

## Further guidelines on the UNIL thesis procedures

The current document serves to complement the LNDS rules as published on the LNDS website.

### Thesis format

Consult the Thesis Formatting Section (below) to properly organize and format the thesis document.

### Pick your jury and prepare the private defense

**The jury composition is at least partially the same as the TAC indicated for your intermediate evaluation.**

Please check with the LNDS coordinator in case of changes.

#### ***For FBM students***

Well in advance and in agreement with your thesis director, send an e-mail to all jury members to coordinate a date for the private thesis defense. Once the date is fixed, reserve a room on campus to hold the private defense. The composition of the jury, as well as the date and location of the exam have to be announced to the LNDS coordinator and to the **FBM Thesis Office** ([phdthesis@unil.ch](mailto:phdthesis@unil.ch)) at least **5 weeks prior to the private thesis defense** (together with the other documents necessary, all listed [HERE](#) "Thesis deposit checklist"). Travel fees of your experts can be partially reimbursed. Remote participation of jury experts is possible. Please check details and modalities with LNDS coordinator. Ask the LNDS coordinator for your final LNDS ECTS and your LNDS thesis number, too.

Candidates must also send the pdf of the thesis manuscript to all jury members (incl. the president) **5 weeks prior to the private thesis defense**. Please ask (especially the president who will preside the thesis defenses) whether they would like to receive a print-out of your thesis for review.

Once you have submitted all your documents to the FBM Thesis Office, they will send an e-mail to the jury members and the thesis director(s), with copy to the PhD candidate, asking them to send their evaluation report to the Doctoral School at least one week before the private defense. In this report, experts and director(s) will evaluate the format and contents of the thesis and indicate whether they consider the thesis eligible to be defended. After receiving these reports, the FBM Thesis Office Doctoral School will send them to the president of the thesis jury.

Please note that after receiving the thesis manuscript, the FBM Doctoral School will issue a so-called **UNIL exam registration tax** (500 CHF) to the student's private address. This invoice must be paid **30 days before the public thesis defense**; else you cannot order your PhD diploma.

### ***For SSP students***

Well in advance and in agreement with your thesis director, send an e-mail to all jury members to coordinate a date for the private thesis defense. Once the date is fixed, reserve a room on campus to hold the private defense. The composition of your thesis jury also needs to be announced to the SSP Doctoral School ahead of time. Please consult the SSP procedures [HERE](#).

For preparing the thesis defenses with the SSP Doctoral school please also ask the LNDS coordinator for your final LNDS ECTS and your LNDS thesis number, too.

**One of your jury members should be designated as “rapporteur” for the Lemanic Neuroscience Doctoral School (i.e. informing the LNDS coordinator on the jury composition, defense dates and outcomes).**

### **During the private defense ...**

... the candidate’s general knowledge in Neurosciences will be evaluated, as well as the specific knowledge in the field of the thesis.

### ***For FBM students***

The defense (1-2 hours) includes the following steps: 20-40 minutes of oral presentation by the PhD student

- 2 rounds of questions from the experts
- Questions from the president
- Deliberation by the jury

The jury assigns a grade to the thesis manuscript, the quality of the candidate’s personal work, as well as the quality of his/her presentation and knowledge. This evaluation is expressed by three marks between 0 and 6. Each of the three scores must be equal to or greater than 4 to pass the private defense.

When the student has successfully passed the private defense, the jury (at least including the jury president and the thesis director) and the student fix a date for the public thesis defense. The public defense should take place ***minimum 3 weeks after the private defense***. Once the date is agreed upon, the student needs to reserve an auditorium to hold the public defense and announce the location, date and time to the FBM Thesis Office ([phdthesis@unil.ch](mailto:phdthesis@unil.ch)).

If the jury requires corrections to the thesis by the student, the document filled during the private defense (the “procès verbal” or “PV”) should specify the person responsible for checking the corrections. This person has to receive the corrected manuscript BEFORE the public defense and announce to the FBM Thesis Office ([phdthesis@unil.ch](mailto:phdthesis@unil.ch)) in time that he/she agree with the new version of the thesis.

### ***For SSP students***

Please refer to the procedures in place at the [SSP Doctoral School](#).

The defense (1-2 hours) includes the following steps: 20-40 minutes of oral presentation by the PhD student

- 2 rounds of questions from the experts
- Questions from the president
- Deliberation by the jury

The thesis jury may:

- accept the manuscript
- accept the manuscript with some reworking
- refuse the manuscript as is and schedule a second thesis colloquium within 6 months
- reject the thesis.

Note that after the « colloque de thèse », an **exam registration tax** (500 CHF) needs to be paid. Details are to be obtained from the [SSP Thesis Office](#). After the « colloque de thèse », potential modifications asked for by the jury need to be implemented in the thesis document. Two versions of the corrected thesis need to be sent to the thesis director who will then communicate his decision on thesis eligibility to the deanship. In succession, the student is provided the “imprimatur” page (signature page) that needs to be included into the final and printed version of the thesis. The final printed version of the thesis needs to be sent to the [SSP Thesis Office](#) at least 3 weeks before the public defense (soutenance de these ).

### **Public Thesis Defense**

Upon successful completion of the private defense, the thesis director (at the FBM) or the Dean’s Office (at the SSP) sets the date and place of the public defense in agreement with the thesis jury and the PhD candidate. The public thesis defense takes place at least 3 weeks and at most 6 months after the private defense session. The thesis jury decides whether the thesis defense was successful.

Following the public defense, the thesis must be submitted to the [BCU University library](#) and your PhD degree must be ordered by filling the template provided. The imprimatur page you received during or just after the public thesis defense must be included in the final thesis manuscript and the LNDS thesis number must be stated on the thesis title page. The LNDS coordinator is very happy to receive a pdf of your final thesis manuscript for the LNDS archive!

## **Thesis formatting**

### **A. General points**

Some general advice from the "[Prescriptions pour l'impression et le dépôt des thèses de doctorat de l'Université de Lausanne](#)":

- A4 format, 29.7 x 21 cm
- Double-sided printing
- Paper 80 gr/m<sup>2</sup>
- 40 lines/page maximum
- 15 mm external margin minimum
- Clean presentation of text, pictures and tables, without corrections
- Front cover in cardstock (130 - 180 gr/m<sup>2</sup>)
- Official title page, [available here](#) (will be the first page of the document as well as the front cover of the thesis)
- The "imprimatur" page immediately follows the title page (attributed by the thesis jury)
- Please note that the binding of the document cannot be done with rings or plastic

### **B. How to organize a thesis with published articles**

To write your thesis with articles you need to have scientific article(s) published, accepted for publication or at least accepted for review, in peer-reviewed journals. Only if your contribution is significant, the article will be considered as part of your thesis. The advantage of a thesis written with articles is that the chapters of the results section can be replaced by articles. For each paper, please do indicate in detail (in the thesis manuscript) what was YOUR EXACT contribution to the work.

A thesis with articles should be structured as follows:

- Official title page with logo of your faculty of enrollment, to [download from the LNDS website](#)
- Imprimatur page (attributed by the thesis jury)
- Acknowledgements
- Abstract (in English & French)
- (a general) Introduction (~ 10-20 pages suggested, tbd with thesis director)
- Brief summary of the results, indicating precisely your contribution to each article
- (a general) Discussion (~ 10-20 pages suggested, tbd with thesis director)
- References
- Annex section with pdf of articles as produced during submission process

### **C. How to organize a thesis without published articles**

The advantage here (for some) might be that you can write the thesis in French and without having articles published or accepted. Please note that if you do not (yet) have peer-reviewed publications, the jury members will base their opinion much more on the knowledge you expose in your general Introduction and Discussion as well as when you write these sections as "envelope" for already peer-reviewed and published papers ...

This type of thesis should be structured as follows:

- Official title page with logo of your faculty of enrollment, to [download from the LNDS website](#)

- Imprimatur page (attributed by the thesis jury)
- Acknowledgements
- Abstract (in English & French)
- List of Abbreviations
- Table of Contents
- List of Figures
- List of Tables
- Introduction (extensive and detailed; content tbd with thesis director)
- Materials and Methods
- Results
- Discussion (extensive and detailed; content tbd with thesis director)
- References

Please **keep in mind the following points** when writing a thesis with or without articles:

- Please download the **thesis official title page** [from the LNDS website](#).
- The Imprimatur page immediately needs to follow the title page in the final thesis version. This can be done by scanning the original Imprimatur page and inserting it into the thesis document (please do not use a jpg-photo, the quality is not sufficient).
- A good introduction should show that you have acquired a broad knowledge of the previous and ongoing research in your field, do not forget appropriate referencing (and avoid auto-plagiarism if you have published papers on the topic already)
- A good discussion should express critical thinking concerning what the student has learned:
  - Discussing your results considering other findings, making an overall analysis of the publications reviewed.
  - Analyzing the quality and limitations of the results.
  - Formulating conclusions.
  - Making the point about future perspectives.