

Regulation name	Rules for the assignment, preparation, submission, archiving and publication of bachelor and diploma theses at the Czech University of Life Sciences		
Regulation type	Rector's regulation		
Regulation serial number	5/2019	Effective from	24 January 2024
		Effective until	[Effective until]
As amended by Amendments	6/2023; 2/2024		
Concise description	This regulation addresses issues regarding thesis supervisors and consultants, the process of thesis assignment, preparation and submission. The regulation further specifies methods of checking content conformity, preparation of the supervisor's and external examiner's reviews and thesis defence.		
Expert guarantor	SO – Vice-Rector for Education		
Approved by	Irrelevant	Date	[Date of approval]
Issued by	prof. Ing. Petr Sklenička, CSc., Rector	Date	24 January 2024

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Rector's Directive

No. 5/2019

Rules for the assignment, preparation, submission, archiving and publication of bachelor and diploma theses at the Czech University of Life Sciences

Article 1

Introductory provisions

- (1) The purpose of this Directive is to define rules for the assignment, preparation, submission, archiving and publication of bachelor and diploma theses (hereinafter as the “theses”) at the Czech University of Life Sciences (hereinafter as the “ČZU”), its faculties and university institute.
- (2) The term “faculty”, wherever used in this Directive, is understood to include the university institute, and the term “Dean” or “Dean of the faculty” used in this Directive shall also mean the Director of the university institute, and all other provisions apply to the university institute accordingly.

Article 2

Thesis supervisor and consultant

- (1) Thesis supervisors come from among the academic staff of the relevant faculty where the student preparing his/her thesis is enrolled for study.
- (2) In exceptional and justified cases, external experts not employed at the ČZU may also act as thesis supervisors. In such cases, the thesis supervision is generally addressed in contracts between the ČZU and the employer of the external expert (e.g. an institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic). Thesis external supervisors are appointed by the Dean, who approves the thesis assignment in the ČZU information system.
- (3) A student may prepare his/her thesis at a faculty other than the faculty at which that student is enrolled for study subject to consent of the Dean of the faculty where the student is enrolled for study.
- (4) Only an academic staff member (or an external expert as per paragraph 2 of this Article) holding a scientific degree or the academic degree “doctor” may act as a thesis supervisor, but exceptions may be granted by the Dean where so justified.
- (5) One academic staff member may supervise no more than 12 theses (bachelor and diploma theses in total), the defence of which is scheduled within one academic year. For study programmes with the economic difficulty coefficient lower than 1.5, the above number may reach up to 18 theses at most. In particular cases, the Dean may allow a higher number of theses supervised by one academic staff member.

- (6) In addition to a thesis supervisor, an expert consultant may be appointed for the student to be able to consult professional essentials of his/her thesis. Furthermore, consultants may include doctoral programme students or external experts. More than one consultant may be appointed for one thesis. A thesis consultant may not act as an external examiner of a thesis that he/she consults.

Article 3

Thesis assignment

- (1) The topic of a thesis is selected, and a thesis is assigned in observance of the rules and schedule of the faculty where the student is enrolled for study.
- (2) The assignment of a thesis (hereinafter as the “assignment”) must be prepared using an official form of the ČZU, available in electronic format in the ČZU information system.
- (3) After completion, the assignment must be approved electronically by the thesis supervisor, the Head of the department where the thesis is to be prepared, the guarantor of the study programme and the Dean of the faculty where the student is enrolled for study.
- (4) After approval is granted, the assignment may be cancelled for serious reasons only, based on a written application lodged by the student or the thesis supervisor. The application must be approved by the Dean. Where the application is lodged by the student, the opinion of the thesis supervisor is required for considering the application.
- (5) If the thesis supervisor changes, the approval of the assignment in the ČZU information system will be cancelled automatically, and the entire approval process under para. 3 of this Article must be retaken. The provisions of para. 4 of this Article shall not apply to a change of the thesis supervisor.

Article 4

Thesis preparation

- (1) When preparing his/her thesis, the student must observe the rules and schedule of the faculty where he/she is enrolled for study.
- (2) The language of the thesis (hereinafter as the “thesis language”) depends on the accreditation of the study programme studied by the student. The thesis language is indicated in the assignment and is binding on the student. Exceptions may be granted by the Dean in justified cases.
- (3) When preparing the thesis, the student is obliged to consult his/her progress and partial outcomes with the thesis supervisor or consultant on a regular basis. The “Consultations” module in the ČZU information system can also be utilised for consultations.

Article 5

Thesis submission

- (1) Students will submit their thesis in both electronic and printed forms.

- (2) The electronic version of the thesis is uploaded by the student in pdf format to the ČZU information system. If included in the thesis (e.g. a project), annexes can be uploaded separately.
- (3) In addition to the electronic version of the thesis, the student will also upload additional information to the ČZU information system – the thesis abstract in the thesis language as well as in English, key words in the thesis language as well as in English. If the thesis language is English, the additional information will be uploaded in English only.
- (4) Moreover, the student must submit two copies of the thesis in printed form, bound in book form. The manner, place and date of submission will be determined by the Dean in the Dean's order. After completion of the defence, one copy will be returned to the student and the other will be retained by the relevant department. If the student is granted a deferral of the publication of his/her thesis under Article 10 of this Directive, one more copy of the thesis in printed form will be submitted.
- (5) The thesis presented by the student for defence will be published for public view at the study department of the relevant faculty at least five working days prior to the defence.
- (6) The electronic version of the thesis must conform to the printed form; the conformity is confirmed by the student in a declaration in the ČZU information system when submitting the thesis, and by signing the declaration in the printed form of the thesis.
- (7) Having submitted his/her thesis, the student is provided a 24-hour protective period during which he/she is able to cancel the electronic submission of the thesis in the ČZU information system and to upload a new file. However, this is only possible if the deadline given by the faculty for the submission of the thesis has not yet expired. After the expiry of the protective period, the student is not entitled to change the electronic form in the ČZU information system in any manner.

Article 6

Checks of content conformity

- (1) The electronic version of the thesis will undergo a check of content conformity, after it has been uploaded to the ČZU information system and after the expiry of the 24-hour protection period, during which the student may carry out changes of the uploaded file.
- (2) The check is done via the Theses.cz portal, and its purpose is to determine the degree of conformity of the student's thesis to texts of other authors. The result of the check is then displayed in the ČZU information system, and is accessible to the student, thesis supervisor, Head of the department and the Vice-Dean concerned. In addition, the result of the check will also be made available to the thesis supervisor in the overall overview of theses in the ČZU information system.
- (3) If the degree of conformity of the thesis with texts of different authors is greater than or equals 15%, the thesis supervisor is obliged to make comments on such conformity in his/her review. Where the supervisor identifies a thesis as plagiarism, the thesis will be given a failing grade in the supervisor's review.
- (4) In the preparation of the thesis, applications based on artificial intelligence (hereinafter as "AI") may be utilised as an auxiliary tool only for the research part of the thesis, also to check grammar and stylistics, to design the text structure, to reformulate the text stylistically or to search for sources.

- (5) AI based applications are inadmissible for formulating students' own thesis results and for discussing and summarising the thesis conclusions.
- (6) Where the student has used AI tools to create the content part of the thesis, he/she is obliged to quote the relevant source in the thesis. In such case, it is recommended to use a footnote, stating that the text has been created or modified by AI, and explaining the manner of using AI, ideally adding the full text of the query (prompt).
- (7) In the case AI tools have been used, the student is under the obligation to supplement the general declaration of the thesis originality with the following sentence: *"I declare that I have used AI tools in accordance with the university's internal regulations and principles of academic integrity and ethics. Appropriate references to the use of those tools have been made in the thesis."*
- (8) Plagiarism is understood as a degree of conformity of the thesis to texts of other authors greater than 10% if those texts are included in the thesis without proper citations.
- (9) A thesis that conforms to texts of other authors to an extent greater than 20% is considered plagiarism, even if proper citations are included, since the citations are taken as a compilation of complete parts written by other authors.
- (10) Conformity of the thesis to the author's previously published texts (such as the bachelor thesis) is not understood as plagiarism. The extent of such conformity may not exceed 40% (sum of conformity to the individual works/theses).
- (11) A thesis that does not include proper citations for more than 10% of the bibliographic sources listed in the list of information sources at the end of the thesis is deemed to be unsatisfactory.
- (12) The decision on whether the thesis may be considered as plagiarism falls within the responsibility of the state final examination board before which the thesis is defended by the student.
- (13) If a thesis is identified as plagiarism by the board as per the previous paragraph, the student will be given the "fail" grade and the whole matter will be presented to the appropriate disciplinary board for resolution.
- (14) A case of plagiarism will be referred to the disciplinary board even if the thesis is not eventually defended before the state final examination board by the student (e.g. for the reason that the student has withdrawn from the state final examination in advance).
- (15) Less serious cases of misconduct, e.g. isolated omissions of bibliographic references to texts of other authors or if a few bibliographic entries cited in the text are not included in the list of literature sources, are generally penalised by decreasing the grade level of the thesis assessed.

Article 7

Thesis reviews

- (1) Both the thesis supervisor and the external examiner prepare thesis reviews.
- (2) The appointment of the external examiner falls within the responsibilities of the Head of the department where the thesis is prepared. External examiners are required to have completed university education, in the master's degree study programme as a minimum.
- (3) External examiners are appointed in the environment of the ČZU information system, where the database of external examiners is maintained.

- (4) In preparing their reviews, the supervisor and external examiner must adhere to the instructions and schedule of the faculty where the student is enrolled for study. Both reviews are filled in an electronic form in the ČZU information system, and after a review finally saved, it is considered as having been signed electronically.

Article 8

Thesis defence

- (1) The defence of the thesis is part of the state final examination (hereinafter as the “FSE”) and takes place before the FSE board in line with rules of the relevant faculty.
- (2) The student is informed about his/her assignment to the FSE board by means of the ČZU information system as well as by an e-mail sent automatically through the aforesaid system.
- (3) The student’s assignment to the FSE board is communicated to the thesis supervisor via the ČZU information system as well as by an e-mail sent automatically through the aforesaid system (one e-mail for all FSE boards linked to one milestone). The thesis supervisor is also informed of the result of the defence by the ČZU information system.
- (4) The overview of the theses to be defended and the thesis defence schedule, including the student’s name, study programme, title of the thesis and the thesis supervisor, the date and place of the defence, is posted in the public part of the ČZU website, from the date of publication of the thesis defence schedule in the ČZU information system.
- (5) All information and the uploaded files regarding the thesis are available in advance in the ČZU information system to members of the FSE board before which the defence will take place, specifically from the date on which the relevant board is published via the above system. Members are informed of this option via an automatically generated e-mail from the ČZU information system.
- (6) If the final assessment of the thesis defence is “failed”, the thesis concerned will be retained in the ČZU information system, and the student will upload a new file with the thesis, including additional information, for the new defence.
- (7) The same procedure as in paragraph 6 of this Article is followed also if the student is not admitted to the defence of the thesis for the reason that the assessment of his/her thesis is “failed” in the reviews submitted by the external examiner and the thesis supervisor.
- (8) If the defence does not take place on account of the student’s excuse from the date of the FSE (defence of the title is assessed as “excused”), the thesis remains stored in the ČZU information system and is to be defended on one of the other dates when the FSE is held.

Article 9

Thesis publication

- (1) All theses that have been defended must be published through the ČZU information system. The obligation to publish theses according to the first sentence applies to all theses that have been defended as part of the FSE after 01 January 2011.

- (2) The full text of the thesis is available to the public on the public information portal of the ČZU information system, in pdf format, together with the assignment, review by the supervisor, name and review by the external examiner and the result of the defence. This is excepting the information the disclosure of which is deferred as per Article 10 of this Directive.
- (3) Theses defended by 31 December 2010 are available to students, employees and the public only in printed form or in electronic form on CD in the study room of the ČZU Library.
- (4) By submitting his/her thesis, the author agrees to the publication of the thesis under this Article, irrespective of the result of the defence.

Article 10

Postponement of thesis publication

- (1) If classified information as per a separate legal regulation or information which the provider does not wish to be disclosed (e.g. a trade secret, etc.) has been used in the preparation of the thesis, the author of the thesis, where possible, should ensure that the classified information or the key to such information forms part of an annex, and only that annex can thus be classified, not the thesis as a whole.
- (2) In specially justified cases, the Dean may allow the postponement of publication of a thesis, but by three years at most.
- (3) The Dean or the Vice-Dean authorised by the Dean must be informed in writing by the author of the thesis that classified information or information the disclosure of which has been declined by the author before the assignment is drawn up. If such facts are discovered later, notification must be made forthwith after the discovery.
- (4) The Dean decides on the postponement of a thesis upon a written application. The application must be lodged by the author of the thesis through the Study Department of the faculty where the student is enrolled for study, no later than two months before the deadline for submission of the thesis. The application must contain a statement from the provider of the information as per the previous paragraph, which statement must specify which data supplied by the provider should not be disclosed. The application must indicate the period for which the applicant requests the postponement of the publication of the thesis and the reasons for requesting the postponement. Where the application is lodged by the thesis author, the application must also include the statement of the thesis supervisor. When making a decision, the Dean may adjust the length of the postponement and the justification of his/her decision.
- (5) The information that the publication of the thesis has been postponed may be entered in the ČZU information system only by those persons who hold special authorisation. In addition to registration of the postponement, the date until which the publication is postponed and the reason for the postponement is entered in the system.
- (6) The date until which the publication of the thesis has been postponed is derived from the date of the thesis defence. This date, together with the justification for the postponement, is displayed in the ČZU information system where otherwise classified files are accessible.
- (7) One copy of the thesis the publication of which is permitted to be postponed, will be handed over by the faculty to the Study Department of the Rector's Office no later than within two weeks after

the defence, in an envelope, on which the following details will be indicated: the name of the university, name of the faculty, name and surname of the thesis author, study programme/field of study in which the thesis was defended and a text "Do not open." At the same time, the faculty will provide a list of theses handed over as above; the list must contain all of the above details.

- (8) The envelopes will be sealed by the Study Department of the Rector's Office, which will afterwards ensure that the theses are forwarded to the Director of the Department of Higher Education Institutions, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (hereinafter as the "MEYS"). The Study Department of the Rector's Office also keeps records of all theses submitted to the MEYS in the aforesaid manner.
- (9) After the expiry of the three-year period, the theses will be returned to the ČZU by the MEYS. The Study Department of the Rector's Office then will then arrange for the immediate submission of the theses back to the faculty.

Article 11 **Thesis archiving**

- (1) Theses defended at the ČZU after 01 January 2011 are archived in electronic form through the ČZU information system.
- (2) Printed copies of theses are archived at the individual departments; the archiving time-limits are regulated in the Filing and Shredding Rules of the ČZU, as amended.

Article 12 **Transitional and final provisions**

- (1) The provisions of Article 2 shall not apply to theses assigned before this Directive took effect.
- (2) This Directive becomes valid on the day of its publication.
- (3) This Directive takes effect on 01 September 2019, excepting Article 5(5) hereof, which is effective upon its publication.
- (4) This Directive shall supersede the Rector's Directive No. 5/2017.