Linneuniversitetet
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Master's thesis in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies
5KP45E

Guidelines for the Master's Thesis in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies, Linnaeus University,
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Abstract

These guidelines are largely based on A. Ekblom 2014. *Guidelines for the Master's thesis: Instructions and advice for Master's students in Global Environmental History*. Uppsala University, Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University, Box 626, 75126 Uppsala, Sweden.

Ekblom, A. 2014. Riktlinjer för Master uppsats: Instruktioner och råd för Master studenter i Global miljöhistoria. Uppsala, Institutionen för arkeologi och antik historia

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In addition, the following textbook has been used:

Wayne C. Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, 4th edition, Chicago 2016.

This manual specifies the formal requirements of a Master's thesis in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies and provides instructions for layout and referencing. The text also contains advice on choosing a thesis topic and how to write the thesis. A Master's thesis requires independent research and individual conclusions, based on the interpretation of primary sources. The thesis must derive from your own reasoning and written in your own words. Language, organisation of the thesis, treatment of sources and empirical data must be clear, stringent, and transparent. The manual also explains the individual roles of your as author, the main supervisor, the assistant supervisor and the mentor supervisor are clarified in the text. It clarifies the ethical guidelines of research and particularly the problem of plagiarism and provides information on the process of the thesis defence, the role of the opponent, the chair and the seminar participants and a summary of the assessment and grading process.

Contents

Introduction

Writing a thesis is a journey of exploration that you will enjoy. As you explore your topic, you will challenge your thinking in the process. You will not conclude that journey with the completion of your thesis, but you will be able to summarise your journey with your thesis and even inspire others to follow you. The aims of this text are to make sure that you complete the journey in time and that you know where to go, which places to visit and which routes (not to) take. The text clarifies the formal requirements, your own role, and that of the supervisor; it also presents some advice on formulating the thesis topic, on the writing process, and what you can do if you get stuck. This is a long document, and so the most important information relating to the formal process of writing a thesis is summarised in this introduction.

The MA thesis in the Colonial and Postcolonial Studies programme is 45 credits (the equivalent of one and a half semester, fulltime). This text provides guidelines and information on the formal requirements of a Master's thesis at LNU and advice and guidance on the elements of the thesis, references, disposition, and layout.[1]

The formal thesis process begins when the student is assigned a supervisor. The roles of the supervisor and the Master's student in the thesis process are specified in chapter 6. The supervisor informs the students when the thesis is ready to be evaluated. In order to pass, the thesis has to go through an evaluation process that follows several steps. As a student, you have to defend your work in a formal defence seminar and participate in one seminar in the role of an opponent. You must also participate in one thesis seminar in the role of an opponent. You are furthermore expected to actively participate in your fellow students' seminars. The grading of the thesis ranges from A to F. The grade is based on the thesis as it was presented at the defence seminar, and the quality of the defence will also be considered. In order to pass, the thesis should be shown to present new knowledge, either by presenting new data or by analysing/conceptualising data in a new way. The student must also show that she/he is able to synthesise information and contextualise research in relation to the field of research, the sources and theory. The student must also be able to assess the value and contribution of his/her research and formulate a general independent conclusion and analysis. For the grades A and B (pass with honours), the student must fulfil the requirements above and also show the ability to independently innovate/generate an original conceptual approach to a subject at a high level of abstraction (see appendix 2). In sum, to pass with honours, the thesis must be of exceptional quality, and the student must exhibit both independence and integrity in the thesis process.

If your thesis does not pass the thesis defence, you can still revise the thesis and defend it again once it has been improved. If there is any risk of a failure, the supervisor should ideally inform the student at an early stage and suggest revisions accordingly. However, this depends on whether the student follows the designated deadlines and goals for submission and thesis work. The responsibility for the thesis process ultimately lies with you, the student. Your supervisor can support you in this process, but you are always the project manager of your research and thesis writing. Once your thesis has been graded and revised, you must register the bibliographic data of the thesis in

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[1] The text has been modified from Rydbeck (2009) and Knutsson (2011).

DiVA. After this registration, your credits will be reported. If approved, you have to registrate your thesis in DiVA (see chapter 9).

As you embark on this journey that writing a thesis entails, here are some quick words of advice:

(1) Make many small and feasible deadlines that you can achieve step by step;

(2) Make a synopsis of your thesis from day one and work from that when planning your thesis work;

(3) Sketch all sections of your thesis right from the start and go back and reformulate aims and research questions if you get stuck. For this purpose you can use the thesis template, aka "essay template" available on the computers at the University computer rooms or on the template website online;

(4) Formulate your questions as explicit as possible right from the start.

You will find more practical information in the five appendices at the end of the detailed guidelines:

1) Time schedule for the thesis work
2) Formal criteria for the grading of theses
3) Checklist for double checking of formalities, etc. before submission of the thesis
4) Checklist in preparation for opposition of a thesis
5) How to search for literature at the university library (UB).

Formal requirements

A 45-credit thesis should be 60–70 pages and c. 150,000 characters (with spaces) long. This includes a table of contents, references and appendices but generally excludes images. Maps, diagrams, figures, and tables that are the result of the independent analysis of either written or visual sources, artefacts, and represent results of research, are not merely illustrations and thus may count as the equivalent of text. In these cases, the length of the thesis may be reduced according to what the formal supervisor estimates is reasonable.

Table 1. Guidelines for Master's thesis

Credit/time	No. of pages & references	No. of words and characters with spaces)	No. of hours (60 minutes) supervision
45 credits(5KP45E) 1.5 terms (100%)	50–60 pages *c.* 40 references	20–26,000 words 120–160,000 characters	30 hours

2.1. The independent research project

A Master's thesis is the result of research that is carried out **individually, independently, and autonomously**. It must result in conclusions drawn from a critical academic analysis of new primary data or by analysing/conceptualising data in a new way. A student must show an ability to contextualise conclusions in relation to a relevant field of research as represented by the existing research literature. A Master's thesis must go beyond compiling, reviewing, summarising, and presenting existing knowledge. The study must generate new knowledge on a given topic. Results must also be presented with a high level of clarity, so that the reader can follow the argument and assess the conclusions in relation to sources or source materials, and in relation to the aims and research questions.

It is expected that the master student[2]:

- presents a theoretical overview of parts of the main fields of study;
- discusses, applies, compares and evaluates theories of the main fields of study critically and with a high degree of independence;
- discusses current research critically and with a high degree of independence
- discusses and applies adequate methods for solving research assignments;
- independently conducts qualified research assignments within given time frames;
- adheres to linguistic conventions in an academic context;
- independently and critically evaluate their own and others' work;
- assess relevant research ethical aspects.

In other words, you should be able to persuasively explain the purpose and aims of the thesis, the choice of research questions in relation to the purpose and aims, and contextualise these in relation to previous research. You show that you are

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[2] 5KP45E Colonial and Postcolonial Studies, Master Thesis 45 credits: https://kursplan.lnu.se/kursplaner/syllabus-5KP45E-1.pdf

- familiar with previous research in the field, both nationally and internationally, and able to discuss and define key terms relevant to the thesis topic;
- familiar with the theoretical frameworks and methodologies that can be regarded as central to the research area, and is able to problematise and apply them in the context of their own research;
- able to actively position themselves in relation to theoretical frameworks and methodologies, by choosing suitable theoretical frames and methodologies and justifying these choices in relation to the thesis topic and material;
- able to critically review sources and/or source materials by evaluating the reliability and validity of sources and drawing independent conclusions on the basis of these sources;
- able to formulate feasible thesis topic, aims and research questions, and demarcate empirical studies within the time limit of the thesis project;
- able to plan and schedule the thesis work;
- able to plan and effectively arrange the thesis text;
- able to autonomously search for relevant sources and reference literature;
- able to present research results in a way that is coherent, orderly and legible;
- able to summarise the main results of the research and contextualise it;
- able to follow standard formalities when it comes to referencing, text structure and formatting, as instructed;
- able to evaluate and assess his/her own knowledge contribution in relation to the field.

To pass with honours, the student must fulfil the requirements above, but also show the ability to independently innovate/generate an original conceptual approach to a subject on a high level of abstraction. In sum, for an A (or B), the thesis must be of exceptional quality, and the student must have shown both independence and integrity in the thesis process.

2.2. Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes of the programme as a whole are also relevant to your thesis and the choice of topic for your thesis. It is important to remind you of these here, since this is a sort of contract between what you as a student can expect to learn from the programme and what your teachers and supervisors should make sure you do. The learning outcomes are defined in the programme syllabus, and the wording is partly defined by the national decree of higher education, which all higher education institutions in Sweden must follow.

On completion of the programme, you will have fulfilled the objectives of a Master's degree, as specified in the decree of higher education[3]; you will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills

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[3] https://kursplan.lnu.se/utbildningsplaner/syllabus-KAKP2-1.1.pdf

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and handle complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information,
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, independently and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and thus contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work,
- demonstrate the ability both nationally and internationally to present and discuss their works and artistic issues in speech, writing or in other ways and in dialogue with different groups, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in other qualified work.

Judgement and approach
- demonstrate an ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social, and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work,
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and,
- demonstrate the ability to identify their individual need for further knowledge and take responsibility for their ongoing learning.

Programme specific objectives

After completing the programme, you should be able to:

Knowledge and understanding
- account for knowledge of colonial and postcolonial studies, including an overview of the field as well as in depth knowledge in the subfield represented by the independent project (Master's thesis), and demonstrate knowledge of current research debates in the interdisciplinary field,
- account for the main causes, processes, and consequences of modern colonialism, historically and today, and critically discuss descriptions of colonialism in a postcolonial context,
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of general theories, concepts and methods in second level studies in the field of colonial and postcolonial studies, and in-depth methodological knowledge in the thematic specialisation of the independent project (Master's thesis)

Competence and skills
- integrate new knowledge and analyse and examine complex phenomena in colonial and postcolonial studies in historical and contemporary contexts,
- apply relevant postcolonial theories in analyses of written and other sources from colonial contexts and relations, or in descriptions and interpretations of these,
- independently identify and formulate research questions, plan research assignments and identify need for further knowledge.

Judgement and approach

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- analyse and systematically evaluate connections between empirical documentation of historical and contemporary events and processes influenced by colonial power and dependence and by theoretical postcolonial interpretations, or literary portrayals of these,
- assess and apply relevant academic and societal aspects of their studies from postcolonial perspectives, and demonstrate an awareness of ethical aspects of research,
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its integrated role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, especially in light of colonial and postcolonial experiences.

Not all thesis topics will cover the learning outcomes in their entirety. In these cases, these learning outcomes will be considered to have been examined in your mandatory courses (but you can also add a section in your thesis where you discuss these issues; as discussed in the next chapter).

2.3. The process

The first term is filled with mandatory courses. In the second term you have to choose optional courses (course choices are made already in the beginning of April). You are registered on the thesis work similar to a course (45 credits). the thesis course starts in the second term and runs alongside the program as a whole. During the program, 30 weeks are specially assigned for the task of researching and writing the thesis. You can start writing your thesis in term 2, but most common for students is to start in course term 3. You are advised to actively think about your thesis topic and discuss ideas with teachers, and programme coordinator early on. You will start reflecting on a thesis topic, research questions and writing strategies in the Independent Project course. During the course in term 2 you will critically evaluate finished Master's theses and discuss them with your teachers and fellow students. This exercise is supposed to help you better understand how to build a thesis topic. You will also be the opponent in the mock-defences on the thesis drafts of 2nd year master students. This will prepare you for formulating your research questions and also in choosing form and conceptualisation for your thesis. In term 3 you start with your thesis and are formally assigned a supervisor (unless you have already started on the thesis course in term 2). If necessary, an external supervisor will be appointed. A formal contract for the external supervisor needs to be approved and signed by the programme director. Together with your supervisor you will schedule joint supervision meetings throughout term 3 and 4. We strongly recommend attending these meetings and meeting your deadlines. In the beginning of term 3, you will present your thesis project to the new first year students and now you will be the one to have your project reviewed. In April you will also present your theses draft for critical review by the 1st year students and by members of the Centre for Concurrences (LNUCC) (mock-defence). The final theses defences are usually scheduled in the last week of May (see details in 9.1).

Building the thesis

3.1. Defining the thesis topic

Defining a good thesis topic can take time. Preferably, it should be a topic that interests you and suits your training, skills, and background. Most importantly, it should be a topic that is feasible within the time frame.

Remember also that the Master's thesis should generate **new knowledge** on a given topic and result in an **independent and original conclusion**. You are expected to include an **empirical analysis**. This can range from text analyses of a number of texts, interviews, the compilation of information from primary literary sources, a discourse analysis of debates, an analysis of visual or media representation, or analyses of material cultures or other non-written archives or media.

The formal requirements for a thesis in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies are as follows:[4]

If you want to maintain the disciplinary identity from your mother discipline, you should choose a topic that is acceptable within the discipline. If you plan to continue your research training and apply for a PhD position, after having concluded the Master's degree, it is particularly important that you maintain your scholarly training in the main subject of your Bachelor's degree. Make sure to follow the formal requirements and methodological traditions of your main BA discipline.[5] Discuss this carefully with your supervisor/s for guidance.

3.1.1. A diachronic perspective

A diachronic perspective is a comparison over time. The time frame of the analysis can be very broad. A discourse analysis that focuses on the changes in the public discourse in a certain region or on a particular theme over the last 10 years is diachronic and, in addition, introduces a method relevant to historical analysis in terms of a longer time-perspective. A study that focuses on a particular discourse or events in time can be said to be diachronic if it entails a comparison with other similar events or discourses, or if it traces the processes of changes over this time period.

3.1.2. Dissemination of knowledge

Studies of the dissemination of colonial history and postcolonial thought in education and/or to the public can also be a thesis topic; pedagogy in relation to mediating environmental history, or analyses of the staging and representation of environmental history themes in museums and media are two examples of such topics.

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[4] Note that even if the programme encourages a broad range of thesis topics, and the teachers' collegium has a broad competence, the availability of supervisors must also be considered when choosing a topic; therefore, it is important that you discuss topics with the programme director.

[5] For instance, for a Master's thesis in history, the formal requirement states that you work extensively with archival documents. If you have a BA in history and want to be eligible for a PhD position, you should make sure to choose a thesis topic with such an empirical basis.

3.1.3. Other important considerations when choosing a topic

As discussed in Chapter 2, a Master-degree also has associated requirements that are defined in the national decree of higher education. Most of you will fulfil these requirements in the definition of your thesis topics. However, some of you may opt for a thesis topic or subject that is very narrow in scope or methodology (critical discourse analysis or comparative historical analysis), or a topic/subject that requires a lot of analysis time and does not allow you to expand on theory or wider interpretation. With such a thesis focus, it may not be obvious how to relate to all learning outcomes within the thesis.

As stated in the previous chapter, we consider these learning outcomes to be examined in your mandatory courses; but you can also, to be sure, add a heading in your thesis with the title "Societal relevance of presented work", or something similar. It is also important to point out that the assessment criteria for "Pass with Honours" requires a theoretical and reflective analysis, not only of the sources used, but also of your own knowledge process and of the value of your own study. If the thesis is too narrow in its scope or too methodologically focused, you are less likely to have delved into a theoretical and reflective analysis that could be graded with A or B. Again, in such cases, a section on the possibilities and limitations of science and its role could be added to the thesis to show examiners that you are well versed in this discussion, even if it might not be directly within the scope of the thesis.

3.2. Formulating aims and research questions

The overall aim of the thesis draws the basic boundaries of the thesis. Remember that the main requirement is that the thesis should contribute new knowledge and, thus, be original. This requirement is best met already when formulating the aim. It may be difficult to be original or contribute new knowledge if you choose a well-researched topic, unless you apply a new theoretical frame of analyses, for instance.

The more explicitly you formulate the research questions, the easier it will be for you to decide on the methodology, sources and theoretical frame/s. A good way to test your questions is to sketch your conclusions from the very beginning. Base these on your preliminary ideas of what the results will be or the range of possible results. If you are not able to sketch the conclusion from the outset, i.e. if you have no clue of what you might find, it is a good indication that your research questions are poorly defined — go back and define them more clearly. On the other hand, if your conclusions are obvious even from the beginning, it is a good indication that you have posed the questions in such a way that you have the conclusion in the question.

You should take care to trace any possible preconceived assumptions of your research questions since this will lead you into circular reasoning, and you are more likely to get stuck when writing. If you make assumptions (sometimes you must), make them very explicit from the start and review them critically as you continue working on the thesis. Secondly, research questions are often on such a general level that they are difficult to translate into the kinds of sources and methodologies necessary to answer them. Once you have defined and reviewed your overall research questions, the next step is to proceed and ask yourself how, practically, you would go about trying to answer them. To do this, you would most likely have to pose a number of sub-questions. Write these sub-questions out on paper, in plain language, as simply as possible. After doing so, it will be easier for you to structure your work and decide on which sources to use and what methodologies/theoretical frameworks might be useful for analysing them. Writing sub-questions out is also a good way of revealing and detecting inconsistencies, or gaps, in your own reasoning.

As discussed in Chapter 2, this is an independent research project. Some students will have topics that already have been predefined, e.g. if they are part of a research project, or the topic has been suggested by a researcher or supervisor. However, the formulation of aims and research questions

should be done autonomously. The supervisor will give feedback on your suggestions and act as a sparring partner, but they cannot define the aims or research questions for you. Remember that independence and integrity is factored into grading. Present the supervisor with a good basis for supervising and it is more likely that you will be considered independent. *Do not expect the supervisor to do your job!*

The aim and research questions will define your **choice of sources, theoretical frames, and the methodology of analyses**. When your proposal has been drafted, it is important to keep in mind the following factors:

- Will the project contribute new knowledge? Note that the application of a new methodology or a new theoretical being applied to old data counts as new knowledge.
- How is the project different from previous research in the field? It can be any or a combination of the following: new sources/material/data, new questions on old sources, new frames of interpretation, new comparative perspectives, the introduction of new methodologies to analyse old data.
- What is the value of the project in the wider research field?
- What sources/source materials are suitable for answering your research questions?
- What data, methodologies, theoretical frame/s would be suitable for answering your research questions?

3.3. Organising the writing process

Get started with the writing as soon as possible. The writing process stimulates the thought process and will be stimulating for you as a researcher. Start by making a preliminary disposition – this will work as a skeleton that will organise your text fragments and form the basis for planning your time. Start your writing by simply sketching out the contents of each section. Make sure to sketch all sections of the synopsis from the beginning. This is a good way of testing the topic, the aim, and the questions, as discussed in previous section. Go back and revise if you get stuck.

Let the preliminary disposition guide your work on the text and revise the disposition as the thesis develops. Make a time schedule for the different sections of the text and the tasks required for each section. Build the text gradually, rearrange it and tighten it as you go. Come back to your texts throughout the process and revise it at different stages.

3.3.1. Testing the idea and knowing when to stop

Write in parallel with your empirical study. Do not wait until you feel you have amassed enough reading or enough source material. You will find that the deeper you dig, the deeper you still want to go. The feeling of "having enough" will simply not materialise!

Learning how to prioritise and make judgments on what is relevant (or simply when to stop digging) is part of the learning outcome of writing a thesis. Writing in parallel with your background study or empirical study will help you to demarcate the study and remind you of the purpose of your study. When working with your empirical study or doing your background reading, always think of where you should place your notes within the structure of your thesis or a particular section (work actively, using the disposition as a living document).

While collecting sources, carrying out analyses and doing background reading, you should consider what you are doing right now relates back to the aim of the thesis and the research questions. You may also find that the aims and the research questions need revision in the course of the thesis process, perhaps because of the quality of your sources or because your results did not come out as expected. The revision process is also part of your knowledge process. A thesis project is a

hermeneutic spiral (c.f. Gadamer 1975) of learning. You begin with a pre-understanding of a subject/problem that guides the aims, research questions, and choice of sources etc., but as you actually delve further into your subject, you also build a new understanding. This will make you want to modify your original ideas about what the problem was or where the aim of your project should be directed, order to be relevant. Do not be afraid or troubled by this process, instead, engage in it and see it as part of your working process.

It is always good to do a small pilot study early on in the thesis process. You need to be sure that your sources and methodologies of analyses will work from the start, so that you have time to go back and revise research questions and aims. Make a mini-empirical study in order to assess the sources and figure out whether your original idea is feasible or not.

3.3.1. Structure is the key

Create a clear structure for your thesis from the beginning of your project. Use the format layout as a tool when making your outline (see chapter 4). Sketch the contents of each section with a few sentences, right from the beginning. It is easier for the supervisor to follow your reasoning and give you good advice this way. As you will write theses that range over a wide range of topics, and theses that should also be acceptable in other disciplines, there is no definitive rule when it comes to structure. This means that you have to think through the form of the thesis and there will be many opportunities in the programme when we will discuss this issue. Generally, there are three different forms of theses, the conventional form thesis, a narrative-based thesis and an explorative thesis form, this will be explained further in the academic writing days in autumn.

For a conventional thesis the following sections are expected:

- research aims
- research questions
- theory and method
- research background
- presentation of sources/source material
- analysis
- discussion/conclusion

For other forms, theory and method run as a core throughout the thesis, e.g. theory and method are embedded in your narrative or in the questions you explore. Whatever form you choose the thesis should be balanced between background and empirical study. In other words, the introduction, theory and method, and research background should be balanced against your own independent study (preferable 30/60 and minimum 50/50, no less).

When it comes to chapters that present the background, theory or method, **avoid writing a long review without reflection**. There are many ways to dispose the text internally. If you arrange it chronologically, it risks becoming a simply additive review without reflection. Arranging the text thematically is usually better, since it forces you to analyse the texts/material and to use your own reasoning for the structure of the text. Another way of structuring a text is dialectically; here, you raise certain oppositions in the literature/study and focus the discussion on these oppositions. This usually forces you to synthesise the texts/material even more than the other alternatives, and thus it is well suited for a concluding discussion/conclusion, if not before. In any case, you should make sure to rewrite texts in steps so that you build towards a synthesis. As has been stated here many times, reviews without synthesis are not acceptable in a Master's thesis. It may be better to incorporate the research background in your general discussion or in the theory and method chapter. However, at the same time, you must provide the reader with enough background to follow and assess your argument. There are also choices when structuring the text internally that relate to what you want the reader to remember after reading a section, or where you want the emphasis to be. In academic traditions, it is common to gradually build up an argument and then move in for the final

punch or conclusion of the argument at the end. This is usually how a thesis is structured; unless you are a very skilled writer, this is the most convenient form of writing a thesis. When structuring a text internally, this building up of the argument might not be best suited for some sections. To keep the attention of the reader and emphasise an argument, you can actually begin with the punch and then lay out the argument that led you there. In general, because your thesis topics range over so many different academic traditions, there is no definitive formal requirement when it comes to thesis structure. You are encouraged to experiment, as long as you make sure that you meet the assessment criteria.

Theory and method should be integrated, and choices of method and theory should be consequently executed. Some students prefer to separate theory from method in different chapters. This may be suitable, so long as you do not forget that these chapters must be conversant with each other. Make sure also that there is a balance between what you discuss in the theory and method section, and what you actually do/write in the rest of the thesis.

In some academic traditions, the general idea is that you pose a research question, then analyse the empirical data and results objectively, and then the conclusion from there will simply materialise by itself. When you write a thesis, you will find (maybe to your frustration) that this does not always happen. If you choose this approach, you will find great difficulties in turning the conclusion from a mere description of results to an actual synthesis and analysis. A mere presentation or "catalogue" of the empirical material is not an analysis. Remember that you must make your own independent and autonomous analyses. The theoretical or conceptual frame will help you structure or *frame* your conclusion conceptually. Thus, clarifying this frame for yourself and discussing it with your supervisor from the very beginning will greatly facilitate the writing process.

The discussion/conclusion chapter is where you contextualise the results of your empirical study in relation to research aims, questions and the field of research. You should not bring in new sources or empirical studies at this stage. Make sure to link the discussion with your theory and method section.

3.3.1. Are you stuck?

Sooner or later we all get stuck at some point in the writing process. Do not let this discourage you! Usually, this predicament is not as difficult to fix as one might think. Take your time and look for clues. Maybe you will find the problem at the heart of your research questions, or maybe in the structure of the text itself, or maybe you lack the theoretical frame or conceptual tool necessary to discuss and analyse your results (see 3.3.1.).

Do you feel unsure of where you are going with your text or how you should direct it? This could be an indication of weakly defined research aims and questions. It could also be caused by research questions being formulated in such a way that you end up with circular reasoning or dead ends that are difficult to get back from. Go back, define the aims and research questions more clearly, and revise them if necessary.

Do you keep moving things around, or find that you say the same things in many places, or do you have important bits of texts that do not belong anywhere? This could be an indication of a disposition in need of revision. Try another way, restructure it, and see if the new structure works better. When you have a structure that works, writing will be a lot easier.

Have you finished your analyses and interpretation and feel that you have absolutely no idea what or how to write in your conclusion? Then you probably need a theoretical frame or a conceptual tool to inspire you to write about your results on a more analytical level. If you have already defined this analytical level from the start, but still have difficulties in writing the conclusion, take this as a strong indication that the particular theoretical frame or the chosen conceptual tool does not really work for you.

If you are really stuck with your text, there is a very useful and very simple exercise you can do to help.[6] Give yourself five minutes; take a pen and a piece of paper and answer these three questions:

- What am I writing right now?
- Why am I writing this?
- What is the problem with what I am writing right now?

You might discover that you actually already know what the problem is, and, consequently, that you already know how to solve it.

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[6] This exercise was formulated by Petra Hansson, a PhD candidate in the Department of Pedagogy, Uppsala University.

Layout

Learning how to follow formal instructions in relation to the formatting of texts, referencing the sources, and structuring the content? It is good preparation for publishing research in the future, so take it seriously. Do not let your supervisor spend valuable hours of supervision on correcting and monitoring formalities. Learn the Styles function in Word (or equivalent in other programs), and you can use it as a tool when working with your text.[7]

4.1. What needs to be included?

The first page of the thesis is the title page. Use the template available at LNU website. The title page should contain the title of the thesis, the name of the author, the department and subject area, no. of credits, the term and year, and the name of the supervisor. The more informative your title is, the more likely it is that the people who are likely to quote you will find it. If you want a catchy title, add a sub-title that is more informative.

An abstract should be added after the title page (as shown in this document). The abstract should be short (0.5 pages) and to the point, and it should state the aim(s), sources used, the methodology and the main results. The abstract should be followed by at least five keywords. **The table of contents** should follow on a separate page. If you have numerous illustrations, photos, maps and/or tables, you can add a **list of illustrations and tables** after the abstract. If you want, you can add **acknowledgements**. The **thesis text** follows after the list of illustrations/tables or acknowledge-ments (if you have included one). A **thesis summary** should follow the thesis text. Note that a thesis summary is not the same as an abstract. The summary should comment on all chapters of the thesis and draw out the main points of each (1–2 pages). If you have **an appendix**, it should be placed last. Lengthy descriptions of data, databases, and supplementary material are best placed in appendices. The order of the sections should be as follows:

- title page (see first page for format)
- abstract (see example here)
- keywords (see example here)
- acknowledgement (optional)
- table of contents (automatic when using styles)
- (list of illustrations, tables, and maps are optional! It is only relevant if you have a lot)
- thesis text
- list of references (see section 5.3),
- appendices (lengthy descriptions of data, databases, supplementary material)

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[7] The template for master theses is called "Essay template" and is available on the computers in all computer rooms and at the University Library. You can also download it here:
https://lnu.se/en/library/Writing-and-referencing/thesis-template/

4.2. The layout as a tool for structuring the thesis

It is easiest to use the formatting provided in this document as a layout for your text. Formatting text according to a layout is a good tool for working with text structure. Learn to use the Styles function (if you are using Word) or the equivalent in another program, right from the start. In Word, click on the "change styles" option in the home window and you will see all the styles used in the document (see fig. 1).[8] If you use Styles, you can also easily reformat the text at a later stage if you want to publish it somewhere else. The navigation pane (fig. 2) will also show you the layout of the text. Working with the thesis text in one document is easier, as you are more aware of the outline. A table of contents with pagination will be made automatically when using Styles.[9]
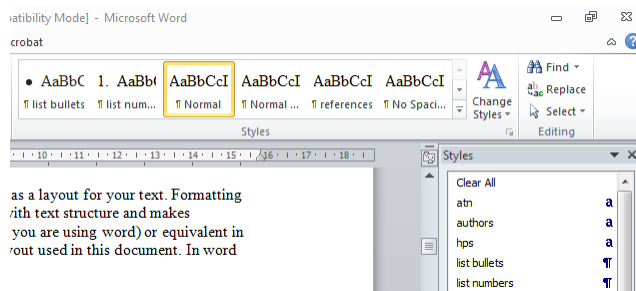

Figure 1. Styles function in Windows. Click on the "change styles" icon on the upper right to open the Styles window and see all the styles in this document, or use the pane to the left of the "change styles" icon (to see only the ones used in the document, choose options from the right corner of the styles pane, to the right, and select "styles in use".
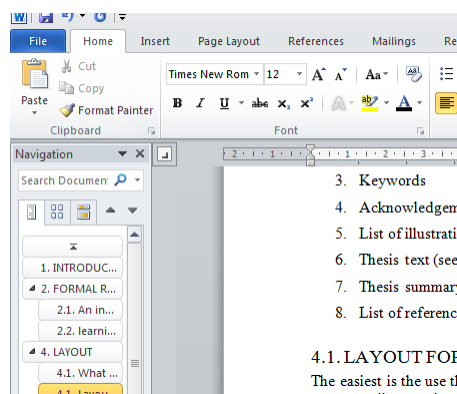

Figure 2. The navigation pane to the right will show you the table of contents while working with the text, and you will be able to quickly navigate the text.

4.3. Styles used

You should follow the layout used in this document. The following styles are used in the text and you can see them if you have opened the Styles pane, as shown in fig. 1:

- Title and title page (see first page for format);
- **Body text**: 12 pt. Times New Roman, single line spacing, 6 pt after paragraph;
- Quote (Use **Block text**): 12 pt. Times New Roman, single line spacing, 6 pt after paragraph. Indentation right and left 0.5 pt.

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[8] The easiest way to use Styles is to simply begin by overwriting the formatted headings and paragraphs in this document. Follow these steps: 1) begin by saving this document under another name, 2) put your marker at the beginning of the text and overwrite it with your planned heading or beginnings of the paragraph texts, 3) make sure you have all types of headings, bullet lists and number lists represented, and also the footnotes and captions. You can, at a later stage, reedit the styles and easily change them if you are publishing your thesis somewhere else. Edit them using the "modify" function in the Styles window.
[9] To make/update table of contents go to the references window, choose "table of contents" to make a new one, or choose the "update table" and the "update entire table" option.

- List bullets (use **List Bullet 2**): 12 pt. Times New Roman, single line spacing. Indentation: left: 0.5 cm, hanging: 0.63 cm.
- List number (use **List Numbers 3**): 12 pt. Times New Roman, single line spacing. Indentation: left 1 cm, hanging 0.63 cm.
- Figure, table, illustration texts (use **Caption**): 10 pt. Times New Roman, italic, single line spacing, 6 pt. before and after paragraph).
- **Footnote text**: 9 pt. Times New Roman, 3 pt. after paragraph.
- **Heading 1**: 18 pt. Times New Roman, 20 pt. before, 84 pt. after. Page break before heading. Do not hyphenate 1.1.
- **Heading 2**: 15 pt. Times New Roman, 30 pt. before, 5 pt. after. Do not hyphenate.
- **Heading 3:** 13 pt. Times New Roman, 20 pt. before, 4 pt. after. Do not hyphenate.

Avoid using more than three classes of headings. Too many levels of headings make the text difficult to follow. When you work with the text you can use numbers before headings (for instance 4., (Heading 1) 4.1. (Heading 2), 4.1.1. (Heading 3) (as shown here). In the final text version use of numbered headings is optional.

Use paragraphs to break up large bodies of text. This will increase the readability of the text. Also try to balance the lengths of the paragraphs with each other, but do not make them too short. In this document, paragraphs are generally short. If you use too many too short paragraphs in a thesis, it will appear as if you are unable to synthesise or link statements together.

4.4. Other formatting standards

There are also other formatting standards that should be used here, which you should learn for the future. Below is the beginning of a list. Please assist in building this list:

- It is up to you which English you want to use. Just make sure to be consistent with spelling and grammar, but be sure to be consistent and not to mix them (eg. -ised, -sation, -sing rather than –ized, -zation, -zing).
- When referring to chapters and figs in your thesis use capitalised letters (see Fig. 1 and Chapter 1).
- Names in English have capitalised letters, like Linnaeus University, European Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, the North American Free Trade Agreement.
- Long hyphen, usually called an 'en dash' –: this should be used when signifying from–to something, i.e. from 640 AD to 800 AD from page 1 to 3, or 20 to 30 m.a.s.l., or Uppsala to Stockholm.
- Double quotation marks "like this" should only be used when using direct quotes. Otherwise use a single quotation mark 'like this'.
- Numbers below 10 should be written out in text form, like two.
- Put a full stop after the abbreviation (Fig. not Fig), and write out the word "table" in full?
- Figures, photos and illustrations are all referred to as fig. and given a sequential number, the same as the tables. Always have a description under figures and tables.
- Table headings are placed above the table.
- Figure caption are placed below the figure.
- No space between numbers and percent: 12%, but insert a space between numbers and units of measurement: 12 m. 12 cm. 12 km.
- Abbreviations: Generally, you should be restrictive when using abbreviations in a thesis text. Use only the most well-known and general abbreviations, and use standardised abbreviations and full stops: i.e.; etc.; m.a.s.l.; cf.
- Foreign language terms (except for personal names and place names) should always be italicized, i.e. *status quo*, *tian xia.*

- In a quote, if you skip sections of a text this should be marked like this […]. Similarly, if you add an explanation to the quote [explaining a word or a phrase] it should be marked as shown with an ellipsis.
- Over 40 words (or 2-3 sentences) should be marked as block text.

Referencing

As soon as you start writing and drafting your thesis, make sure that you are using a **formal referencing system**! There are several referencing styles and each discipline prefers a particular one, for instance MHRA, Harvard, Oxford, Chicago and APA. You can use the one that best suits your discipline for writing your thesis in Colonial and Postcolonial studies but be sure to be consistent. For the sake of exemplification, we use Harvard style in this text. You can use footnotes in the same way as in this document: for example, when adding additional information or side-line information or references. You are expected to add references to your text while you are writing and drafting your thesis. Therefore, you should **set up a routine for referencing from the beginning**. Take it as a rule to routinely add references and format them in your bibliography every time you add a reference. You can also use Zotero, or End-Note or a similar reference management program.[10] Use our excellent library system to find sources and resources! See Appendix 5 for a guide on how to use the library. Rule is you can never have to many references. You also have to think through the quality of references used. Other popular books, social media etc. can be used but you need to make sure to balance use of such non-academic sources with enough academic literature.

5.1. References in the text

Use a formal referencing system as soon as you start writing and drafting your thesis! In the "Author-date" referencing system (also known as "Harvard"), this means that references should be added as parenthesis in the text directly after the statement. You should reference in such a way that it is always clear who says what. A reference to another author should be clearly marked in contrast to your own statement. For instance:

> Svensson (2012) states that...while Karlsson (2011) proffers a contrary opinion. I agree with the latter argument in terms of ...

If you place the reference at the end of the sentence, you should generally put it before the full stop. In general, you should avoid having a long section of information from the same source (remember, no reviews without synthesis!).

If you refer to the same reference in sequence, you can use (idem.) so as not to repeat the reference. References should be made sequentially on the basis of first year of publication, then the name of the author. They should be demarcated by a colon if it is the same author, and a semicolon if it is a new author. If you refer to publications by the same author that are published in different years, you can place them together, as exemplified below:

- (Tainter 1988, 2007, 2012; Crumley 1989; Sörlin 1989, 2000; West 1989; Anderson 1997).

Publications by the same author from the same year should be referenced using a, b, c in the list of references and in the running text, as below:

- (Tainter 1988 a, b, c; Crumley 2007 a, b).

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[10] For more information you can contact the library: https://lnu.se/en/library/Writing-and-referencing/referencing/

Publications by two authors should be referenced with and, publications by more than two authors should be referenced et al., like showed below. Note that in case of more than two authors, the first five authors should always be listed in the list of references:

- (Anderson and Erikson 2007; Anderson et al. 2010).

References to books or reports should include page numbers written as below with a long hyphen, or en dash. (When the hyphen replaces to-from, a en dash should always be used):

- (Anderson and Erikson 2007: 12–13; Anderson et al. 2010: 144–145; Tainter 1988, 1989: 151).

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The rule is that all statements that are not blatantly obvious, considered common knowledge, or are entirely your own argument, should be referenced. Oral information and interviews should be referenced either as follows: (Anna Svensson, personal communication 2014-01-09), or Anna Svensson (interview 2014-01-09). If you are referring to your own results produced within the thesis, you should make a reference to where they can be found in the thesis (see p. 2). Remember that a reader must be able to distinguish between your own thoughts and ideas, and the conclusions of the sources and references you have been inspired by and used.

5.2. Using quotes

Direct quotes should be used sparingly! The exception is if you use written sources as your source material. Do not construct the research background on the basis of direct quotes; use your own voice and reasoning instead. **A text with too many quotes is an author passive text.** If you use a direct quote, it should be marked by using the Block text formatting in the styles panel.
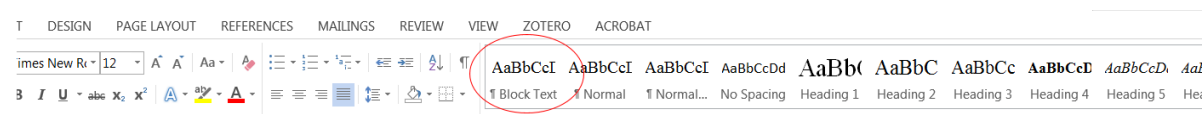
The quote should also be referenced with author, date and page. Short quotes of a single line/a few sentences can be written directly in the text. Longer quotes should be inserted using the quote style (see below). To quote Ekblom (2014: 9):

> Direct quotes should be used sparingly! The exception is if you use written sources as your source material. Do not construct the research background on the basis of direct quotes; use your own voice and reasoning instead.

Use quotation marks to mark the quote " ". A quote within a quote should have single quotation marks: 'quote'. Use single quotation marks to designate 'so to speak' expressions. Quotes must be given correctly and exactly as printed in the original text, even with grammar mistakes or mis-spellings. If you want to mark grammar mistakes or a misspelling in the original quote, you can use [sic.] directly after. If you omit single words or phrases to condense the text or adjust it to your text, you should mark this with an ellipsis […]. But you must not delete text so that you corrupt the original meaning of the quote. Similarly, if you begin or end a quote in the middle of a sentence you mark this with [...]. In this document the first chapter (p. 7), was introduced with a quote. In such cases you can use a footnote for the reference. **Remember that when using a quote, you need to introduce it with a bridging text and also to explain the quote/or contextualise it in your own words.**

5.3. Formatting the list of references

Referencing to primary and secondary sources can be done differently. If referring to an analysed source material (e.g. archive material, webpages, magazine articles) you may use footnotes. Archive sources can be referenced following formatting in history or classical archaeology. Discuss with your supervisor what is most appropriate.

References should be organised first alphabetically and then chronologically, beginning with the oldest reference (i.e. Elenga 1994, 1998, 2000). Co-authored papers with two authors follow alphabetically and then chronologically (i.e. Elenga and Adams 1995; Elenga and Schwartz 1990; Elenga and Wirrman 1989). Co-authored papers with three authors or more are referred to as Elenga *et al.* in the text. In the bibliography/list of references), the first five authors should be stated and followed by et al. Similar to the references with two authors, references should be listed first alphabetically and then chronologically.

Below is a list of examples of references to single, co-authored, and multi-authored journal papers, and also references to books, chapters in edited books, reports and webpage references. Make sure to follow the formatting of these references. When referring to chapters in edited books always refer to the author of the chapter (see the Sunderlin and Pokam 2002 reference below for an example). Note that book titles and journal titles should be in italics and capital letters should be used in titles (see examples below); this format should be used also in the running text. Books and edited books should always have the place of publication and the publisher stated. English book titles and journal names should be capitalised.

Articles in peer-reviewed journals:

Elenga, H., Schwartz, D., Vincens, A. 1994. Pollen evidence of late Quaternary vegetation and inferred climate changes in Congo. *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology* 109: 345–356.

Gbetnkom, D. 2005. Deforestation in Cameroon: immediate causes and consequences. *Environment and Development Economics* 10(4): 557–572.

Sunderlin W.D., Ndoye, O., Bikié H., Laporte, N. Mertens, B., et al. 2000. Economic crisis, small-scale agriculture, and forest cover change in southern Cameroon. *Environmental Conservation* 27 (3): 284–290.

Reports:

FAO, 2005. *Global Forest Resources Assessment*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

FAO, 2014. *Interim Report on Deforestation in Cameroon*. http:// www.fao.org/deforestation/Cameroon. Accessed 2014.01.02.

Monographs:

Fairhead, J., Leach, M. 2003. *Science, Society and Power: Environmental Knowledge and Policy in West Africa and the Caribbean*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Edited books:

Lavachery, P. 1996. Shum laka rockshelter late Holocene deposits: from stone to metal (North Western Cameroon). In: Pwiti, G., Soper, R. (eds) *Aspects of African Archaeology*, 10–20. Harare: University of Zimbabwe publications.

Myers, N. 1996.) Tropical deforestation: Rates and patterns. In: Brown, K. Pearce, D. (eds) *The Causes of Tropical Deforestation*, 27–40. Second Edition. London: University College London.

Sunderlin, W.D., Pokam, J. 2002. Economic crisis and forest cover change in Cameroon: The roles of migration, crop diversification, and gender division of labor. In: Pokam, J. (ed.) *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 581–606. Chicago: The University of Chicago.

Magazine articles/webpages:

If the author of article is named use author name and year and write reference similar to referee journal papers. If the author name is missing use publisher name and year. Always write out publisher. See example below:

Adebambo (2016). Ken Saro-Wiwa: A voice against environmental degradation. The Guardian https://guardian.ng/saturday-magazine/ken-saro-wiwa-a-voice-against-environmental-degredation/. Published 2016.08.13, Accessed 2018.03.23.

When publishing in journals and other series be aware that each journal series has its own format for referencing and of listing references. These are sometimes well specified, and sometimes not. Learning to follow formal instructions when it comes to formatting is part of learning goals when writing a thesis. You can also use End-note or other programs to assist when working with references.

Unpublished archival material and web-based sources

There are also standards as to how to reference archival manuscripts, primary sources such as film, interviews, web-based blogs, images etc., depending on the style of the referencing system.

You will find clear instructions in the style guides manuals. For the Harvard style you find useful information here: https://www.umu.se/bibliotek/soka-skriva-studera/skriva-referenser/harvard-skriva-referenslista/

Supervision

At the beginning of the third term, you will start working with your supervisor. Your supervisor will accompany your independent project until you defend the Master's thesis and meet you regularly for coaching and other support. You supervisor is given the equivalent of 30 hours of supervision (45 credit thesis). **That means your supervision time is a time-limited teaching moment that you have to spend warily and plan wisely, since it includes supervisory meetings, reading and commenting on texts, answering emails, etc**. Typically, your supervisor will make two whole annotated readings of your draft at different stages of your work. Comments from the supervisor primarily concern the academic content of the text and analysis. Although the supervisor might make some grammar and spelling corrections you are responsible of proofreading your work (see the Language and Style section).

Students are encouraged to contact researchers/lectures about supervision and thesis topics as this is also a way of building academic maturity and personal networks. However, you may be assisted in this prosses by the teachers of the Independent project course. The roles of the supervisor/s should be made clear from the outset of the thesis project. For that purpose you will make a work schedule with your supervisor/s. The work schedule works as a contract between you and the supervisor/s but can of course be updated over the course of your thesis work.

6.1. Joining a Research Cluster

As part of the mentorship, you will join the research cluster at the LNUCC that best fits your field of inquiry. There are currently three multidisciplinary clusters: 1. Aesthetics of the Empire, 2. Colonial Connections and 3. Comparisons and Migration, citizenship, and belonging. As part of a cluster, you will be able to participate in the cluster seminars and activities as a regular member. In addition to having a more personal contact with researchers you will gain experience in academic discussion and presentations, adding to your generic scholarly skills. At the end of the third semester, you will have the opportunity to give a short presentation of your ongoing thesis work (10 minutes long) in a cross-cluster seminar.

6.2. Your role

It is important to remember that while the academic staff at LNU can provide good supervision, this is also an independent research exercise where you are the project manager. The supervisors can assist you and help you set up a feasible time plan. **But it is you who is responsible for carrying out the tasks – no one else.** Remember that independence and integrity are factored into the grading of your thesis. The main (and, if applicable, assistant) supervisor will expect you to take account of the following points:

- **Make a time plan** for your thesis work and set dates for tasks and submission deadlines. Remember! Make many small achievable goals that allow you to feel good about yourself and allow the supervisor to follow your progress.
- **Follow deadlines for text submissions**: if you have not got as far as planned, it is OK. Hand in what you have and take the opportunity to specify any potential problems. For instance, delays in analysis of sources may be due to the fact that the goals were set too

high, or a non-working methodology for analysing them was used. Delays in writing are often due simply to a non-working text structure, poorly specified questions, or a lack of a theoretical frame for discussing and analysing results (see 3.3.1.). The more open you are about such problems with your supervisor, the more the supervisor will be able to assist you.

- **Avoid long reviews and near quotes/plagiarism** (see the Ethical Guidelines section): it is difficult for a supervisor to actually supervise such texts, as there is nothing on which to comment.
- **Dare to make your own reflections and conclusions and to be bold**: this will allow your supervisor to really do his or her job properly. The more independent your thinking (but always based on the sources), the better you can be supervised, and the more the supervisor can challenge your thinking.
- Always remember that **this is your learning and knowledge process**: use the supervisor to stimulate that process. Listen carefully to the advice given. Respect that the main and assistant supervisor know the formal requirements of a thesis better than you, but do not allow the supervisor to become the author of the text. Do not lose your integrity as an author or researcher – you must be able to defend and explain the contents of your thesis during the defence.

If the main supervisor determines that your study is very likely not going to meet the requirements, or that the topic/methodology or sources chosen are not enough or are too complex for a thesis, you will be informed and should respond accordingly. To allow the supervisor to be able to make a good assessment of the feasibility of the thesis, it is however required that he or she gets enough texts to read at an early stage.

Some authors identify very personally with what they have written and have difficulty handling comments and views from others on their text. But when it comes to thesis writing it is important that you, as a writer, really listen to comments from supervisor/s and colleagues. Always have an open attitude to advice on changes and improvements to the text. If the supervisor/s and student-colleagues who know you do not sufficiently understand a particular argument or phrasing, other readers are likely to have the same problem.

The supervisor should inform you when the thesis is ready for the defence. This does not mean *per se* that the thesis will receive a passing grade. Use this guide and look through the assessment criteria in Appendix 2 so that you are sure you have fulfilled the requirements. It is important to emphasise that it is always you, and you alone, who is responsible for the content of the thesis.

Ethical guidelines

An ethical treatment of sources, texts and possible study objects is the foundation for all research. It is always the responsibility of the individual researcher to ensure that their research is of good quality and follows the proper procedure. It is you as an individual researcher who is responsible for thesis content. It is not the role of the supervisor to monitor the moral use of sources and references.

7.1. Scientific misconduct

The State Research Council (VR), the largest Swedish research funding body, has compiled guidelines and information on ethical guidelines for research, which are applicable also for you: see http://www.codex.vr.se/. Scientific misconduct can include any of the following forms of deliberate misrepresentation:

- fabrication of data, i.e. the researcher manipulates the data to achieve a specific result;
- theft or plagiarism of data from other researchers;
- misrepresentation of research: this includes the misuse of methodology, the omission of certain data because they do not conform to expected or desired results, and the deliberate misrepresentation of sources.

While writing, you must **make a clear separation between sources, source material, theoretical frameworks, and conclusions and arguments taken from another researcher**. This is best done using direct references to the sources. When material/arguments are used very frequently (for instance a dataset from another author), or if you use a theoretical frame or methodology that defines your treatment of data/sources or the whole scope of the thesis, this should be clearly stated in the introduction or theory/methods section. Similarly, if your conclusion builds very strongly on another author's interpretation, this should be clearly written. You can refer to and draw on work you have completed previously; in this case, you should refer to your own work the same way as you would another author.

7.1.1. Many plagiarise without knowing!

When a thesis is submitted, it is the student researchers themselves who ensure that the thesis is the result of independent research. Plagiarism is not allowed, and written assignments are always automatically tested against plagiarism using a search engine function in the Student Portal (*Studentportalen*).

As this is a broad international programme, we are aware that students come from many different academic fields and have been fostered in different academic traditions. In an authoritative academic tradition, students are often taught that it is correct to quote authorities as closely as possible. In other traditions, students have been trained to be as objective as possible and may again prefer to quote sources closely, avoiding personal reflections with the intention of not misconstruing meaning. If you are trained in such traditions, the difference between quoting, referencing/reviewing authors, and actual plagiarism can be difficult to make.

As a guideline, also when writing assignments at MA level, remember that this is your own independent study/reflection. The word limit of a Master's thesis does not allow you to make long,

extensive reviews of what other researchers have argued. An examiner or reader will be more interested in your own conclusions and arguments and how you contextualise your research in relation to other researchers; it is this ability that it is the very basis of the assessment of your thesis. Your own conclusions and arguments should be the running thread in the thesis text.

If you still feel unsure about the difference between referencing, quoting, and plagiarism, another guideline is to avoid copying text altogether – even if it is just a matter of single sentences. Cutting and pasting text, jumbling sentences, and exchanging a few synonyms here and there may still count as plagiarism. Everything you write should be your own words. If you do want to use the wording of another author, this should be inserted as a direct quote. This should then be clearly marked as a quote by using the quotation styles if longer than two sentences, or by using quotation marks (if less than two sentences), and always using proper referencing. Below, a practical example is given:

Avoid copied statements: Ekblom (2014) argues that it is your own conclusions and arguments that should be the running thread in the thesis text.

Try to write more independently: My line of reasoning will be the running thread which structures this text (see similar discussion in Ekblom 2014)

The first example is actually a direct quote and should be clearly marked as such with quotation marks and proper referencing: As stated by Ekblom (2014: 3): "it is your own conclusions and arguments that should be the running thread in the thesis text".

For more instructions on how to use quotes, see section 5.2. If you use photos, pictures, drawings, maps or other similar material from other authors, the source should be referenced. Also note that such material can be protected by copyright (see more on this in the chapter 9.4.

7.1.2. Working with interviews/informants

Some of you will work with informants through interviews and/or use of the oral tradition, action research or participatory methods. There are some ethical guidelines that are particular to this type of work:

- Informants must be well informed of the purpose of the study: i.e. they must be informed of the overall aims of your project.
- Informants must be told how the study/interview will be used: i.e. they must be informed that you will publish in the thesis, and how you will do it. If you plan to publish in a journal paper, the informants should also be informed.
- The finished product should be submitted to the informant before publication.
- The informant must give active consent: i.e. record agreement on tape or on paper.
- The informant must be able to decline: i.e. a no is a no.
- The informant must decide if he/she wants to be anonymous or not: i.e. record an agreement.
- The informant has the right to read the transcript or listen to the recording after the interview.
- The identity of the informant must be protected if he/she asks for anonymity.
- In case of sensitive information, the student must make a careful consideration of whether or not the informant's identity should be protected, even if the informant has not demanded anonymity. Discuss this with you supervisor/s;

If you are planning to conduct interviews, to use informants or handle information regarding living people, we encourage you to **contact the Ethical Advisory Board in South East Sweden** at the **university to get assistance in the ethical assessment of your project before starting your study**.

7.2. Language and style

A relevant question for any writer is who the potential reader of the text might be, i.e. to which audience should I direct myself as a writer? The answer to that question will obviously direct the language and structure of the text. In this case, you write for your teachers, fellow students, and professionals working in that particular "field" of study. As Postcolonial studies is such a broad subject, and you all come from different "mother disciplines", we will be accommodating when it comes to style and structure. Ideally, your thesis should be accepted both as a Master's thesis within your respective mother disciplines but at the same time fulfil the requirements specified here.

When you write, you should assume that the reader has a basic knowledge of the discipline and the field you are discussing, but you should also respect that the audience most likely to read your thesis consists of your fellow student colleagues who may not have an in-depth knowledge of your field. In general, it is always good to avoid too much jargon, abbreviations, and internal disciplinary references and concepts, as they allow you as a writer to "hide behind the concepts".

When writing a thesis, you can allow yourself to have a certain literary style, and some thesis topics may require a very personal literary style. But, at the same time, a thesis must comply with the formal requirements of a thesis in humanities; these can be summed up as Clarity, Stringency and Transparency.

8. Quality of Writing

8.1. Clarity

Clarity and simplicity are good ideals. A high theoretical level does not necessarily mean that the language must be difficult to read, but quite the opposite. Your language should strive for clarity of reasoning. Avoid vague terms that cannot be specified or may be easily misunderstood. Colloquial expressions may have many different meanings or are unspecified, and thus they should be avoided. Avoid vague expressions like "it seems to be", "my feeling is that", "I have a sense that", "in my opinion", "one would argue", etc. Here, you will argue a case, supported by an analysis of sources and a well-structured argument. Do not denigrate yourself or the value of your conclusions.

If you are not sure what to say or how to interpret something, do not try and hide through vagueness. In the same vein, do not hide behind concepts, jargon, or phraseology. Dare to write out what you mean in order to follow your reasoning through; do not leave it up to the reader to guess what you might mean.

In scientific prose, the basic rule is that all sentences must be complete. That is, they must contain both a noun (e.g. someone/thing), a verb (that does something) and an object (a noun governed by a verb or a preposition). Avoid long and complicated sentence that may confuse the reader. Avoid building sentences in the passive sense. Too many sentences in the passive sense one after the other means that the reader will be lost completely. For instance, compare the following two sentences:

> On the basis of my analysis of the sources, a number of conclusions can be drawn, and these in turn form the basis of the argument that…

With

> My argument is based on an analysis of the sources and the conclusions that I drew from them.

Try to write direct sentences, like the second sentence exemplified above.

8.2. Stringency

In academia, your choice of sources and your treatment of them should be stringent in relation to the purpose and research questions of your thesis. In humanities, your choice of methods should also be stringent within your theoretical frame. This stringency should also be reflected in the language, both in the use of terminology, the phraseology, and the language structure. In natural sciences, there is a focus on repeatability, i.e. if another researcher approaches the same question with the same sources and methodologies would they come to the same conclusion. This would perhaps not be possible in humanities, but stringency is still required when it comes to the treatment of sources – for instance, in using a similar method to analyse different sources. One can also very actively try out different methods to analyse similar sources, but the rationale should be well explained, and in such cases trying out different methodologies should be part of the research questions. Your conclusions should also be a logical argument that can be supported by your sources. This does not mean that other researchers would draw the same conclusions on the basis of your material, but that the material/sources, method, analysis and conclusion are presented so that the reader can follow your reasoning and assess whether your conclusion is sound. That is, a reader should be able to disagree with your conclusion on the basis of his/her interpretation of the data and analysis but still find that you have built a good argument.

8.2. Transparency

In the humanities, you are expected to make clear your own choices of sources, methodologies and theoretical frames, in order to make clear the basic pre-understanding you have of a topic when it comes to defining a thesis topic or research question. You should also make clear how you have treated the sources, how you have interpreted them, and how your interpretation might direct your general conclusions in a certain way. In addition, you are expected to reflect on your own knowledge process in the course of the thesis, which in turn introduces reflexivity on knowledge. This is what is define as transparency, and is perhaps a quality of research that defines the humanities, in contrast to other disciplines.

8.3. Ask someone else to read your text

Always ask a fellow student to read your texts and create reading groups. You can learn a lot from reading and reviewing other people's texts. Read the text out loud to yourself. If you know that you have difficulties expressing yourself in writing and your language needs improvement, the university provides specialist support through the University Library (UB) Academic Support Centre or *språkverkstaden*. Take this opportunity and contact them if you are experiencing problems writing, presenting, or studying. **If you want additional support, contact the program co-ordinator.**

9. Assessment and publication

9.1. Thesis defence

The thesis defence is part of your thesis project. The defence is important as it allows you to raise and explain potential problems or controversial issues with your thesis that might otherwise risk being read as shortcomings. After working intensively on a thesis for a whole year, most students really enjoy debating the thesis thoroughly – this is usually a festive occasion!

The course coordinator schedules the defence when the main supervisor has indicated that your thesis is ready. The course coordinator also appoints an opponent amongst students of the same year. The actual defence takes place in a public thesis seminar where two or three theses are normally presented. The examination of a thesis is expected to last 60 minutes and is structured as follows: first, the examiner introduces the seminar and asks you (the defendant) if you want to add something to the summary or if something important was left out. The larger part of the seminar is devoted to the examination and discussion of the content of the thesis, by the opponent (ca. 20 minutes). A guide to the opponent is given in Appendix 3. Thereafter you get the opportunity to answer or commenting on the opponent's observations. In this part your ability to listen, weight and discuss is evaluated. Finally, the floor is opened up for questions from other participants in the seminar and the examiner, who are expected to contribute actively.

1. Examiner = chair of the seminar "introduces the seminar", i.e. a summary of the thesis (7 min?)
2. Defendant confirms/corrects/adds to the summary (3 min?)
3. Opponent's discussion (20 min)
4. Defendant replies (10 min?)
5. General discussion opened by the examiner and questions from the floor (20 min?)

The chair (usually the examiner) is responsible for ensuring that the seminar is conducted in a collegial and constructive atmosphere. The respondent will be informed after the defence by the examiner if changes to the thesis are necessary, or of it needs to be supplemented before it can be approved.

9.2. Grading and assessment

After the oral examination seminar, an examinator will grade your thesis and an additional examinator may also be consulted. The thesis can be graded A-F. The programme director then informs you of the grade. Note that the submitted thesis at the time of the oral examination seminar forms the basis of grading. If your thesis was graded with a B, you cannot rise to an A, even if you revise the text. Note that the changes and additions suggested by the examiner have to be made   it is the published and revised text that is most important for your future carrier, so do make sure to revise the thesis on the basis of the comments you receive at the thesis defence.

A thesis is graded A only if it has qualities that are considered extraordinary. If the thesis is not accepted (F) after the thesis defence, you must contact your supervisor and discuss the necessary

revisions of the thesis. Schedule your continued work according to the comments you have received in the oral examination seminar. If you were informed after the oral examination seminar of necessary improvements by the examiner, these must be amended before you can be passed and before you can register your thesis in DiVA.

9.3. Activation and publishing

Your thesis credits will only be registered once you have uploaded the thesis in PDF format in DiVA. Once your thesis has been graded and appropriately revised you will be notified by the examiner to proceed to register the bibliographic data of your thesis in DiVA. This is the common search and open digital archive of research publications (http://uu.diva- portal.org/). This search engine and archive is used by several universities in Sweden and Norway, and it is a reliable archive. You can use the DiVA checklist for students to be sure you submit all the needed information (https://ub.lnu.se/diva/checklista/publicering_eng.html). It is mandatory for all thesis students on our Master's programme to register the bibliographic data of their thesis in DiVA before their credits are reported in Ladok. You can decide whether to make your work searchable and public on the web or to archive it during the uploading process. If you decide to make your thesis public you will be asked to sign a publication agreement confirming that you agree to the terms of publication. Instructions for how to proceed are given in DiVA. Note that if the paper is not submitted in full text, it will not be searchable in the large DiVA or Libris *uppsatssök* (Swedish national library thesis database). We encourage all our students to make their work publicly available. Also note that all approved Master's theses are public records under the Freedom of Press Act.

9.4. Publication of images

If you use photos, illustrations, or artwork from other works in your thesis, these must be approved for publication by the copyright owner. The basic rule for artwork is that it is always copyrighted, unless the artist has been deceased for over 70 years. If you have been given permission to publish an artwork by the copyright owner, you should name the copyright owner and write out in the text that you have been given permission by the copyright owner to reproduce it. Copyright rules are different in different countries, and in your thesis, you must comply with the Swedish regulations. If you want to know more about the rules for publication of artwork, the Visual Arts Copyright Society in Sweden (BUS) provides good information: (http://www.bus.se/). It is possible to find a lot of visual material freely available on the Web in Wikipedia commons: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Huvudsida.

9.5. Taking out your degree

Before the defence, make sure that all your credits have been reported and double-check that you have enough credits to take out your degree. You have to take out your degree through our degree unit. You apply for the degree using the following link: https://lnu.se/en/student/during-your-studies/degree/

Here you will be given detailed instructions on the process. Note that it can take several months before your application is processed. In the meantime, the programme director will write you a provisional certificate stating that you have completed the programme.

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Knutsson, K. 2011. Handledning och riktlinjer för uppsatsskrivning: råd och anvisningar för masteruppsatser och C-uppsatser vid Institutionen för arkeologi och antik historia, avdelning Arkeologi. Unpublished. Uppsala, Institutionen för arkeologi och antik historia.

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Appendices

1. Time schedule

The students of the Master's programme in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies have very different thesis topics, and some will write their theses fulltime or part-time; thus, your time plan will vary depending on your chosen topic and study choices. Discuss time planning with your supervisor/s and set up realistic achievable deadlines. Below is an example of a time plan that would ensure you finish your thesis on time.

1st term (Ht 1)		Coursework Thinking about the thesis topic, discussing it with colleagues and writing a full Pro Memoria (PM) / thesis project
2nd term (VT 1)	Feb.	Thinking about the thesis topic, intensively discussing it with supervisors
	March	Preliminary definition of aims and research questions, shared for feedback Prel. identification of sources/material (and frames) Academic writing workshop March – specifying topics and questions (write up draft 1: "project plan")
	April-May	Feasibility study (e.g. mini-study)
	June	Start source-material collection and test analyses to test the topic
	July	Take a holiday
3rd term (Ht 2)	August	Continue source-material analyses
	Sept.	Presentation of thesis topic to colleagues
	Oct.	Cont. source-material analyses
	Nov.	Cont. source-material analyses (e.g. complementary study)
	Dec.	Summarise results General write up. Present your thesis for 1st year students reviews and Concurrences seminary
	Jan.	
4th term (Vt 2)	Feb.	Write up of analysis and theoretical framework Methodology and analyses, end of March Academic writing workshop, crafting the text: bridges, intros and narrative
	March	
	April	Mock defence, revision of thesis, reading groups Final draft, revision, revision, revision…
	May	**Submission of thesis ca. second week of May**
	June	Revision of thesis after defences **Examination seminaries – 1st and 2nd week of June**

Table 1. Time plan for the Master's thesis (Vt = spring term, Ht=autumn term)

2. Criteria for assessment

The criteria for assessment and grading of the thesis are similar to the questions raised in the thesis defence. It is a good idea to look at this list when writing the thesis, and before submission, in order to make sure that these points are addressed in your thesis.[11] If not, you will be informed after the thesis defence and required to complement the thesis. For Pass with Honours (A), the most important assessment criteria relate to thesis quality (criteria 20–22), which are the criteria given most weight in the assessment. For Pass with Honours, the teachers' collegium should consider the thesis to be of extraordinary quality. Independence and integrity are assessed by the supervisor/s (criteria 16–21).

The following aspects will be evaluated following the general grading, with not sufficient performance = F, sufficient = E-C, extraordinary= A-B):

Grade	Criteria
A	Outstanding performance without errors
B	Above the average standard but with minor errors
C	Generally sound work with some errors
D	Fair but with significant shortcomings
E	Performance meets the minimum criteria
Fx	Fail – some more work required before the credit can be awarded
F	Fail – considerable further work is required

Problem formulation Are the purposes and aims well defined and clear?

1. Are the research questions well defined and clear?
2. How does the choice of research questions balance the purpose and aims of the thesis?

Research context:

3. Does the author explain the relevance of the thesis subject in relation to the research field?
4. Has the author sufficiently covered the relevant research field?
5. Are relevant terms and concepts explained and contextualised?
6. Is the research context given in a synthesised manner (does the author demonstrate an understanding of the research field)?

Theory and method:

7. Is the author able to justify the choices made when it comes to theoretical frame/s and methodologies?
8. Does the author display a sufficiently source-critical approach to sources used and choices of method and theory of analyses?

Structure:

9. Is the thesis sufficiently well structured?
10. Is there a balance between research background, empirical analyses and synthesis?

Structure and time:

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[11] These criteria have been modified for the Global Environmental History programme on the basis of criteria presented in Knutsson (2011), formulated by Mats Cullhed, and also the grading criteria of Department of History, as defined by Karin Ågren. They have also been revised and commented on by the programme council and teachers' collegium.

11. Does the thesis follow formal requirements?
12. Is the language of the thesis readable enough to convey the argument?
13. Weighing the quality and ambition of the empirical study and the text overall, how well is the thesis executed considering the number of credits and the allocated time?

Implementation and conclusions:

14. Are the conclusions supported by the empirical data, and/or does the author make a convincing and sound argument on the basis of the analyses?

Quality:

15. Overall quality of the thesis (all criteria 1–15 must be fulfilled).
16. Are the choices of theoretical frame/s and methodologies applied consistently in the thesis?
17. Is the structure of the thesis appropriate for the research aim and field?
18. Is there a balance between the research aims and questions, and the conclusion (i.e. does the author deliver what is promised at the beginning)?
19. To what degree does the author lay out an autonomous argument and conclusion (i.e. how independent is the conclusion)?
20. To what degree does the author manage to contribute new knowledge and a new independent conceptual approach to analysis and interpretation (i.e. how original is the conclusion, the treatment of the sources and the analysis)?

Independence and integrity: assessed by the supervisor/s:

21. How independent has the student been during the writing process?
22. How responsive has the student been to supervision (considering the balance between integrity and listening to advice)?
23. How has the student managed to balance time management against scope and empirical studies?
24. How has the student managed the empirical data/sources?

Thesis defence and opposition assessed by the attending supervisor/s, and chair:

25. How did the student manage to respond to critical points raised in the thesis?
26. How did the student carry out the opposition?

Learning outcomes and their relation to grading

Grading is related to the learning outcomes. Biggs and Collins (1982) have presented a taxonomy of the structure of observed learning outcome (SOLO), which is used here in modified form (Table 1). The taxonomy is based on differences in the depth of learning and the ability to synthesise, contextualise and analyse the research topic. The learning outcomes of a Master's degree are placed on the highest extended abstract level in the SOLO taxonomy (see section 2.2.). In order to receive the grade Pass, the thesis should be shown to present new knowledge either by presenting new data or by analysing/conceptualising data in a new way. The student must also show that she/he is able to synthesise information and contextualise research in relation to the research field, sources and theory. The student must also be able to assess the value and contribution of his/her research and formulate a general independent conclusion and analysis. For the grade Pass with Honours, the student must fulfil the requirements above, but also show the ability to independently innovate/generate an original conceptual approach to a subject on a high level of abstraction.

Learning	Definition	Keywords	Grade
Pre-structural	The student has not really understood the task and uses too simple a way of going about it.		F
Uni-structural/ Multi-structural	The student focuses on a review that is dependent and additive. The student shows inability/ability to contextualise research in relation to the research field or the sources.	identify, name, list, account for, combine, describe, enumerate	F
Relational	The student is able to synthesise information and contextualise research in relation to the research field or the sources to some extent, but they are unable to contextualise research on a more theoretical level	apply, argue, compare, contrast, criticise, explain cause, relate	F
Relational/ Extended abstract	The student is able to synthesise information and contextualise research in relation to the research field, sources and theory. He/she is also able to evaluate the value/contribution of individual research and to abstract the conclusion into a general independent conclusion and analysis.	all of the above, as well as analyse, evaluate, reflect, hypothesis, theorise	C, D, E
Extended abstract	The student is able to synthesise, contextualise, evaluate and analyse the topic to a high level of abstraction, and they are able to independently innovate/generate new knowledge and/or conceptual understanding of a subject.	all of the above, as well as create, innovate, create, formulate, abstract, theorise on a meta-level	A, B

Table 3. The learning outcomes of a Master's degree lie at the highest level in the SOLO taxonomy, as shown here.

Reference

Biggs, J.B., Collis, K. 1982. Evaluating the Quality of Learning: the SOLO taxonomy. New York, Academic Press.

Grade	General	Criteria		
		Use of sources and treatment of empirical data	Reasoning, argumentation and analyses	Structure and formalities
VG	Independent and innovative approach to the research field	Sources and data have been scrutinised and very carefully selected	Independent and original argumentation and reasoning	The thesis is well structured and excellently presented
	Use of new sources, conceptual and theoretical frames that have not been tried in the research field	Relevant source criticism in the use of empirical data and sources	Analyses and interpretation of sources is consequent with the theoretical and methodological frame.	The rules of formal scientific writing have been carefully observed
	Original conceptual and theoretical framing of the study in a unique way.	Sources and empirical data are treated in an adequate, stringent and transparent way	Analysis, results and interpretation is discussed in an active dialogue with previous relevant research	Formal requirements have been carefully observed
	Good background knowledge of relevant research context demonstrated in the formulation of the research aims and questions and choice of theoretical frame and method.	Transparent and relevant correlation between different sources	Source-critical problems are discussed and taken into account in interpretation and analyses	The language has been carefully revised
	The research aims and problems are clearly formulated	Theory and method permeates the choice of sources and methodology	Terms and concepts fundamental to the study are well defined and used consistently	Few errors in grammar and formalities
	Theory and method permeates the thesis in the choice of sources, method of analyses, and frame of interpretation.			
G	New knowledge or new approaches to a research field	Sources and data have been well selected	Independent argumentation and reasoning	The thesis is well structured
	Good background knowledge of relevant research context	Relevant source criticism in the use of data and sources	Analysis, results and interpretation is discussed in an active dialogue with previous relevant research	The language has been carefully revised
	The research aims and problems are clearly formulated.	Sources are treated in an adequate, stringent and transparent way	Source critical problems are discussed and taken into account in interpretation and analyses	Good adherence to formal requirements
	Method and theory is explained and argued in relation to the research field and previous research.	Transparent and relevant correlation between different sources	Terms and concepts fundamental to the study are well defined and used consistently	Good adherence to formalities of scientific writing
	Stringent use of method/s and theoretical frames.			Few errors in grammar and formalities

The table of Appendix 2 is based on the Swedish grading system. Translated to the international grading system VG equates A and B, G = C, D, E, and U = F.

U			
Lack of background knowledge Lack of research context The research problem is not clearly defined The study lacks relevance for the research field and/or is primarily empirically based. Problem formulation, analysis and interpretation makes no reference to any theoretical frames Appropriate method/methods are lacking Lack of independence problem formulation, analysis and interpretation The thesis is descriptive	Irrelevant and/or improper use of sources Too few sources No discussion on source critical studies at all Source critical problems are not addressed in the analysis of interpretation Problem formulation, analysis and interpretation do not sufficiently address relevant research in the field	Different interpretations and perspectives are not discussed There is no dialogue between relevant research and analysis and research results. Terms central to the study are not sufficiently explained defined or problematised Terms and concepts are not used in a stringent manner.	The formalities of scientific writing are not observed Poor language and many grammar mistakes Lack of adherence to formal requirements

3. Pre-submission checklist

When the text is ready and your supervisor/s has informed you that the thesis is ready for submission, ask a student colleague to read the text focusing on the language and formalities. Follow this checklist to make sure everything is ready:

- Double check the information on the title page.
- Double check that everything that should be there is present – keywords, abstract page, list of references, appendices.
- Double check that figures, maps, tables are referred to in the text and that numbers correspond correctly.
- Double check that figures, maps and tables all have fig. and table captions.
- Double check that headings are correctly numbered and the right size.
- Double check page breaks and make sure that they do not fall in the middle of tables or figures, etc. (If a heading falls at the bottom of the page, it may be better to move it to the next).
- Double check that new paragraphs on a page, after a table/heading/bullet list, etc. are not indented.
- Double check that other paragraphs are indented.
- Delete all unnecessary extra blanks (the easiest way to do this is to do a search and replace of two blanks with one).
- Double check that quotes which are more than three sentences long are formatted using the Quotes style. Double check the use of simple quotation marks to designate 'so to speak' expressions.
- Double check that quotes of less than two sentences, which are included in the text, have quotation marks and are correctly formatted.
- Delete any hyperlinks.
- Double check that you have formatted references in the text correctly.
- Doublecheck American/English spelling and make sure its consequent.
- Double check that non-English words (except for names) are in italics and written correctly.

Double check that you have used long hyphens correctly:
- in all cases when signifying to−from,
- in cases of inserted subordinate clauses (i.e. I prefer – if you allow – to …).

Double check that you have used short hyphens correctly:
- in double names (e.g.: Ann-Marie, Andersson-Bergström).

Double check that book titles and journal titles have capital letters:
- in the text,
- in footnotes,
- in the reference list.

Double check the reference list and that
- all reference in the text are listed in the list of references,
- all references in the list of references are used in the texts,
- the reference list is formatted correctly and all information is there.

Double check that all footnotes have a full stop and also the references, figure and table texts.

Lastly
- Double check that hyphens in hyphenations fall correctly (as the text is now formatted, word does this automatically and not always in the logical place).
- Update the list of contents.
- Double check that list of illustrations has correct page numbers.

After the defence

After the thesis defence, make sure to incorporate any relevant suggested changes in the text, to make the additions and corrections made by the examiner, and correct any grammatical or formatting errors. Be aware that the final and corrected version of the thesis has to be sent to the examiner. Only after the last version of the thesis is approved by the examiner you may go ahead and register the bibliographic data and abstract in DiVA.

4. Thesis defence questions for opponents

The list below is meant to serve as an aid when preparing an opposition and for participation in a thesis defence seminar. The questions that are raised in the thesis defence correlate with the criteria of assessment presented in Appendix 2. The idea of a thesis defence is that the opponent and seminar participants should raise any potential issues or problems with the thesis at the seminar, so that the student is able to explain and defend what may otherwise appear as shortcomings or inconsistencies. The defence is taken into account when the thesis is graded. A thesis defence where the opponent does not take the task seriously means that the defendant will not be able to explain any shortcomings or inconsistencies. Thus, a poorly planned opposition might make it impossible for the defendant to improve his/her grade or the thesis as a whole.

As an opponent, the critique you give should be constructive, you should pick up on the strengths on the thesis and not only the weakness, and you are also expected to make suggestions as to how the weaknesses could be amended. Often there are strengths that do not come out properly and could be better highlighted.

Problem formulation

- Is the overall purpose and aims of the thesis well defined and clear?
- Are the research questions well defined and clear?
- How does the choice of research questions balance the purpose and aims of the thesis?
- Are there any assumptions made in the research questions that may have affected the outcome of the thesis and should have been made clear from the beginning?

Research context

- Does the author manage to explain the relevance of the thesis subject in relation to the research field?
- Do you feel that the author has given a just representation of the relevant research field?
- Are you as a reader given the necessary background to be able to follow the argument in the thesis and assess the relevance of interpretation and conclusions?
- Is the author able to explain and contextualise key terms and concepts relevant to the thesis topic?
- Is the research context given in a synthesised manner, and does it convince you that the author has a good understanding of the field?

Theory and method

- Does the author clearly explain the choices made when it comes to theoretical frame/s and methodologies?
- Does the author convince you that these choices are justified in relation to the research field and sources used?
- Is the method of analysis and the selection of source material sufficiently explained?
- Does the author display a sufficiently source-critical approach to the sources used and the choices of method and theory of analyses?

Structure

- Is the structure of the thesis appropriate for the research aim and field?
- Does the structure of the thesis follow a clear line of thought, or could improvements make it clearer?
- Is there a balance between research background, empirical analyses and synthesis?

Structure and time

- Does the thesis follow formal requirements?
- Is the language of the thesis easy to follow, or can you suggest improvements?
- Weighing up the quality and ambition of the empirical study and the text overall, how well is the thesis executed considering the number of credits and the allocated time?

Implementation and conclusions

- Is there a balance between the research aims and questions, and the conclusion (i.e. does the author deliver what is promised at the beginning)?
- Are the choices of theoretical frame/s and methodologies applied consistently in the thesis?
- Are the conclusions supported by the empirical data, and/or does the author make a convincing and sound argument on the basis of the analyses?
- To what degree does the author lay out an autonomous argument and conclusion (i.e. how independent is the conclusion)?
- To what degree does the author manage to contribute new knowledge, and in what way (i.e. how original is the conclusion)?
- After reading the thesis, what do you as a reader define as the main contribution of the thesis?
- Is the relevance, potential and originality of the thesis well presented, or could the thesis be presented differently to make these aspects clearer to the reader?

5. How to find books via the UB system

The best way to search for books is via http://libris.kb.se/

This is joint system for all Swedish university libraries. To see if the book is in Linnaeus University choose "southern Sweden" and see if it is listed. Then you can click "Linnaeus University", and it gives you information in which UB library and on what shelf you can find the book. Many books are now available as online books follow instructions to access the e-book. If it is only available at other universities, you can borrow it through the libris system. You can also suggest that the library purchase the book.

How to access journals via the UB system

UB has agreements with many (most) of the publication houses that owns the academic journals and through the UB system you can access most journal papers.

1. Log in to studentportalen and keep it open as a window (doing this the system will recognise that you are authorised to read papers as you are logged in)
2. Go to the link https://lnu-se-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/search?vid=primo-custom-lnu
3. Search the journal in question
4. You get a number of options the Taylor and Francis link shows you that you have open access to papers via the LNU page (see example below). So, follow the link and then search for the year, issue, number in question.