of two supervisors is appointed. Although both supervisors share the same degree of responsibility, it might be the case that in the process of conducting research one of the supervisors might acquire the leading role. However, it does not diminish the role of the second supervisor, as both supervisors are responsible for monitoring the progress of the student. Following the regulations on the development of the Master Theses, the supervisors should hold a Doctoral degree.

It is allowed that the student is assigned a consultant to provide specific expertise. The consultant should not obligatorily hold a Doctoral degree and might be the representative of the industry.

In exceptional circumstances, the student might be assigned to a single supervisor. Since upon completion of the study programme the students are awarded the Master of Science Degree in Digital Humanities, should a single supervisor be appointed, then it is favoured that the supervisor either is a prominent leading researcher and/or professor in the field of Digital Humanities or in the fields of information technologies, computer science and other related scientific disciplines.

Please note that the supervisor is not expected to undertake the project work, provide solutions to all challenges encountered or supply the full list of working bibliography.

We expect our students and supervisors to establish a well-functioning cooperation full of mutual esteem, with students not expecting their supervisors to be available immediately, and with supervisors allocating sufficient time for the required number of consultations.

Supervisors should instruct the student about their preferred minimum number of pages to be submitted for evaluation at each stage. This requirement is totally individual and is not a subject to specific regulation by any rules and norms, but depends on the working style of the supervisors. There are professors, who prefer digging into voluminous pieces of text, and/or the ones who choose to analyse data organised in short yet completed chapters. Notwithstanding the fact that working styles might have an influence on the development process, we invite our students to submit the piece of written work, which is sufficient for establishing understanding of the ideas addressed and which would enable supervisors to provide constructive criticism on the contribution. The supervisors, in their turn, are responsible for providing the criticism in good time.

The Master Thesis supervisors are expected to provide guidance to the students when required, e.g., suggesting the primary and secondary sources of working bibliography, approving the Thesis plan, advising on reliable and suitable research methods, reading the parts of the draft and providing suggestions for the introduction of corrections. The supervisors are expected to help students, arranging for the necessary administrative steps to be taken in case the students require assistance in drawing any academic research related documents and/or have faced the challenges that might hinder submission of the Master Thesis in due time. The supervisors assess students' performance submitting a Reference Form (Appendix 10).

Supervisors are allowed to reject the submission and examination of the Master Thesis parts, if the student has significantly violated the terms stipulated in the Progress Report, having presented no sufficient evidence of effective mitigating circumstances. Should the student violate the deadline for 2–4 weeks, the decision on accepting the work is taken by the supervisors, whereas if the violation surpasses 4 weeks, then the decision is taken by the Head of the study programme based on the data taken from the Progress Report and following the supervisors' opinion.

Please note that supervisors do not take any responsibility for the Master Thesis itself, for the proposed ideas and the materials included in the Master Thesis.

3.15.
Frequency of Supervision

We demand from our students to maintain regular contact with their supervisor(s), personally arranging the meetings at intervals of not less than four – six weeks during the third semester and not less than three weeks during the fourth semester of studies.

Bearing in mind that face-to-face meetings might be difficult to organise, the students and supervisor(s) may use the considerable freedom scheduling their meetings in online format, e.g., organising video conferences.

Please note that progress seminars are scheduled in addition to the individual supervision meetings and are not envisaged as the platforms for discussing particular issues of each Master Thesis.

3.16.
Progress Report

The students of the study programme "Digital Humanities" have to observe the deadlines stipulated in the Progress Report, which is updated on an annual basis. The Progress Report is needed to ensure that the students make regular solid progress in the development of their Thesis.

The administration of the study programme takes responsibility for monitoring the students' progress, whereas the students are responsible for keeping administration informed.

Please note that the submission of the Progress Report is a mandatory requirement and serves as the main source of evidence for monitoring progress.

The supervisors are responsible for monitoring the students' progress and should highlight the challenges faced, make a note of all difficulties as well as inform the Head of the study programme about any violations of the norms and regulations. The Progress Report form is provided in Appendix 11.

3.17.
Binding the Thesis

The students should submit the hard-bound copy of the Master Thesis observing the deadline stipulated in the Progress Report.

Although students have a significant freedom choosing the cloth of any colour, we invite our students to give preference of covering the Master Thesis in blue, red or green cloth, which should be further lettered in gold, providing that the cover contains information on the name of the university, type of the graduation paper and the year of its development. Having the student's name on the spine is considered to be an advantage. The sample cover page is given in Appendix 12.

As outlined in Section 3.18, the hard-bound copy of the Master Thesis should be submitted to the Curator of the study programme 5 (five) business days prior to the Viva Voce Examination.

We kindly remind that alongside with the submission of the hard-bound copy, our students must also upload a full digital copy to ORTUS e-learning platform. ORTUS system generates a unique submission approval report, which a student should obligatorily print out, sign and enclose to the hard-bound copy of the Master Thesis.

Please note that only the students, who have managed to submit the hard-bound copy and upload the digital copy of the Master Thesis to ORTUS are admitted to the Viva Voce Examination.

The hard-bound copy of the Master Thesis is deposited at the Faculty for the period of time stipulated in the internal file nomenclature of Riga Technical University.

3.18.
Submission and Review

Students submit the soft-bound copy of the Master Thesis to the Curator of the study programme observing the deadlines stipulated in the Progress Report.

The student is personally responsible for contacting the reviewer and submitting the Master Thesis to them in either printed or digital form.

The reviewer is responsible for providing critical evaluation of the submitted Master Thesis in good times, which are stipulated in the general regulations of Riga Technical University on the development of graduate papers and are specified in the Progress Report.

The reviewer should express evaluation in the Review Form, which is given in Appendix 13 of the present handbook. Should the reviewers experience difficulties in evaluating the Thesis positively, they should contact the Head of the study programme for consultation. The Head of the study programme should appoint another reviewer for the Master Thesis in question and if the negative evaluation is repeated, withdraw the Master Thesis from the current cycle of the Master Thesis development. The student can appeal by addressing the inquiry to the Head of the study programme.

The Head of the study programme is responsible for contacting the Dean of the Faculty and arranging the appellation review. Should the review be negative, the given Master Thesis is given a failure mark and cannot be ever resubmitted. Students, in their turn, might apply for the reinstatement, following the regulations stipulated in Section 3.20.

By filling in the Review Form, the reviewer provides critical evaluation of the students' choice of topic and fulfilment of the set objectives, data collection and analysis, presentation and employability of research results, as well as conclusions. The reviewer should also pay attention to the linguistic and textual aspects and the degree of creativity the students have demonstrated crafting their Master Theses.

Should the positive review be provided, the reviewer draws the main question(s) to be replied by the student at the Viva Voce Examination.

Having introduced all the corrections in the Master Thesis, the students submit the hard-bound copy of the Thesis, which is styled following the guidelines stipulated in Section 3.17. The regulations on further submission of the Master Thesis are provided in Sections 3.1.17. and 3.1.18. of this handbook.

3.19.

Sample Titles of the Developed Master Theses

The following non-exhaustive list of the Master Theses titles is used to indicate the diversity and broad scope of the subjects covered within the field of Digital Humanities:

- Reconstruction of Objects of Collections of Museum of the History of Riga and Navigation in Virtual Environment
- Analysis of Climate Change Awareness and Attitudes among Youth in Latvia
- Research Thinking through Visualisation in Digital Humanities
- Video Games and Humanities
- Design as a Tool of Visual and Mental Persuasion
- BERT Integration into Google Search Algorithm: How Text Origin Affects its SEO
- Narrative in the Digital Age: Case Study and Semiotic Analysis of the Video Game *Shadow of The Tomb Rider*
- Artificial Intelligence Solutions for Automating the Processing of Scanned Photo Negatives: Analysis of Photonegative Post-processing Process in the Most Significant Memory Institutions in Latvia
- Analysis and Classification of Methods used in Generative Art
- GIS Tools for Developing and Visualising "Baldone Sanatorium" Site Revitalisation Recommendations
- Dynamic Archiving and Crowdsourcing Solutions for Cultural Heritage in the Context of Pandemic 2020
- Developing Guidelines for Readers and Creators to Increase Data Visualisation Literacy
- Establishment of a Single System for Digitalisation and Conservation of Museum of the History of Riga and Navigation Collections
- Evaluative Language in Film Reviews and Machine-Learning thereof
- Analysis of Mobile Technologies in Airline Travel Industry
- Evaluation of e-Government Services: A Case of Latvia
- Visualising Image Patterns: Five Years of Latvian Tourism Promotional Photography
- Construction of User: Developer Bias on UX in E-learning Production
- Study of Mobile Phone-based Microlearning
- COVID-19 Related Fake News: Methods and Tools for Automated Detection
- Role of Diplomacy in Shaping Latvia's Future Digital Success
- Visualising Data about the End of WWII in Kurzeme
- Study of User Experience in the RunReady Mobile Application
- Semiotics of UI and UX Design Elements of Product Customisation-Oriented Online Store
- AI vs Human Interaction in B2C Relations
- Engagement of Elementary School Students through an Applied Gamification Model

3.20.
Reinstatement

Should a student be exmatriculated from Riga Technical University for non-observing the requirements for the Master Thesis development, they may ask the University to reinstate at a certain date in order to initiate the examination and review of the Master Thesis at its current stage of development. In this case, the student should address the inquiry to the Head of the study programme.

The Head of the study programme decides whether or not the student should be reinstated, taking into account the quality of the submitted material, the time lapse left until the Viva Voce Examination and examining whether the reason for examatriculation was not related to the violation of the Code of Ethics and the Code of Academic Integrity. Should the latter be the case, the student must provide a well-substantiated reasoning for the previous failure submitted in the written form.

If the reinstatement is approved, the student's Master Thesis is going to be examined in accordance with the general rules of the University as well as observing the regulations stipulated in the given handbook.

Please note that reinstatement is subject to payment for the development and revision of the Master Thesis and the Viva Voce Examination.

3.21.
Viva Voce Examination

The Head of the study programme sets the date for the Viva Voce Examination and informs students about it at the beginning of the fourth semester, notifying that the date is also subject to a change.

At the beginning of the fourth semester, Rector of Riga Technical University approves the Viva Voce Examination Committee, which following the norms and regulations comprises the Head of the study programme, who might also act as the Chair of the Committee, and at least two more members possessing the necessary academic qualification and research expertise in the given scientific field.

The task of the Viva Voce Examination is to make an informed expert decision whether or not to award the Master of Science Degree in Digital Humanities.

We kindly remind our students that the Viva Voce Examination is a public event. However, should the student provide sufficient evidence that the Master Thesis contains confidential materials or trade secrets, the decision on the organisation of the closed Viva Voce Examination is taken. The Inquiry Form for organising the closed Viva Voce Examination is provided in Appendix 14.

During the Viva Voce Examination, the students are expected to present the results of their research in the form of a well-structured, logical and clear presentation. The presentation should be organised following a coherent and cohesive structure, as the members of the Committee will take this into account in awarding final marks.

The presentation should explain the main challenge of the research, summarise briefly the established theoretical background, provide detailed information about the analytical data and empirical results, describe the student's contribution, and list the main conclusions.

The students are expected to deliver the presentation using PowerPoint or any other presentation format upon approval from the Head of the study programme.

We invite our students to speak freely rather than reading from the slides; however, the use of the notecards is allowed.

Please note that the student's position in front of the screen has a major influence. We expect our students to avoid blocking the audience's view, moving constantly from side to side and turning the back to the audience. Should the Viva Voce Examination be organised online, the students take full responsibility for the quality of the Internet connection, characteristics of webcam and microphone, as well as for arranging the proper work station (avoiding the obstacles of technical and personal character).

We invite our students to explain any figures, tables and other visual materials addressing them in proper quality as well as avoiding flashing up lengthy quotations without giving the audience time to digest them.

Please note that should the students have any other questions concerning the organisation of the presentation, they may consult either supervisor(s) or the Curator of the study programme.

The time slot allocated for every student's presentation is 15 minutes, which is further followed by the panel of questions from the members of the Viva Voce

Examination Committee and other participants in case the public Viva Voce Examination is organised. There is no minimum time allocated for the panel of questions per Master Thesis; however, as a guideline, it should not surpass one hour. If the Viva Voce Examination is longer than three hours, short break(s) at the appropriate point(s) are provided.

The Viva Voce Examination should take place either at the premises of the University and be conducted face-to-face or should be organised via a video conferencing tool.

The Head of the study programme makes a decision on the format of the Viva Voce Examination and notifies both students and other members of the Committee on the adopted format beforehand. If the Viva Voce Examination is organised in the online format, it should be obligatorily recorded, provided that all participants are informed about this condition and are aware of the fact that the video is going to be stored for a limited period solely for appeal purposes.

At the conclusion of the Viva Voce Examination, all but the members of the Viva Voce Examination Committee should withdraw and the members of the Committee should confer together on the result in private. Should the members of the Viva Voce Examination Committee have doubts relating to the appropriate decision to be made, they might consult the supervisors irrespective of the fact whether they were present at the examination. The decision on every grade is taken by voting, the Head of the Viva Voce Examination Committee has a casting vote in case of a tie.

The results of the Viva Voce Examination can be announced both publicly and privately. The former concerns the public announcement of the final grades to the students, whereas the latter demands inviting the students into the examination room individually. The decision upon the choice of the format of result announcement is taken by the Viva Voce Examination Committee at the beginning of the event consulting with the students.

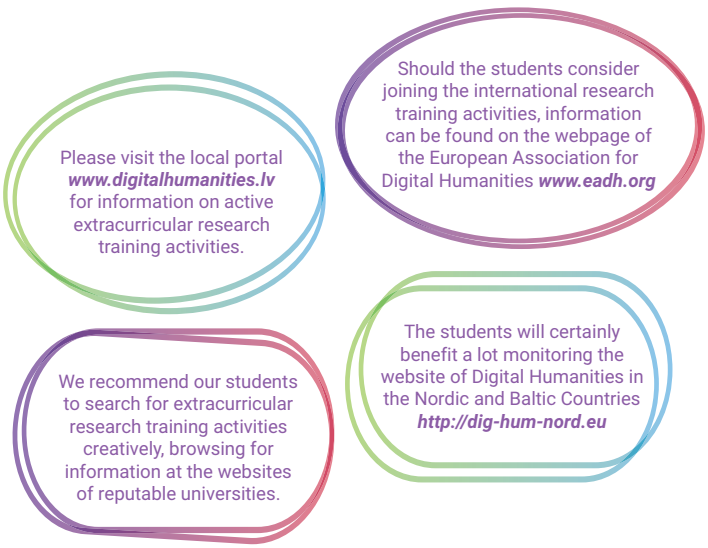
Extracurricular Research Training

04

4.1. Guest Lectures
4.2. Seminars
4.3. Summer Schools
4.4. Scientific Conferences
4.5. Publications
4.6. Research Projects

In view of the fact that every university aims at making the students academically and scientifically brilliant, we invite our students to take comparative advantage of participating in a variety of extracurricular research activities provided by the University and/or recognised individually. There is a great deal of various credit-bearing study modules and study courses on offer from many professional associations and higher education institutions.

It is a common desire of both students and the Faculty to explore and benefit from the variability of the study and research contexts, since irrespective of their background, persuasion and experience levels, there is a constant strife for satisfying intellectual curiosity.



Please note that similar types of training activities pursuing research excellence might be provided as curricular or extracurricular events. The curricular events are part of credit point awarding system and are compulsory, whereas extracurricular activities are voluntary and might be held without result recognition.

Extracurricular research training activities organised abroad will certainly offer great added value in terms of cultural enrichment and best practice exchange.

We kindly remind our students that the Faculty shall not bear any costs related to extracurricular research training activities.

4.1.
Guest Lectures

Within the framework of the study programme "Digital Humanities", students can greatly benefit from attending guest lectures delivered by the prominent specialists in the given field from different higher education institutions and industry. Guest lecturers are renowned experts in their field and are willing to share their expertise with the students.

Bearing in mind that Digital Humanities is a highly interdisciplinary field of research and studies, we invite specialists from different disciplines and expect our students to use this opportunity to widen their horizon and look outside their major discipline.

Please note that should the guest lecturers be invited to deliver the whole study course and/or study module, or participate in its implementation giving only some classes, seminars, webinars, colloquia, lectures, etc., these are subject to compulsory attendance.

Should the students participate in the curricular guest lectures, they are expected to fulfil all assignments and demonstrate full involvement, which includes working in class and performing out-of-class activities stipulated by the instructors.

Guest lectures are a valuable source of information on the current state-of-the-art in the particular research field and industry. It is important to attend extracurricular guest lectures organised for you, as they provide an impetus for inspiration and creativity, may help you decide on the scope of your research interests and even determine your future career path.

Please note that guest lectures are a great platform to engage in the debates, discuss interesting and challenging questions, explore new themes, hear new voices and learn new opinions. We invite our students to be active and use this opportunity wisely.

We aim at providing at least two variable scale guest lecture series within a study term to add excitement and interest and translate them further to greater academic results.

Should the students come across an interesting academic research or industry trend they want to explore, or should they learn about any prominent professors, whose opinion is of high importance, we would be more than

happy to discuss the opportunity of inviting the experts in the respective field to share the results of their research.

The Curator of the study programme is responsible for updating information on the envisaged guest lectures, whereas the students are responsible for checking the schedule for any updates, monitoring ORTUS for any changes and getting acquainted with any e-mails and/or system generated messages.

We are committed to ensuring constant advancement of the study programme; therefore, we are always happy and honoured to invite our graduates to share their learning experience with new students and encourage them to explore their limits. If you feel that this role will suit you in the future, please contact us.

4.2.
Seminars

At the Faculty, we are dedicated to encouraging, supporting and inspiring our students to advance and mature professionally, offering them the opportunity to attend diverse seminars, which aim at addressing the research and studies related issues.

The students are invited to join at least three curriculum seminars on conducting the research within the framework of the Master Thesis development process and are provided at least two extracurricular seminars devoted to research presentation skills and research writing skills during the fourth semester of studies.

The Research Presentation Skills Seminar is envisaged to pursue students' excellence in drawing and delivering intellectual and creative presentations of the results of their research. The themes of the seminar might include tips on giving a scientific talk, crafting slides, highlighting winning points, making great conclusions, etc.

The Research Writing Skills Seminar is aimed at assisting students in their research writings, which might comprise instructions on elaborating research papers, formulating the hypothesis and research questions, formulating the theses to be explored, reviewing the results of scientific work, etc.

Please note that the seminars are organised in English and require registration, observing the deadlines provided by the Curator of the study programme. The exact dates of the seminars are announced beforehand on ORTUS.

During the third semester of their studies, the students are given the opportunity to participate in the Career Day Seminar, which might be organised onsite or online. This seminar is aimed at putting into the contact the students of the study programme and the representatives of different research institutions, state establishments, private companies, etc. with the purpose to stimulate information exchange, pursue academic excellence, motivate students to seek for the research-driven fieldwork, and/or use this opportunity for finding interesting ideas for further research within the framework of the Master Thesis and beyond.

In addition, a variety of other seminars, covering a wide range of topics is provided, where students are kindly asked to register if they want to participate. Information about the topical seminars organised by the institutes and centres of the Faculty as well as by other units of Riga Technical University can be found on ORTUS and/or at the website of the corresponding faculties.

Please note that the seminars hosted by the Faculty are provided at no additional cost to the students of the study programme. Should the seminars be provided by the guest speakers, the participation fee is subject to change.

4.3.
Summer Schools

We always invite our students to make their summer recognised, participating in various summer schools organised by the local and international institutions. Summer schools are seen as a great opportunity to develop new skills and pursue excellence in research and studies.

Summer schools are an excellent source of inspiration and curriculum enriching, provided in the dense and well-structured way. The access to new knowledge and skills is provided via the series of lectures, classes, seminars, individual tutorials devoted to one major subject, which allows exploring the subject from multiple perspectives. If the students prefer super intensive immersion into a particular research and/or study issue, a summer school is the best way to do it.

It is an exceptional platform for the top-level industry specialists and renowned researchers to share their valuable expertise, professional skills and accumulated knowledge in a particular discipline and across.

Please note that before being enrolled in any summer school, the students should obtain full data on recognition of their achievements and fees, if any.

Before considering joining any summer school, we recommend our students to get acquainted with the main themes covered within the summer school, explore the full list of tutors and request the sample certificate.

Should the students consider joining the summer school aiming at recognising the obtained credit points within the framework of the study programme, they should submit an inquiry addressed to the Head of the study programme (Appendix 15) before enrolment. It is a great opportunity to acquire necessary information from the highly-ranked specialists and underload your fall semester, provided the acquired credit points are recognised.

We encourage our students to actively participate in the summer schools; however, we kindly remind that the Faculty is not responsible for any discrepancies caused by incomplete or misleading information and/or for the quality of the attended training activities, as well as shall not bear any costs associated with the summer schools.

We realise the fact that participation fee in many summer schools might be significant; however, the students are encouraged to actively search for the grants and bursaries, which are on offer from Riga Technical University, summer school hosting universities, professional associations and initiatives.

Please note that if the summer school is organised online, it might ease the financial stress for the students still providing them an opportunity to obtain knowledge and skills in the same capacity.

4.4.
Scientific Conferences

Attending scientific conferences is a perfect way of exploring yet another perspective of your research, considering new strategies and approaches. It is an enjoyable and meaningful strategy of building necessary connections, providing new impulse for the conducted research, learning about new job openings, inviting professional feedback about the explored ideas, and improving the public speaking skills.

It is significant to note that conferences are attended by researchers, industry specialists, young scholars, representatives of the publishing houses, peer students and members of the academic staff, which provides extensive networking opportunities. The conferences introduce students to a sense of

intellectual community and create the platform for constant advancement and professional maturity.

Please note that in order to make most of the participation in the conferences, the students are invited to craft a schedule of the presentations they want to attend and identify the researchers they want to talk to.

Irrespective of the fact whether the students aim at pursuing academic, research or business career, they can mature and advance professionally as we believe that any scientific conference contributes greatly to the development of cognitive flexibility and higher orders of awareness of the students.

We encourage our students to participate in all scientific conferences the Faculty hosts, as the interdisciplinary nature of the study programme "Digital Humanities" welcomes diverse themes for discussion.

Since 2016 we have provided our students and the members of the academic staff opportunity to benefit from the plenary lectures held within the framework of the major biennial scientific conference "Meaning in Translation: Illusion of Precision". The conference hosts seminars, workshops and sessions devoted to the issues of Digital Humanities and other interdisciplinary research questions and provides great publishing opportunities for both young scholars and experienced researchers.

Riga Technical University hosts the annual international scientific conference, which is organised in multiple sessions and eagerly welcomes students' presentations.

Please note that all scientific conferences hosted by the Faculty are provided at no additional cost to the students of the study programme.

The students of the study programme are offered the opportunity to participate in different local conferences, most of which run special grants and bursaries for the students. The Curator of the study programme and the Vice-Dean for Science provide information to the Master students about topical conferences they can participate in.

4.5.
Publications

At the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities we pursue scientific and academic excellence, encouraging our students to explore their research frontiers and to challenge their cognitive abilities.

We believe that to efficiently operate and constantly advance within the field of Digital Humanities, the students should get acquainted with its major values, including the academic and research ethics values, which comprise not only honesty, openness, integrity, but also respect for intellectual heritage of each discipline and ability to ground methodological commons avoiding the necessity to sacrifice the main postulates of each field.

We encourage our students to strive for full engagement and maximum benefits of the tailored learning and research environment, exploring the issues, which shall form the basis for the well-pronounced and far-reaching scientific study.

Should the students have a research idea they want to explore outside the framework of their Master Thesis, they are invited to either submit proposal to the Head of the study programme or to approach the member of the academic staff under whose supervision they want to develop their research and shape it into camera ready publication.

The Curator of the study programme and the Vice-Dean for Science shall provide the students with information on the open calls for papers in the journals hosted by the Faculty or in the journals inviting young scholar publications.

Please note that the students can also submit their papers for publishing in the proceedings to the conferences they have participated in.

The Faculty provides opportunity for the students to get their results published should the paper survive the double-blind review process and correspond to the requirements of the particular journal. If the publishing process involves allocation of funds, the decision upon sponsoring the publishing of the paper is taken by the Head of the study programme, consulting the supervisor and addressing the inquiry for financial support to the Dean of the Faculty.

Please note that if the research paper is accepted for publishing in the scientific journal and the publication process involves allocating financial resources, the students shall not bear any costs.

The papers related to the research conducted within the framework of the Master Thesis and published during the study process shall have the positive influence on the Viva Voce Examination result, should the Viva Voce Committee face a tie.

4.6.
Research Projects

We believe that the students of the study programme will greatly benefit from participating in different research projects, which are either initiated at the Faculty level or can be organised within the framework of Student Innovation Grants of Riga Technical University.

05 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, S., Blanke, T. and Dunn, S. (2010), 'Methodological commons: arts and humanities e-science fundamentals', Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences 368(1925), 3779–3796.

Lapiņa, I., Platonova, M., Budņiks, L., Fedotova, K., Kozlovskis, K., Smirnova, T., Ščeulovs, D., Tipāns, I. *Formatting and Style Guidelines for Study and Graduate Papers*. Riga: RTU Press, 2017. 44 p.

Repko, Allen and Rick Szostak (2020) *Interdisciplinary Research: Process and Theory*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

RTU Regulation on Internship Management Procedure at Riga Technical University, approved at the Meeting of RTU Senate on 28 January 2019, Minutes 626

Regulation on Final Examinations at Riga Technical University https://International.Rtu.Lv/Wp-Content/Uploads/Sites/65/2021/02/08.-Regulation_On_Final_Examinations_At_RTU.Pdf

Procedure for Recognition of Competencies Developed Outside Formal Education or from Professional Experience and Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education at Riga Technical University, https://international.rtu.lv/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2021/02/09.-Procedure_for_Recognition_of_Competencies_Developed_Outside_Formal_Education.pdf

Regulation on The Recognition of the Courses Completed at Other Universities and RTU Study Programs, https://international.rtu.lv/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2021/02/10.-Regulation_on_the_Recognition_of_the_Courses.pdf

Internal Code of Student Conduct of Riga Technical University, https://international.rtu.lv/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2021/02/17.-Internal_Code_of_Student_Conduct.docx.pdf

Code of Ethics of RTU Students, Academic Personnel and Staff, https://international.rtu.lv/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2021/02/19.-Code_of_Ethics_of_RTU.docx.pdf

RTU Code of Academic Integrity, https://international.rtu.lv/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2021/02/38.-Code_of_Academic_Integrity-.docx.pdf

Breach of Academic Integrity and Breach Consideration Procedures, https://international.rtu.lv/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2021/02/39.-Analysis_of_the_breach_of_academic_integrity.docx.pdf

Dictionary and General Guidelines of Academic Integrity https://ebooks.rtu.lv/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2020/02/9789934224324_Akademiska-godiguma-terminu-vardnica_visparejas-vadlinijas_PDF-1.pdf

06 APPENDICES

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Head of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities"
Professor Dr. philol. Marina Platonova

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
1st year student of the Academic Master Study Programme
"Digital Humanities"

_____

Student ID No. _____

Application

Please approve the selection of the Study Module _____
_____.

(first option)

In case the selected Study Module is not available, please enroll me in _____
_____.

(second option)

_____ _____

(date) (signature)

On the Fieldwork **in the period from** __.__.20__ **to** __.__.20__**,**
CP: 4.0 of **the Student** of Riga Technical University _____

Skills in the respective professional field:	**Low**	**Average**	**Good**	**Excellent**	**N/A**
Theoretical background, understanding of the main regularities of the professional field of activity					
Practical background, competences and skills applied during the Fieldwork completing the assigned tasks					
Competence completing the tasks of the Fieldwork					
Professional and proper performance, high quality work performance					
Ability to analyse, structure and process professional information					

Personal attitude and contribution of the Student:	**Low**	**Average**	**Good**	**Excellent**	**N/A**
Responsible attitude towards the assigned duties, discipline					
Analytical, logical actions and situational understanding completing the assigned tasks					
Autonomy and critical assessment of own performance					
Personal initiative and innovative approach					
Communication skills and ability to conduct argumentative discussion					
Ability to integrate and work in team					
Professional ethics					

Written reference in free form (including what materials the Student got acquainted with and what tools, equipment and software the Student used during the Fieldwork, what projects or research the Student took part in, etc.).:

Assessment of Student's performance according to a 10 (ten)-point grading scale:									
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*
(negative assessment)	*(negative assessment)*	*(negative assessment)*	*(almost average)*	*(average)*	*(almost good)*	*(good)*	*(very good)*	*(excellent)*	*(outstanding)*

IT helpdesk e-mail: it@rtu.lv, phone: +371 67089999

RIGA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF E-LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND HUMANITIES

STUDENT'S: **NAME SURNAME**

FIELDWORK LEDGER

ACADEMIC MASTER STUDY PROGRAMME
"Digital Humanities"

Intern:	
Course	
Group	
Student ID number	
Fieldwork company:	
Fieldwork Supervisor at the company:	
Fieldwork Coordinator at RTU:	Anastasija Žiravecka Professor +371 29682242 anastasija.ziravecka@rtu.lv
Fieldwork start date:	
Fieldwork end date:	
Fieldwork ledger submitted to RTU:	

Fieldwork week	Time spent undertaking fieldwork, h	Description of the work completed during the fieldwork	Signature of the Fieldwork Supervisor at the company accepting the work performed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

6.	**7.**	**8.**

Comments:

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Head of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities"
Professor Dr. philol. Marina Platonova

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
1st year student of the Academic Master Study Programme
"Digital Humanities"

_____

Student ID No. _____

Application

Please approve the initial theme of the Master Thesis _____

_____

and assign _____ as a supervisor.

_____ _____

(date) (signature)

Approved:

Supervisor

_____ _____

(name, surname, position) (signature)

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Head of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities"
Professor Dr. philol. Marina Platonova

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
2nd year student of the Academic Master Study Programme
"Digital Humanities"

_____

Student ID No. _____

Application

Please approve the final theme of the Master Thesis _____

_____

and assign _____ as a supervisor.

_____ _____

(date) (signature)

Approved:

Supervisor

_____ _____

(name, surname, position) (signature)

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Head of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities"
Professor Dr. philol. Marina Platonova

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
2nd year student of the Academic Master Study Programme
"Digital Humanities"

_____

Student ID No. _____

Application

Please allow exceeding the word limit in the Master Thesis _____
_____.

(Title of the Master Thesis)

Rationale:

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____ _____

(date) (signature)

Supervisor's comment:

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____ _____

(name, surname, position) (signature)

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Head of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities"
Professor Dr. philol. Marina Platonova

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
2nd year student of the Academic Master Study Programme
"Digital Humanities"

_____

Student ID No. _____

Application

Please extend the submission date of _____
of the Master Thesis (Part of the Thesis)

_____

(Title of the Master Thesis)
due to mitigating circumstances.

Description of the mitigating circumstances:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Enclosure (original and contemporaneous documentary evidence):

_____ _____

(date) (signature)

Declaration of Academic Integrity

I declare that this work is my own and does not contain any unacknowledged work from any source.

Signature

Date

Work Performance and Assessment Sheet

The Master Thesis has been elaborated at the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities within the framework of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities".

Author of the Master Thesis
First name, surname _____ (signature, date)

Supervisor
Academic position, scientific degree, first name, surname _____ (signature, date)

The Master Thesis has been suggested for the Viva Voce Examination at the meeting of the Master Thesis Assessment Committee of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities".

Head of the Academic Master Study Programme
"Digital Humanities"
Professor Dr. philol. Marina Platonova _____ (signature, date)

Dean of the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities

Professor Dr. philol. Marina Platonova _____ (signature, date)

The Master Thesis has been publicly presented at the meeting of the Master Thesis Assessment Committee on _____ and evaluated with a mark _____.

Secretary of the Master Thesis Assessment Committee
Associate Professor Dr. philol. Tatjana Smirnova _____ (signature, date)

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities"

REFERENCE

Student's _____
(first name, surname)

Master Thesis _____
(title)

Relevance to the title:

Independence of the research:

Main results of the Master Thesis, its novelty, theoretical and practical significance, main drawbacks:

Relevance to the requirements set in the manual "Formatting and Style Guidelines for Study and Graduate Papers":

Suggested evaluation:

Supervisor
(first name, surname)
Academic position, scientific degree

Riga, _____ _____
(signature)

Progress Report on Elaboration of the Master Thesis

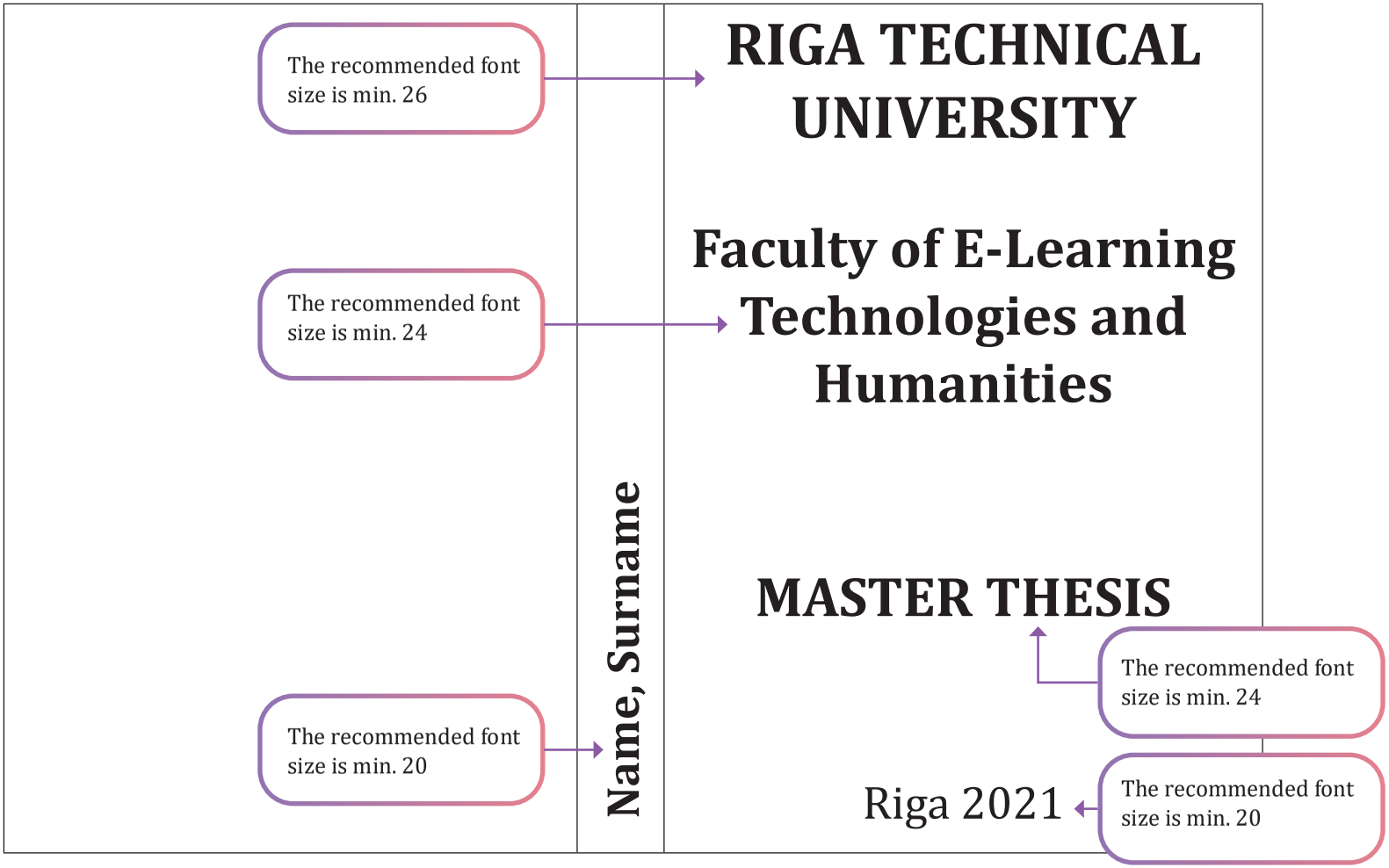
_____

Student's Name, Surname

Deadlines for elaboration of the Master Thesis[1]:

- Draft of the Theoretical Part – by __.__.20__;
- Draft of the Analytical and Practical Parts – by __.__.20__;
- Submission of the final draft of the Master Thesis for Pre-defence – by __.__.20__;
- Preliminary Viva Voce Examination of the Master Thesis – __.__.20__;
- Submission of the hard-bound copy of the Master Thesis and uploading its digital copy to ORTUS system – by __.__.20__;
- Viva Voce Examination of the Master Thesis – __.__.20__.
- The dates of Preliminary Viva Voce Examination (Pre-defence) and Viva Voce Examination are subject to a change.

	Date of submission	**Student's signature**	**Supervisor's signature**	**Curator's signature**	**Remarks / notes**
Draft of the Theoretical Part					
Draft of the Analytical and Practical Parts					
Submission of the final draft of the Master Thesis for review					


The recommended font size is min. 26
RIGA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
The recommended font size is min. 24
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Name, Surname
MASTER THESIS
The recommended font size is min. 24
The recommended font size is min. 20
Riga 2021
The recommended font size is min. 20

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humanities"

REVIEW

Student's _____
(first name, surname)

Master Thesis _____
(title)

Contents and volume of the Master Thesis:

Topicality, problems, positive virtue and main drawbacks of the Master Thesis:

Evaluation of the Master Thesis and contribution:

1. Assessment:

2. Theoretical and practical significance of the Master Thesis:

Reviewer
(first name, surname)
Academic position, scientific degree

Riga, _____ _____
(signature)

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Head of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humantities"
Professor Dr. philol. Marina Platonova

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
2nd year student of the Academic Master Study Programme
"Digital Humanities"

_____

Student ID No. _____

Application

Due to the fact that the Master Thesis

_____

(Title of the Master Thesis)

contains confidential materials / trade secrets please allow the organisation of a closed Viva Voce Examination.

Student's argumentation:

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____ _____

(date) (signature)

Supervisor's / Employer's argumentation:

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____ _____

(name, surname, position) (signature)

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
Head of the Academic Master Study Programme "Digital Humantities"
Professor Dr. philol. Marina Platonova

Riga Technical University
Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities
_____ year student of the Academic Master Study Programme
"Digital Humanities"

_____

Student ID No. _____

Application

Please consider my participation in the Summer School _____

_____

(Title of the Summer School)

aimed at recognition of the obtained credit points within the framework of the study programme.

_____ _____

(date) (signature)