



**Towards Research-Orientation in Professional Practice**  
**A Guide to Thesis Work at Diaconia University of Applied Sciences**

# **TOWARDS RESEARCH-ORIENTATION IN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

A Guide to Thesis Work at Diaconia University of Applied Sciences

**Diaconia University of Applied Sciences  
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## ABSTRACT

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This publication discusses questions related to the thesis process. The thesis process will be studied from the points of views of research, development and innovation at Diak, focusing on communality, multidisciplinary and ethical aspects, promotion of social welfare and health, and the questioning, systematic approach, i.e. research-orientation, in professional practice. The actual implementation of research-orientation in professional practice is seen in the different degree programmes as e.g. the implementation of ethical practices and information literacy. This guide presents Diak's three research programmes which deal with the Church, welfare services and the civil society.

The thesis process is discussed phase by phase. This publication presents different ways of producing a thesis. A thesis at Diak may focus on research or on development. Regardless of the different ways theses are created at Diak, they are all based on research data and aim at enhancing students' professional expertise and their professional ways of thinking.

The guide is subdivided into two parts: The first part deals with general principles related to theses and the phases of the thesis process. The second part provides instructions for written assignments. These guidelines should be applied to all theses as well as other papers written at Diak.

#### **Keywords:**

theses, universities of applied sciences, guidelines, research ethics, information literacy, source criticism

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## TIIVISTELMÄ

### **Kohti tutkivaa ammattikäytäntöä. Opas Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulun opinnäytetöitä varten.**

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Julkaisussa käsitellään opinnäytetyöprosessiin liittyviä kysymyksiä. Opinnäytetyöprosessia tarkastellaan Diakin tutkimus-, kehittämis- ja innovaatiotoiminnan näkökulmista, joissa painottuvat muun muassa yhteisöllisyys, monialaisuus, hyvinvoinnin ja terveyden edistäminen, eettisyys ja tutkiva ammattikäytäntö. Tutkivan ammattikäytännön toteutumista tarkastellaan eri koulutusohjelmissa myös eettisenä käytäntönä sekä informaatiolukutaitoa hyödyntävänä työtapana. Oppaassa esitellään Diakin kolme tutkimusohjelmaa, jotka liittyvät kirkkoon, hyvinvointipalveluihin ja kansalaisyhteiskuntaan.

Opinnäyteprosessia käydään läpi vaiheittain. Julkaisussa esitellään erilaisia tapoja tuottaa opinnäytetyö. Diakin opinnäytetyön toteuttamistapa voi olla tutkimus- tai kehittämispainotteinen. Erilaisista toteuttamistavoistaan huolimatta kaikki opinnäytetyöt pohjautuvat tutkimukselliseen tietoon ja niiden tavoitteena on kehittää opiskelijoiden ammatillista osaamista ja näkemystä.

Opas jakautuu rakenteellisesti kahteen osaan. Ensimmäisessä osassa käsitellään opinnäytetyöhön liittyviä yleisiä periaatteita ja opinnäytetyöprosessin vaiheita. Toisessa osassa on kirjallisen työn ohjeistus, jonka mukaisesti niin opinnäytetyöt kuin muutkin kirjalliset työt Diakissa laaditaan.

**Asiasanat:** opinnäytetyöt, ammattikorkeakoulut, ohjeet, tutkimusetiikka, informaatiolukutaito, lähdekritiikki



## PREFACE

You are now holding in your hands the Guide to Thesis Work at the Diakoniana University of Applied Sciences. As a student and as a supervisor guiding a student's thesis work, you will find guidance from this booklet as you proceed towards research-orientation in professional practice. The purpose of this guide is to help the student during the thesis process to grow into a considerate worker ready for flexible and versatile dialogue in the working community, able to assess and question the different situations and practices in working life.

The purpose of the guide is to support both the student and the supervisor of the work during the process. In addition, as of the beginning of his/her studies, the student should use the guide to gain information acquisition skills and to apply its instructions to his/her written assignments. The student should use the guide in the different phases of his/her studies and be active in searching, processing and using information for practical work and for his/her professional development.

The starting point of Diak's degree programmes is the everyday life of people and, in particular, the related professional practice. With his/her thesis, the student should aim to enhance professional practices and to embrace analytical working methods. The topic of the thesis should therefore be selected on the basis of what sort of professional expertise and qualifications the student intends to attain.

The guide contains views and instructions concerning thesis work and the thesis process, covering issues common to all degree programmes as well as issues specific to certain programmes and fields. The guide also contains instructions on research and development tasks relating to Master's degrees and professional specialisation studies. The different language versions of the guide are published separately.

Diak's guide to thesis work has changed over the years. This edition, the fifth, has been revised and updated on the basis of the previous publications *Research in Professional Practice (Tutkiva ammattikäytäntö)* and *Towards Using Research in Professional Practice. (Kohti tutkivaa ammattikäytäntöä)*. Many people have participated in making this guide; they have provided good comments and suggestions. We thank the authors of the previous editions and those who have given us their comments. This guide acquired its final form of in the hands of Leena Eerola- Ockenström, Arja Kalmari and Mervi Kivirinta.

**Editorial Board**

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# **PART 1**

## **THE THESIS PROCESS AT THE DIACONIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES**

# 1 RESEARCH-ORIENTED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

## 1.1 Starting Points of Research-Oriented Professional Practice

**R**esearch-orientation in professional practice means that the student and employee systematically examine the foundations, quality and results of their work, and actively develop both the work and the working and living environment. It is essential in a university of applied sciences to guide and educate the student towards this type of research-oriented professional practice. The student will grow into an expert capable of identifying, limiting and redefining problems, assessing and analysing situations and his/her own work judiciously, and of finding viable solutions. (Kotila & Mutanen 2004.)

At a university of applied sciences, the student's research and development skills will develop through questioning, reflective studies conducted with awareness and working-life orientation. The student will become trained in analytic, systematic research-oriented professional practice through practical training, seminars and written assignments, as well as through participation in development projects that produce new knowledge. The student will apply the acquired information in his/her development task. (Kotila & Mutanen 2004.) The student will practice and use research-orientation particularly in his/her thesis.

Research orientation in professional practice is visible as:

- active cooperation with working life, Diak projects, teachers and other students
- ability to give justifications for one's own solutions and to assess them judiciously
- ability to find viable solutions
- ability to pass on information and to publish it

- ability to develop and reassess various practices.

Research-orientation in professional practice is visible also in research, development and innovation work (RDI work), which refers to systematic work with the aim of enlarging the currently available pools of knowledge and the use of this knowledge to find new applications. RDI stresses the aspects of applied research, development and service.

**Applied research** refers to the production and search of new research-based knowledge and new answers to research problems which arise from practice and from working life. Applied research is essential in the work conducted at universities of applied sciences.

**Development** refers to activities which aim at producing new or enhanced products, production equipment, work methods or services with the help of research results and functional trials. Various development projects make working-life practices more expedient and help them achieve higher quality.

**Services** refer to the customer-oriented production of training, research and services commissioned by the working life, the business life or various communities; examples of this include expert consultation and research and development services.

## 1.2 Ethics

### *1.2.1 Ethical Points of View*

Ethical solutions in research and development aim at a high regard of people, equality in interaction and a focus on fairness. Ethics are also visible as a critical attitude towards prevailing practices and information offered. Constructive criticism will create the basis for the development and constant reassessment of optimal professional practice. Various ethical points of view are systematically stressed in Diak due to the value base of the school as well as due to the character of the degree programmes.

In an R&D project, ethics refers to the attitude which the student and

the supervisor assume towards their work, its problems and the persons with whom and on whose real-life condition the R&D work takes place. The ethical attitude is seen in how the topic of the thesis is selected, how information is solicited, how the process and its results are discussed, and in how the results are applied. An ethical way of posing the research questions must be visible throughout the thesis process. The selection of the topic and methods, the working, the publication and the application of results all include ethical choices. R&D work requires honesty and transparency. All RDI work at Diak can be characterized by saying that it is morally right, scientifically true and beneficial to the society.

The general principle of honesty applies to the collection and processing of research data as well as to the working methods and use of sources. In its R&D, Diak is committed to the good scientific practice advocated by the National Advisory Board on Ethics (see [www.tenk.fi](http://www.tenk.fi)). For example, if needed, Diak checks thesis plagiarism with appropriate software. RDI work always involves some limit-setting, and the unambiguous presentation of the limits is the prerequisite for ethically high standard of work. Results can be studied on the basis of how equally and justly the different points of view have been presented. Source criticism is one of the researcher's moral obligations: he/she shall check the reliability and applicability of the information and the background motives of the informants.

The ethics of an R&D researcher are also seen in how he/she keeps to agreements relating to schedules and the intended content of the thesis. Should conflicts of interest arise in any work executed due to an order from working-life, it is important to keep in mind that honesty and arguments based on true results weigh more than the benefits or expectations which an involved party may harbour concerning the results.

### *1.2.2 The ethical approach to the research object and community*

All persons who allow their information to be used in an R&D project must specifically permit the research. This requires that they be informed of the thesis and its goals. Similarly, the author commits to using and safe-keeping the data so that the data is used for the agreed purpose only. Because ethical questions are raised as soon as the search for the topic is initiated, these aspects need to be brought up with the supervisor of the thesis as early as possible.

R&D work is often conducted in a community or institution that requires a specific permit. In that case, the author must learn how permissions are acquired in that community. In the social and health sector, many units have an ethical committee of their own to deal with permits (the Personal Data Act 523/1999). In some units or communities, the director grants all permits. If R&D work involves commissioned or contracted research, the commissioning party has concrete needs relating to the development work. In such cases, permissions are included in the contract.

People involved in an R&D project are entitled to read texts prepared on the basis of their information concerning themselves, if they wish. Their comments and evaluations are noted in the assessment and in the discussion chapter, if so agreed. Information security is taken care of in a way that prevents the identification of individual persons or communities; issues must be reported in a form relevant for the treatment of the research problems. The thesis and its attachments must have the addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers of data providers deleted.

It is an issue for all of the Diak community to maintain the high standard of its RDI activities including all theses. Their quality assessment and enhancement is, above all, an ethical question for Diak. Every working life partner or other reader must be guaranteed a high standard of work and results applicable in working life.

### **1.3 The Critical Eye and Judicious Action in Professional Practice**

Research-orientation in professional practice requires a critical eye and judiciousness in thinking and in action. The basis of all activity is the judicious assessment of the different viewpoints and a reflective, analytical and questioning attitude towards prevalent practices and acquired information. Listing of issues or describing of experiences do not suffice; for work to be judicious, it is required, for example, that real-life activities be grouped on the basis of various criteria from various points of view. The acquired information must be significant from the point of view of the task at hand. Its origins and reliability must be ascertained (for source criticism, see Chapter 1.4.1).

During studies, judiciousness is learned through reflection in different learning situations. The student should, through reflection, aim at system-

atically examining interconnections of real-life activities, factors impacting them, and his/her own experiences and background assumptions in relation to different interpretations and research data. Judiciousness is demonstrated in all written assignments and during the thesis process as well as in various seminars in which students practice argumentation and learn the opponent's role; in other words, the students conduct a critical discussion. Argumentation can be seen as dialogue in which the truth of the propositions of the opposing sides is evaluated on the basis of their well-grounded facts. A proposition cannot be refuted with a counter-claim without presenting appropriate premises. In dialogue, the idea is to impact the opponent's view on rational grounds. The key elements in a critical discussion are the proposition, the justification, the conclusion, and the support for conclusions. Competent argumentation skills include those of analysing, assessing and producing valid justifications.

## **1.4 Information Acquisition**

### *1.4.1 Information Literacy and Using the Library*

Research-orientation in professional practice means constant reassessment of one's work. This includes actively searching for new information, assessing it, and using existing information. These activities can be practiced, and they can develop into the type of expertise termed information literacy.

A person with good information literacy is able to:

- determine the type and extent of required information
- acquire the information effectively
- assess the information and its sources critically
- effectively incorporate the selected information into his/her own knowledge base and value system
- working alone or in a group, use information effectively to reach a certain goal
- examine the economical, legal and social questions related to the use of information, and
- use information sources and information appropriately in accordance with the ethical and legal views.

(See Amkit Consortium, IL-ECTS WG 2007.)

Diak students are encouraged throughout their studies to improve their information literacy (table 1). Information literacy education forms a development path through the learning tasks in the different study units. At the beginning of studies, the focus is on learning information acquisition techniques. At that time, the student is instructed in information searches into Diak's library collection data base and the NELLI-portal, which are treated in more detail in the next chapter. Later, as the student's information literacy develops, the focus shifts to the critical evaluation and selection of information as well as to the versatile use of it.

TABLE 1. Information literacy - the learning path at Diak

PHASE OF STUDIES	LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR INFORMATION LITERACY
Basic studies	The student understands the process-like quality of the development of information literacy. The student is able to apply the basic techniques and tools in his/her information acquisition. Self-assessment of one's own information literacy is essential.
Professional Studies	The student knows and is able to use the basic information sources in his/her field, he/she is able to use the library and information services. It is essential to use theoretical knowledge to support one's professional growth.
Thesis	The student is able to analyse research papers and articles and becomes acquainted with producing scientific information. The student's information acquisition skills become more extended. The essential aspects include a critical selection of sources, ethical and legal use of information, and writing and publishing the thesis.

Functioning as an expert	The professional deepens his/her information literacy through his/her actions. The essential aspects include life-long learning and the use of information for professional development and involvement.
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Source criticism, when applied to information used in UAS-studies, is expressed through the analytical screening of data which is performed according to conscious criteria. A source should be accepted only after it has been learned who produced the data and for what purpose, and when the data was created. It is important to identify the type of source information. During studies, useful sources include collections of scientific and professional information. Recommended sources include scientific articles in the field that have passed the referees (in peer review). The borderline between scientific and professional sources may vacillate, as high-standard professional journals may publish articles based on research data. Articles on personal experiences of customers, patients and professional workers published in professional journals often bring new viewpoints to learning assignments or to issues discussed in a thesis (experiential first-hand knowledge). Information from official sources such as statistics, legislation and various official documents is also useful. Learning assignments and theses at the UAS should not, in principle, show study books as sources, because they are, most often, second-hand sources.

#### *1.4.2 Diak's Library and Information Services*

Multiple ways of using libraries and alternative information channels are tools suitable for studies and professional work. Diak's library services consist of the libraries operating on different sites and the web library at <http://kirjastot.diak.fi>.

The web library provides a link to the NELLI-portal (<http://www.nelliportaaali.fi>), which is a good starting point for information acquisition. The NELLI-portal provides access to library collections, articles and an extensive set of other data bases available via the web. The electronic information sources accessible via NELLI may contain open access materials,

i.e. data freely accessible to all Internet users, or Diak may have purchased the right to use the materials. The latter type of information is available via NELLI only when NELLI is accessed via a computer in Diak's network or when Diak's identification information is used at a computer outside Diak.

The information literacy education at the UAS includes the use of the NELLI-portal, for example. In addition to training, the library provides advice and guidance in information acquisition. If the material required by a customer is not available in the local library, the library will order it for the customer from other Diak libraries or as an inter-library loan from another library.

### *1.4.3 Systematic Information Acquisition during Studies and in Writing the Thesis*

Information acquisition is necessary in all phases of studies. Information acquisition should be started by planning the work (see the suggested frame for the plan later in this chapter). During the progress of the thesis process, in particular, the plan should be extended into a "data acquisition diary" to record the search dates, sources, databases and key words. The most useful sources are recorded at the end of the learning diary (see more detail in chapter 4.1). They should form a list to make it easy to transfer them into the list of references in the thesis. Web-sources should have the URL and the access date recorded for the list of references. As necessary, when an individual web-page is used, it should be printed out or a copy should be saved. The student should take the plan with him/her when meeting the supervisor or requesting search help from an information specialist.

The information acquisition plan should contain the following issues:

- 1 TOPIC. Please describe the topic of the learning assignment, research or project. Create a mind-map.
2. WHAT SORT OF INFORMATION WILL YOU NEED? Information on the method, research data, statistics? Please describe in more detail the subject matter on which you require information. Use the mind-map you created.

3. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR TOPIC ALREADY?  
Please consider what you already know and where you found information before. Evaluate it for use for this particular job.
  
4. WHICH KEY WORDS DESCRIBE YOUR TOPIC? Which key words will you use when searching for more information? Use your mind-map, the Vesa-web glossary and other thesauri and glossaries. Please do not forget key words in foreign languages. Consider also how you combine key words and limit or extend the search.
  
5. WHERE WILL YOU SEARCH FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION? Libraries, the web, experts, etc.

#### SOURCES FOUND

## 2 RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION AT DIAK: PRINCIPLES

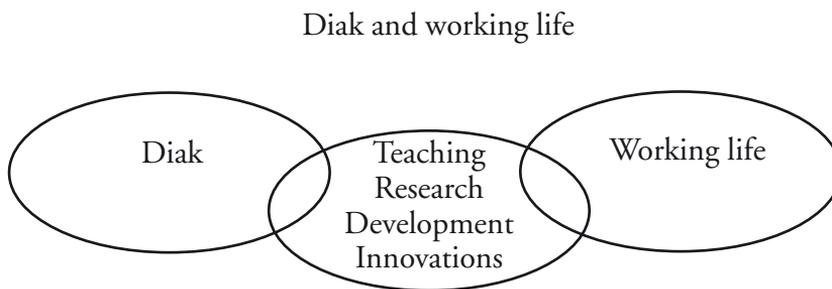
The three key tasks of UAS's are defined as education, research and regional development. The research, development and innovation (RDI) activities at Diaconia University of Applied Sciences aim to participate in the development of working life and society. Diak groups its RDI activities under three themes: church, welfare services and civil society. In its work, Diak prioritizes development projects that focus on poverty and marginalization.

Theses form a part of the research conducted in the different Diak units, in working-life learning environments and in the separate R&D unit at Diak. Working life learning environments refer to activities in which persons in working life, students and teachers cooperate working, learning, researching and developing. In such cases, a part of the studies defined in the curriculum is conducted in working life. The operation of working life learning environments is long-term, systematic, continued, communal and innovative in character. Learning environments aim at producing new information and skills for working life while they offer Diak students an opportunity to reach in real working environments the learning objectives specified in the curriculum. Students might initially participate in the evaluation and development of products, working modes and work methods as learning assignments for different study modules, and the work may extend to produce a set of theses by one or more students.

RDI work is more and more commonly implemented in project form. Project work forms the practical link between education and working life, and it is the key tool in Diak's regional development work. It is important to have students participating in these projects and to have theses written in them. The student gains significant experience of development work while

Diak gains, through combining several minor projects, effective and also externally visible outputs. Thus, the justification for project work comes about due to its results, effects and the grounding of the effects in practice.

Theses form an important part of the interaction between Diak and working life. At its best, this interaction provides both parties with new ideas and concrete benefits for their work. However, benefits do not come about for free, without input and commitment. Figure 1 presents some inputs and outputs of in this cooperation involved for working life and Diak.



**Diak offers:**

- latest professional trends
- approach to enhance professional practice
- ethically responsible participants
- researchers, developers, teachers, students

**Working life offers:**

- appropriate work considering a student's professional development
- useful subjects for R&D

**Diak gains:**

- close touch to working life
- practical training sites
- research objects in touch with the living reality
- challenging objects to develop

**Working life gains:**

- trainees for work
- enthusiastic researchers and results
- an opportunity to develop working methods and communities

FIGURE 1. Inputs and outputs in the cooperation between working life and Diak.

The key theme in Diak's teaching and RDI work is the advancement of communality. Working, Diak respects the individual development goals of each region irrespective of whether they involve local or global projects. A wish is expressed that theses should also support Diak's communal view: research and develop that which increases the viability of communities.

## 3 THE THESIS AT DIAK

The thesis forms an essential, integral part of the work of a UAS student. Thesis work is primarily guided by practices for which solutions and extensions are searched from theory (Kainulainen 2004, 73). Diak aims to provide the student with an education which enables him/her to assume the basic skills required for systematic, research-oriented professional practice and the theoretical study of actions.

### 3.1 General Goals of a Thesis

The general goals of theses by Diak students arise from the Polytechnics Act and Decree as well as from the field-specific skill requirements. According to the Polytechnics Act (351/2003):

*“Working on research, artistic and cultural premises, polytechnics shall provide higher education for professional expert jobs based on the requirements of working life and its development; support the professional growth of individuals; and carry out applied research and development that serves polytechnic education, supports the world of work and regional development, and takes the industrial structure of the region into account.”*

According to the Polytechnics Decree, the purpose of the thesis is to develop and demonstrate the student’s ability to apply information and skills in practical expert tasks related to professional studies (Government Decree on Polytechnics 2003/352 and 3005/423). The purpose of the thesis process is to advance the student’s professional growth and make his/her expertise apparent. The general competency requirements common to all fields of study, defined at the national level, and the field-specific requirements of special expertise guide the development of professional expertise

of all students aiming at Bachelor's and Master's Degrees at universities of applied sciences.

According to Diak's strategy, research and development are conducted in cooperation with the working life in areas arising from Diak's value-base. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Diak aims at creating innovations based on ethically, socially, economically and environmentally sound principles.

Theses form a part of the research conducted in the different Diak units, in working-life learning environments and in separate research projects. This enables the student to do his/her share in actualising Diak's strategy by promoting regional participatory cooperation for social integrity and public health.

The concrete goals of the thesis work and the learning process:

- support and advance the student's professional growth
- provide an opportunity for the student to demonstrate creativity in a systematic developmental process
- advance the student's systematic, research-oriented approach to work
- guide the student in his/her systematic, research-oriented thinking and the principles of good argumentation
- improve the student's R&D skills and his/her mastery of development projects and productions as well as his/her skills of producing actual products and materials (such as learning material packages and service guides)
- aim at producing research data, new practices, operative models and products.

Key principles of Diak's theses:

- The thesis is working-life oriented.
- The starting points of the thesis are concrete both from the point of view of the commissioning party and the student.
- The thesis is primarily integrated either to working-life learning environments, practical training/international exchange or Diak's domestic or international development projects.
- The thesis essentially demonstrates the growth and development of the student's professional knowledge and skills.
- Creating a thesis is a long-term process requiring creativity.

- The thesis forms a possible path for the student to gain employment. The purpose of a university of applied sciences is to train and educate judicious professionals capable of thought whose actions evidence independent thinking and consideration; they can analyse situations and issues and ground their decisions rationally and ethically. The student can demonstrate and strengthen these skills through the thesis which he/she finalises at the end of the studies.

A thesis can be prepared individually, by a pair of students, or by a small group. When a thesis is prepared by a group, the grade is given to all of the group, or separately to each student (Diak Degree Regulations, section 20). In a Finnish-language degree programme, theses are usually written in Finnish. For a well-based reason, the student may write his/her thesis in another language. The student must agree the matter with his/her supervisor. In the degree programme of Sign-Language Interpretation, the thesis may be produced in electronic form in Finnish sign language while the transfer to the new curriculum is being carried out. The thesis itself is always public, but the related statement is not (Diak's Degree Regulations, section 20).

### *3.1.1 The UAS Degree*

In the degree programmes of Social Services, Nursing, and Communication and Media, the extent of the thesis is 15 credits. In the degree programme of Sign Language Interpretation, the extent of the thesis is 23 credits. The studies contain independent work, guidance and seminars. The extent of the thesis in terms of text is determined according to the nature of the work. However, the text must be extensive enough to give sufficient theoretical background for the subject of study, to describe it in practical terms, and to analyse it. The student receives more detailed instructions for the thesis from his/her supervisor.

A thesis aiming at a double qualification (public and church) must be connected to the requirements of both of the qualifications. For education aiming at a qualification for church office, the decision by the Bishop's Conference must be noted that the thesis must be related to the work of the church. At the same time, however, the work must be applicable in the social or health sector.

For the student to qualify for church office, the thesis must fulfil one of

the following criteria in addition to the general criteria:

- The theme advances diaconia, youth work or education at church.
- A separate chapter discusses the possibilities of applying the results in church work.
- A separate chapter discusses the theme and results of the research from a theological point of view.
- Discussion of church work or theological reflection permeates the thesis.

Similarly, when the student wishes to go into health or social work, or to become a sign language interpreter, or to work in communication and media, his/her thesis is required to ensure the deepening of his/her professional skills. In the degree programme of Communication and Media, according to the focus of the programme contents, thesis topics must be related to journalism, documentary media content, media education, communication of nongovernmental organizations and parishes, or participatory media.

Students of the health care option produce a two-phase thesis, the topic of which relates to professional studies in health care. The first phase of the thesis work (15 cr) takes place during the first 210 cr of the education while working towards the qualification of a nurse. The second phase, health promotion (5 cr), deepens the student's professional expertise from what it was when the thesis for nurse's qualification was written. The aspect of health promotion must be clearly discernible in any work of the second phase. It may extend or give more depth to the work already completed for nurse's qualification. It may also consist of some output such as an article or event connected to and based on the earlier thesis. It may also consist of a separate development project initiated by working-life.

The student's thesis may be related to other studies or practice training. For example, it is possible to extend and deepen development work started in a working-life learning environment into a thesis. However, work for which credit has already been given for another study module and qualification cannot be accepted as a new thesis. Principles concerning theses written for working-life (project, working-life learning environment, practice training site) are agreed upon in separately written contracts.

### *3.1.2 The Higher UAS Degree*

The extent of a thesis for a higher UAS degree (Master's degree) is 30 credits. The thesis for a Master's degree consists of research and development to improve working life and professional practice. The thesis focuses on the development and assessment of new professional working models, work methods and service products. The thesis process utilises professional experiential knowledge and the methods and results of previous research and development. The purpose is to produce and use new knowledge in working-life development projects and in the design and productization of services and professional functions. It is a key part of thesis work to distribute expert knowledge and new knowledge to be assimilated into work communities and professional networks.

The purpose of the thesis is to develop and demonstrate the skills of applying research data, to apply the selected methods to analysing and resolving working-life problems, and also to demonstrate the ability of independently conducting demanding expert work.

### *3.1.3 Development Task in Professional Specialisation Studies*

During his/her professional specialisation studies, the student completes a development task which consists of a learning and development process related to his/her own work or working community and which he/she plans autonomously. The primary goal is to produce a reflective description of the development process of a professional practice. This task binds together the different study modules in the student's specialisation studies.

The development task for professional specialisation studies must fulfil the following criteria:

- The task involves developing the student's own work or work community.
- The task lasts as long as the schooling takes (including plan, survey, implementation, publication and assessment phases).
- Goals are set for the task so that its progress and end result can be evaluated on the basis of them.
- The focus is on the work completed during distance learning periods.

The results of the development task are published as the course participants choose in e.g. their own work community or cooperation network using e.g. the media, communications networks or training sessions.

### **3.2 Goals Specific to a Field of Study in a Thesis**

#### *3.2.1 Social Welfare, Health, Education and Diaconia*

Changes in the population and age structure of the Finns, increasing socio-economical differences, changes in service structures and the development and increased use of technology all contribute to challenges faced in education and in the development of working life. The problems of customer and patient groups have become more severe and complicated, requiring special expertise and cross-disciplinary cooperation among the public, private and third sectors. Selected, appropriately targeted projects and working-life learning environments are used to ensure that the subject matters of students' theses are connected to a value base which is in harmony with Diak's strategy. All thesis topics should have an unambiguous connection with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health policies (2010) to enhance the welfare and health of the population, according to which the goals include:

- increasing and maintaining social welfare, safety and participation, decreasing poverty and marginalisation; promoting the health and functioning capability of the population through healthy lifestyles, preventing drug abuse, decreasing the occurrence of illnesses and minimising health differences
- advancing expertise in preventive work so that illnesses and social problems are identified and the required supporting measures are initiated as early as possible
- ensuring a healthy environment in which to live and work.

Change management requires functional trials and research which are produced, in particular, in the various projects under Diak's research programme Welfare Services. The programme focuses on special services and the problems related to providing these services. Private service production and entrepreneurship are increasing in the social and health sector. Re-

garding entrepreneurship, Diak specialises in questions of social and public entrepreneurship.

The objective of regional surveys is to produce information on whether services and operations match the local people's needs. Results from community-level surveys implemented by Diak students can be used in, for example, regional plans to improve welfare and health as well as in the implementation of social welfare projects. Diak students have also completed community surveys in developing countries as parts of their practical training or thesis work.

New technologies and improved information technology have a great impact on the setting up and production of services, on the management of the related operations and on information security. Web-services available for all citizens are increasing, and technological solutions may help independent coping at home.

Changes in the clientele are reflected on the coping of workers, on their safety at work, and on violence at work. The work share among the various parties, their cooperation, and questions of leadership have gained new importance. Studies and new working models are needed to help people cope at work.

Changing diaconia and youth work also require trials and surveys. Parish work should be anchored in the local community to increase joint responsibility. New models must be developed to activate citizens to join the social dialogue on citizens' rights, duties and responsibilities and the prevention of marginalisation. These issues form the core of church research in Diak.

The training, education and communication of parishes increasingly use web services. Research is needed to learn how parish members living in the information society could use Christian values to better manage and structure the flood of information from all communication channels. Diak's Church research programme aims at developing web skills in parishes for youth work, for example.

Parishes are expected to create diverse forums for religions and cultures to meet. The challenges presented to international diaconia in the combat for justice and equality require working models to be continuously developed. They also require an awareness of the circumstances of the world's poorest and most marginalized people; knowledge of effective channels is also required. Diak's R&D is being integrated into students' practical training

in the developing countries. Students' practical training and working-life cooperation are increasingly bringing results which help those in the poorest circumstances. For example, in the spring of 2010, the students and staff at three universities joined forces to learn how the elderly live in the countryside of Swaziland.

Students graduating to work within the church are tasked with supporting people in their ethical choices and in leading spiritual, Christian lives. RDI work is required when searching for new operational models to help parishioners join the Christian community to find meaning for their own lives. Persons training workers and new workers should both participate in the dialogue concerning the role of the diaconate in the development of church civil service.

### *3.2.2 Sign Language Interpretation*

The degree programme in Sign Language Interpretation educates interpreters for diverse and varying tasks to intermediate between hearing people and people who use sign language. The target groups for interpretation services and their service needs are defined in the new Interpretation Act (in force as of 1 September 2010). The Act ensures persons with impairments in hearing, in hearing/visual functions or in speech the interpretation services they need in order to work, study, conduct their business, and to participate in public affairs and leisure activities. Interpretation may take place in sign language and Finnish or Swedish or some other spoken language; the methods used in interpretation include writing, sign-encoded speech, written interpretation, tactile gestures, haptics i.e. tactile marks and other tactile methods. The environments for interpretation activities and guiding are mentioned in the Act. Key issues in UAS Bachelor's and Master's theses include the research of customers, tasks, interpretation methods and work methods of sign language interpreters as well as the development of their professional practice.

Currently, sign language interpretation services are in the process of remarkable change and development as Kela, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, is assuming the responsibility of those services. This challenges the educators of interpreters to renew education and to take a research-oriented view to all development in order to maintain the skills required for

the production of interpretation services. The organisation of interpretation services under businesses and participation in public contract competitions require sturdy business expertise of everyone intending to enter the field. Recognising, collecting and integrating the silent knowledge in the field into business life and development work are quite challenging.

As the field of sign language education changes, so does interpreter education require new type of work to develop content and structure. In addition to the basic degree, as of 2009, there now exist both a national and an international higher UAS degree in the field. The initial secondary education of sign language interpreters had already given its input into the education and work in the field, and there now is a path forming which will extend throughout the entire education system. With its research and development -oriented curriculum, the education of sign language interpreters aims to create a smooth path in which theoretical and practical working life knowledge and skills are compounded in an adept way. Theses written for the higher degree, in particular, will provide significant input for the development of sign language interpreter education.

The field of sign language research is being partly reorganised, as a research institute for sign language was established at the University of Jyväskylä at the end of 2009, and the role of the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland is undergoing a change. Studying and developing the environments and models of sign language interpretation and the environments of interpreters form a key part of the RDI work in this degree programme. Cooperation among universities, research institutions and sign language organisations enables the creation of service need surveys, evaluations of trials and the production of learning materials for the field.

Cooperation with interpreters working in spoken languages in our country is essential. Today, interpretation is an essential part of international activities. Sign language interpreters increasingly cooperate with liaison interpreters and conference interpreters working in spoken languages. A key objective in Diak's R&D is the smooth cooperation of high-quality of all interpreters.

Quality-related work regarding sign language interpreter education and interpreting itself, such as the assessment of the language proficiency and interpretation skills of interpreters, forms an extensive and interesting research subject. It is a continuous research challenge to prepare structurally

coherent, progressive materials on language, culture and interpretation for educators and customers. It is a prerequisite for work of high quality that assessment criteria be noted down, written out in words, and arranged into test products and skills assessment metering tools.

The RDI work in the degree programme of Sign Language Interpretation aims to provide students the opportunity of participating in significant co-operative joint research and development projects relating to interpretation in the field of sign language, and in Diak's cross-disciplinary projects and ventures.

### *3.2.3 Communication*

The role of the media in society has become prominent, and the media sector is more versatile than ever. Beside the professionally produced mass media we now have new forums and practices for citizens' spontaneous communication and media content production, such as the social media, in particular. The media is a significant employer and needs trained labour. There is a need for media and communication skills outside the media sector, for example, in businesses, in the public sector, in parishes and in organisations.

The development of the media is characterised by the dilution of traditional borders, in other words, the convergence of such elements as media contents, technologies and operation modes - referred to as media convergence. Employers in the field increasingly expect to have multi-skilled employees; in other words, the employee must master the technologies and types of expression suitable for the different media, know how to modify material for the different media, and be able to utilise the web with ease as a distribution channel alongside the traditional mass media. In a large editorial office, an employee might still be placed in a specialised job, but more and more workplaces require the editor to master a wide range of tasks.

In addition to convergence and cross-media, the development of the media is characterised by centralised ownership, commercialism and entertainment-orientation of the contents. In this environment, the challenge is to ensure that all values and voices be heard in the media, and to offer journalistic content of high quality to serve the needs of citizens and different special groups. At its best, the media can increase the possibilities of

participation and action for communities and individual citizens. Media skills are of key importance for anyone today, and they contribute to the prevention of marginalisation. Media literacy, media ethics and media criticism gain importance in the professional practice of media professionals as well as in the civic education of all age groups.

Education in the field of communication is faced with many challenges. In the changing media environment, there is much to develop and much to study regarding work practices, technical solutions and contents. One developmental challenge is presented by the need to promote people's participation through the means of journalism, media education and participatory media. Flexibility, skills and motivation for continuous learning and judicious, creative professional practice are the cornerstones of this degree programme.

### **3.3 Alternative Ways to Complete the Thesis**

The thesis may be completed in several different ways. Regardless of the different ways theses are created at Diak, they are all based on research data and aim at enhancing students' professional expertise and professional ways of thinking. For each thesis, the aspects of research and development are both essential. In general, the focus of the work is on the one or on the other: either on research or on development. On the basis of this, a thesis may be

1. *research-oriented*, in which case the focus of the work is on the research or study, and the empirical data is used for finding answers to the research problem, or
2. *development-oriented*, in which case the aim is to develop, implement and assess new products, services, modes of operation or working practices. A development-oriented thesis can be completed in a project; the end result of the project or the result of the development work done in the project may include:
  - a product
  - a functional event.

The forms above are not mutually exclusive; they may overlap. Different ways to complete a thesis are described briefly below.

### 3.3.1 *Research-oriented Theses*

A phenomenon of professional interest gives the subject matter for this type of thesis. The starting point always is a clearly formulated, working-life oriented research problem or question for which the answer is sought utilising appropriate data and research methodology. A research-oriented thesis requires a research plan (see chapter 4.3.2).

The research problem may arise through the concrete needs of working life and the related observations and experiences of the student, or through the theory and research reported in the field. Even when defining the research problem, the student should use professional literature. Guided by his/her research problem, the student familiarises himself/herself with the theory, previous research and other sources concerning the subject, and collects and analyses empirical data (survey, interview, observation, various documents and other data). The student draws his/her conclusions on the basis of his/her analysis of literary sources and empirical data.

The researcher may use both qualitative and quantitative (statistical) methods in the collection and analysis of his/her data. Regardless of which approach is selected, it must evidence understanding and development-orientation.

A research paper is written in the appropriate style at the end of a research-oriented thesis project. The structure of the paper is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.6.1.

### 3.3.2 *Development-oriented Theses*

A development-oriented thesis may be completed as a product development venture or another type of development project. Development-oriented theses are often called *functional theses*, and their purpose is to produce guidelines or guidance for practical work, to organise or systematise work, or to design, model and implement new products and services. It is essential that a development-oriented thesis combines practical implementation and the reporting of it in a manner appropriate for communication in the field of research (Vilkka & Airaksinen 2004, 9).

Development-oriented theses can be subgrouped in two main groups:

- product development or production; this involves producing a new, concrete product or service

- development projects; these involve developing and testing new work methods and operational models, usually as parts of larger working-life projects.

It may be difficult to distinguish product development from other development ventures, as the same thesis may exhibit features of both types: an extensive development venture may include product development.

### *Product development*

Product development (also called production) usually involves a single, relatively short process, the purpose of which is to complete an output or service for a certain user group while developing tools for practical work. Product development includes the design and construction processes of the product or service, the trial or implementation of the product, and the assessment and sometimes even the marketing of the product.

At the beginning of a product development process, the objectives of the thesis must be made clear. It must also be made clear how the thesis interfaces with professional practice. Any Diak thesis must promote professional growth; product development also must include this dimension. The basis of the design, implementation and reflection concerning a product must rest on research data concerning the object of the production and the related professional practices.

The actual output may consist of, for example, a musical production or recording, a video clip, a radio program, a play, an information package, a textual or visual piece, a portfolio or a website. It may also consist of instructions or guidance related to practical work, such as an induction guide, an environmental programme, a communication plan or a set of safety instructions. A product may be an individual object or service for a defined user group, such as a prayer book in sign language, a learning-DVD for schools, or a sensory input device for a handicapped child.

The output of product development may also consist of a functional entity which has been modelled and productised and is thereby transferable to another operating environment (such as a camp as a part of parish youth work, first aid activities for first graders, a theme day on inter-religion dialogue, the interpretation of a musical concert into sign language); or it may

consist of a method (such as the development and application of a quality assurance system for child welfare work, or the development of a capability measurement methodology to support the elderly to continue living at home).

The thesis production for the degree programme of Communications may consist of a relatively extensive documentary or a series of stories in a magazine, radio, TV or web; or it may consist of a website, CD-ROM or DVD which serves as learning material or for a communicative purpose, or as a course on media education; or it may consist of a communication plan for an organisation.

A product development -oriented thesis consists of the actual output and the written work which always accompanies the output. Documentation should be created throughout the thesis process. Therefore, the student should keep his/her learning diary during the entire process. The learning diary (see chapter 4.1) enables the following of the process and the evaluation of issues which had impact on the decisions. The structure of the textual part of the work is given in more detail in chapter 4.6.1.

### *Development projects*

The objective of a development project is to improve the practices, services or products of a work community, or to design new ones. The project should be carried out in proper project form in cooperation with representatives from working life. Development projects require commitment to long-term work. That the student assumes the responsibility of drafting, following and evaluating the project plan and keeping the schedule forms an ethical aspect integral to a development project.

Diak units have research and development projects agreed upon with certain work communities, and it is possible for the student to integrate his/her thesis into these ventures. Students can also participate in ventures initiated by others (such as representatives of working life), defining their thesis topics from there.

When participating in a development project, the student should visualise the key functions of the work community, the problems arising in practice, and the required changes. The student should be included in the project evaluation which always forms a part of a development project. The

basis of the design, implementation and reflection concerning a project must rest on research data concerning the object of the project and the related professional practices.

The thesis and the development project completed for professional specialisation studies include two parts: participation in the development work and the written work, the structure of which is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.6.1. The learning diary supports the reporting of development projects (see chapter 4.1).

### **3.4 Cooperation and Supervision in the Thesis Process**

Completing a thesis is a long process which starts with brainstorming and ends in the publication of the work. Completing the thesis requires the author to have a sense of responsibility, an independent mode of thinking, analysing and argumentation skills, reflection skills and commitment to work. The thesis is completed in cooperation with various participants: the student does not work alone but in cooperation with many others. The most important of these include the supervisor of the work, the working life partner(s) and other students providing peer support. During the thesis process, the student may need and have guidance and support from external experts also.

A supervisor is appointed for each thesis, usually a lecturer at the university. The thesis may also have a second supervisor appointed, usually a teacher, working life representative or a subject-matter expert. When the thesis project nears its end, at the latest, an examiner is appointed for the work. The decisions concerning the supervisor and examiner are made in the way agreed in the unit. If the thesis is expected to lead to a church qualification, the supervisor must be a person with skills to evaluate the special criteria at the very beginning of the work. In the degree programme of Sign Language Interpretation, there is one supervisor common to all, and the second supervisor is selected by the student.

*The supervisor* is expected, at the beginning of the process, to support the student while he/she clarifies the topic and the objectives and plans the thesis work. During the thesis process, alternative solutions relating to methodology and contents should be weighed with the supervisor. Every choice and decision has its impact on the next phase and requires good

grounds, and, often, guidance. In the final phase, the supervisor is expected to support the finalisation of the work by providing comments on it. The assessment and grading of the work and the drafting of the statement are completed by the supervisor and the *examiner* in cooperation.

It is important for the progress of the thesis process that the student takes counselling in all phases. The student is himself/herself responsible for seeking counsel. The student should agree upon the counselling discussions in advance and provide the supervisor with the questions and written materials in advance.

Because UAS theses are working life -based, most theses involve close *cooperation with working life representatives*. The working life representative provides expert help by enlarging the student's view of the studied phenomenon and by opening new perspectives from which to study the subject matter. The extent of cooperation may vary: the thesis may have a working-life supervisor separately appointed, and/or the cooperation may be agreed upon in writing with the working community (see 4.3.4). In addition, research-oriented theses, in particular, require research permissions from the work communities. However, cooperation may be less formal: meetings, discussions etc. The student is always in charge of cooperation and keeping in contact regardless of whether there is a written agreement with working life upon the thesis. If a working life representative has been appointed to supervise the thesis, Diak's lecturers are primarily charged with the theoretical-methodological guidance and assessment of the thesis.

*Peer support* gains particular importance during the long thesis process. Peer support is provided by a specifically appointed student-opponent and/or in joint counselling sessions with the common supervisor as well as in seminars, in which the thesis is introduced for feedback in its different phases (see chapter 4.7). These presentation sessions or seminars can be carried out in groups set up per topic, or in groups set up per professional study module. The publication event of the thesis is attended also by students still working on their theses or just beginning their work, and they may function as referees.

## 4 THE THESIS AS A RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

### 4.1 General Description of the Research and Development Process

The thesis process progresses generally as a research and development process does regardless of which focus is selected (research or development). The phases of a thesis process can be grouped as in Figure 2:

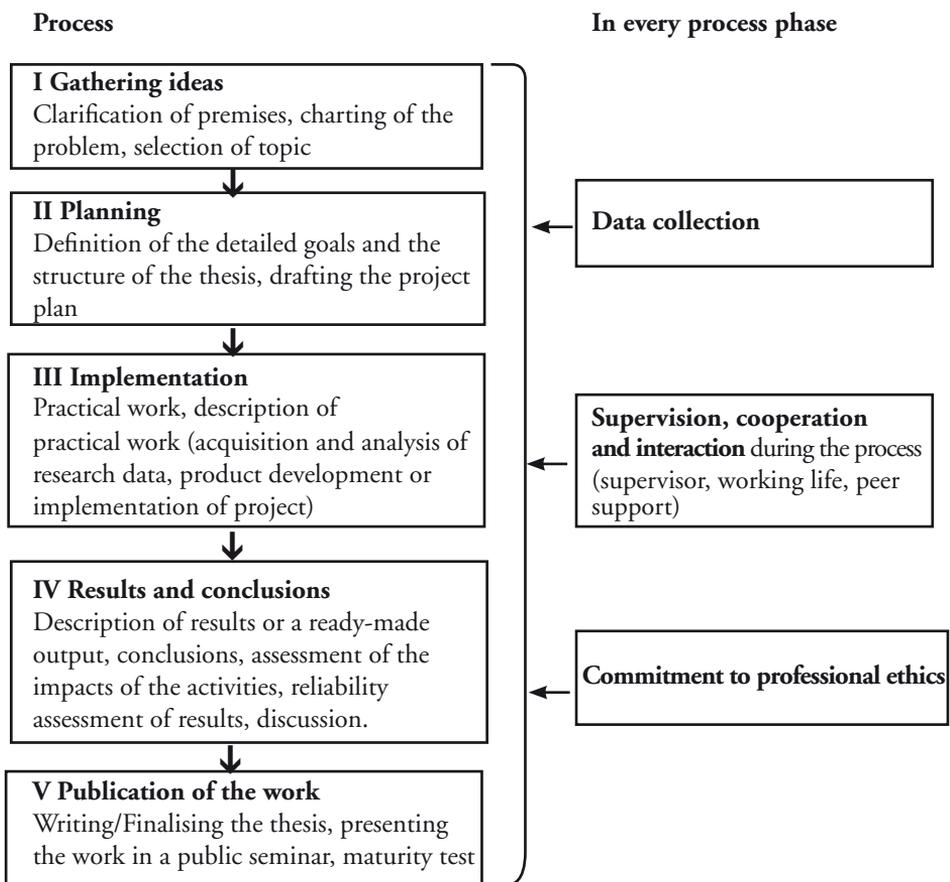


FIGURE 2. The research and development process.

The process proceeds from collecting ideas to planning and to practical implementation, and finally, to results and the publication of results. The publication of the work requires the completion of the maturity test which demonstrates the author's expertise in his/her field and his/her proficiency in the use of language (see chapter 4.6.3). All process phases require data acquisition, cooperation with the supervisor, working life and other interest groups as well as commitment to professional ethics. These issues were discussed earlier in 1.4, 3.4 and 1.2.

The student should keep a *learning diary* during the entire process. The diary functions as a self-assessment tool which gives structure to thinking and learning. The learning diary encourages the student to give structure to the thesis process, to assume a reflective and critical approach, and to assess his/her learning. The diary also provides support for drafting the thesis, for giving justifications for decisions made, and for the assessment of how the objectives were met.

## **4.2 Gathering ideas**

The student selects the topic of his/her thesis in cooperation with teachers, working-life representatives and/or customers. The objectives of Diak theses are presented in chapter 3.1. It is good practice to start gathering ideas for the thesis in good time - preferably in the early phases of studies. During studies, the written assignments, practical training and working-life contacts provide grounds for the thesis theme selection: what is, exactly, the working-life problem or area on which the student wishes to extend his/her knowledge and skills?

When ideas are gathered, information acquisition skills are required (see chapter 1.4) of the student, and he/she needs to study literature and research papers published in the field in order to visualise and delimit the topic. In gathering ideas for the topic of the thesis, it is essential to:

- clarify the need for the work
- clarify the significance of the subject for the development of professional expertise, professional growth and professional practice
- clarify how the arguments and choices interface with the objectives of Diak theses (see chapter 3.1)
- delimit the topic on the basis of earlier information and research

- have ethical grounds for all justifications and choices
- demonstrate originality, innovativeness and novelty value.

The student drafts a research question presentation which contains the following information:

**Research Question Presentation: selection of topic, preliminary action plan**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. Subject matter towards which you wish to be geared**
- 2. Purpose and need of this work (objectives of the work)**
- 3. Research problem/development task/form and viewpoint of production**  
 (What do you wish to describe, clarify, understand, develop? What media do you have in mind for your production?)
- 4. Environment(s) in which to carry out the thesis work, working communities, partners**  
**What interests you in this topic?** How did you decide to choose this subject matter?
- 5. Preliminary action plan and schedule**

The research question presentation is submitted to a defined person as instructed at the particular Diak site, after which the student is informed of the supervisor(s) for the work. The idea for the thesis is discussed and the thesis is worked upon in Thesis Studies or Research and Development Studies as well as in various seminars arranged at different Diak sites.

**4.3 Delimiting the Topic, Planning the Thesis**

*4.3.1 Delimiting the Topic, Significance of the Plan*

The idea for a thesis is, often at first, rather unclear and too extensive. It is important to delimit the topic so that the thesis work can be carried out

in practice without compromising its significance; professional literature in the field, working-life contacts and supervision provide support for this. The connection to earlier information, described in the thesis, provides the knowledge base, i.e. the theoretical premises of the work.

The theoretical premises are there to help search for new information, to provide structure for the collected data and to highlight the essential facts. The definition of concepts helps the student understand the issues in question unambiguously. The key concepts are delimited and particularised, their meanings are described, and the interrelations of parallel concepts are studied. Concept definition requires familiarity with professional literature and other materials in the field as well as systematic, precise usage.

The research or development plan puts the thesis idea into concrete terms as an action plan. The purpose of the plan is to guide the research, product development or project actions, the student's commitment to the selected task, time management and, for example, permit applications. When drafting the plan, it is essential to consider the following:

- the usability and coverage of background materials and how current they are (see chapter 1.4)
- clarity and systematic use of key concepts and their definitions
- clarity of structuring and delimitation of research objectives or research problems
- correspondence of topic and content, logical progression of the whole.

The research or development plan must be written and presented no later than during the study unit Research and Development 2. (Students who started before the year 2010 must present their work no later than during the study unit Thesis Work and Research Methods 2.) In the degree programme of Communication and Media, the development or research plan as well as the synopsis for the possible production are created and presented during the study unit Basics of the Thesis Process. Students receive instructions for creating the synopsis for their production at the beginning of the study unit. In the degree programme of Sign Language Interpretation, the plan is created during the study module OT4 (Research Methodology).

### *4.3.2 Planning a Research-oriented Thesis*

The structure of a research-oriented thesis is the following:

#### **1 Introduction and background**

Introduction of the topic. What need is there for this work? Why is this particular theme current for the profession? How is it connected to the student's professional development?

#### **2 Theoretical premises of the work, or the knowledge base**

What are the key sources for theoretical knowledge (see data acquisition plan)? What is the theoretical approach to research? Presentation of earlier studies on the subject (researcher, research questions, method, key results and discussion). Compare and discuss how concepts were defined in earlier studies on the subject. What are the key concepts of this work?

#### **3 Purpose and objectives of study**

What is the purpose of the study? Do you want to chart, describe, explain, forecast? Delimit and define the research problems structuring them into clear, concrete questions. What objectives are reached by studying these particular questions? Why are these objectives important?

#### **4 Research environment, methods for data collection and analysis**

What is the target group of the research; in other words, from where or from whom is the data collected? Which permits are required? Which methods, and why those particular methods, will best produce answers to the research questions? How will the data be analysed?

#### **5 Reliability and ethics of research**

What sort of issues related to reliability and ethics must be paid attention to in this work?

#### **6 Research schedule and costs**

The phases in the progress of the research including schedules; estimated costs if any.

## **7 Reporting and publication**

How will the work be reported and published?

### *4.3.3 Planning a development-oriented thesis (project plan)*

The plan for a development-oriented thesis (product development, a development project) contains the following parts:

#### **1 Premises and partners**

Description of the baseline situation, description of development needs, explanation of how the work interfaces with the student's professional development and, possibly, more extensive development projects. Who are involved in the venture? Organisation chart, if any. Who are the project's target groups and beneficiaries?

#### **2 Theoretical background**

What sort of a knowledge base and thinking lie in the background of the project? Which are the key concepts? What sort of research has been done in the subject area and what other projects have been carried out?

#### **3 Goals**

The objectives of the project, both long-term and short-term.

#### **4 Implementation of the project and possible risks**

How will the project be carried out in practice (operation modes and work practices, methods)? What are the possible risks involved? How will the project be followed up, assessed and reflected upon? Which issues of reliability and ethics need to be considered in this work?

#### **5 Schedule and resources**

The key actions and their tentative schedules, persons and their work share, materials, equipment, supplies, budget if any.

#### **6 Reporting and publication**

How will the project be reported and published?

#### 4.3.4 Working-life Cooperation: Agreement, Research Permissions, Project-form Thesis

If the work involves an order or assignment from a working-life party, a **co-operation agreement for thesis work** must be written. Table 2 presents a model agreement available in Diak's student intranet. When the agreement is drafted, also issues of confidentiality need to be discussed.

TABLE 2. Cooperation agreement for thesis work.

1. Customer	Agency/Department/Unit	Contact person and working-life supervisor
	Street address	Tel.
	City	e-mail
2. Student(s)	Last name	First names
	Street address	Tel./e-mail
	Last name	First names
	Street address	Tel./e-mail
	Diak unit	Supervisor at Diak
	Degree title focused upon	Name of thesis
3. Object of the agreement	Thesis work shall be carried out in accordance with the attached plan and the research permit, if one is required. The student is entitled to write a thesis on the basis of the data and, after the thesis is ready, to publish articles utilising the data in the thesis.	
4. Student's commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student shall be bound to secrecy and to using the customer's data for the above mentioned purposes only.</li> <li>- The student shall refrain from disclosing or publishing itemised or identifiable data from the customer's material.</li> <li>- The student shall deliver the finalised thesis to the customer and, if possible, present the results to the customer.</li> <li>- These clauses shall remain in force even after the thesis is published.</li> </ul>	
5. Customer's commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The customer shall be bound to enable the gathering of the data.</li> <li>- The customer shall guide the student in professional questions relating to the thesis.</li> <li>- The customer shall cover thesis-related costs in accordance with a separate agreement, if one exists</li> </ul>	

6. Termination of this cooperation agreement for thesis work	The customer is entitled to terminate the cooperation agreement if the thesis work is interrupted for reasons relating to the student. The student is entitled to terminate the agreement if the work cannot be carried out due to compelling reasons such as data becoming impossible to acquire. If the cooperation agreement is terminated, all materials collected for the thesis shall be returned to the customer.
	Three identical copies of this agreement have been made: one for the customer, one for the student and one for Diaconia University of Applied Sciences.
(month)/ (day) /20	
Customer's representative	Student
Attachments:	number and titles

It must be noted that regardless of the assignment, a **research permit** from the work community is required in most cases (see chapter 1.2.2). The student must discuss the permit application with the supervising teacher as well. Before drafting an application, the author must find out how permissions are acquired in that community. The application should be written using the standard document layout (see Diak's student intranet), listing the author, the educational institute, the supervisor of the work, the topic, purpose and objectives of the work, the grounds on which research permission should be granted, an account of confidentiality of all information, and the contact information and signatures of all authors.

Education in universities of applied sciences should be as closely connected to working life as possible. One of the measures used is provided by **project-form theses**. A thesis is considered a project-form thesis if even one of the conditions below is true:

- Working life pays either Diak or the student for the work.
- The supervisor allocated for the work represents working life.
- The work community intends, from the very first, to utilise the results of the thesis in its work, and this is agreed upon in writing before the practical thesis work commences.

#### 4.4 Practical Aspects of Thesis Work

After the thesis plan has been approved, the practical work begins: the student builds the knowledge base, i.e. gathers and supplements the background information and theory, collects and analyses material and research data, and conducts and evaluates the practical operative work. Essential issues include:

- application and improvement of data acquisition skills
- an effective problem-solving process, ethical and judicious handling of all issues, providing justifications and evaluations for decisions made
- contacts to and negotiations with partners
- charting the target group.

In addition, when the research is empirical, it is important to remember the following:

- research permit possibly needed (see chapter 4.3.4)
- collection of data
- data analysis and evaluation of the method
- description of the implementation of the research and the justifications for all decisions made
- reporting the results.

In development-oriented work, the following are also essential:

- planning the topic, form and process for the work
- creating the manuscript or designing the product
- forming the team or production group, mastering the equipment and software
- organising the operation and collecting the materials (e.g. shooting visuals)
- implementing/writing/editing.

It must be kept in mind that development work of high-quality must follow the logic of research: the work must be rooted in earlier knowledge, it must aim at creating a new product or new activity, and it must be implemented in a systematic manner with appropriate methodology. (Kainulainen 2004, 64.)

The student's work on his/her thesis is supported by the supervisors and partners, his/her earlier professional and methodological studies, and his/her studies in the English language and scientific writing. Data acquisition is an essential part of this phase as well. Keeping a learning diary facilitates the construction of the work process, the follow-up of the implementation, and the student's self-assessment.

#### **4.5 Results, Conclusions, Discussion**

The results of the thesis are seen in new operational models, services, products or research-based knowledge. It is not sufficient to describe results or outputs; the results (or the output and its feedback) must be interpreted, and conclusions must be drawn. It is good practice to consider the validity and reliability of the research. The aim is to bring up the essential issues which resulted from the work and to consider how well they match the original objectives of the work. Results can be compared to those on the same subject matter elsewhere. This shows the author's own thinking. In the discussion, the following aspects are essential:

- the reliability of the results, which should be discussed from the point of view of the thesis process just completed
- the correlation of the results and the conclusions with the premises and the problem-setting of the thesis
- originality and innovativeness of the work
- highlighting of significant results
- setting the results in their contexts and comparing them with the results of earlier research
- usability of the results, their significance and connection to professional growth and working life
- the student's own thinking, ethicality, judiciousness and self-assessment.

#### **4.6 Publication**

Theses from universities of applied sciences often provide information on several research and development projects, and it is essential for these works to enable the reader to study the author's perception of the reliability and

the process of the work (development project, product) which form an important basis for the reliability and transferability of the results.

Theses are public (Ministry of Education 2004). Results of theses are intended for further use, and therefore, publication forms an essential part of all research-oriented professional practices and their assessment.

The publication of a thesis involves writing the paper, submitting the thesis for preliminary examination, and presenting the work in a publication seminar and, possibly, in the work community. After this, the paper is bound, delivered to the library, and stored in pdf-format in the Theseus database in common use by universities of applied sciences. Publication also involves a maturity test.

#### *4.6.1 Writing the Thesis*

The thesis always includes a written part. The language must be proper and the results clearly presented and applicable to practice. If the thesis concerns a working community or a similar topic, the part of the work to be assessed and published must not contain any confidential information. The structure of the paper differs slightly depending on whether the thesis is research- or development-oriented.

The *research-oriented* thesis describes the research process and publishes the results. The thesis must include:

- background and premises for the project
- how the study interfaces with professional practice, theory, and the results from earlier research (knowledge base/theoretical premises)
- definition of key concepts
- purpose, objectives, research problem
- research environment, the target group of the study
- methods for data collection and analysis, description of the research process
- data analysis, research results
- conclusions, assessment of the implementation, reliability and results of the study.

The structure of the *development-oriented* thesis is determined by the nature of the work. The written part of a product development activity (production) must include:

- purpose and objectives of production
- how the production interfaces with professional practice, theory, and the results from earlier research
- definition of key concepts
- operating environment and customer group (customer analysis)
- plan, description and assessment of the work process, and
- feedback of the production, its assessment and applicability to working life, reflection in relation to research-based knowledge.

The written part of a development project must include:

- purpose and objectives of the project
- how the project interfaces with professional practice, theory, and the results from earlier research
- definition of key concepts
- operating environment and customer group
- plan, description and assessment of the work process, and
- assessment of the results of the implementation in relation to professional practice and research-based knowledge, applicability to working life (conclusions).

Working on the written part of the thesis should be started immediately after the plan is approved, and the work should be carried on throughout the thesis process. A thesis diary is a good tool. It is important to note all sources used as precisely as possible during the process (see chapter 1.4.3). In the paper, the following aspects are essential:

- form, layout and fluency of the written part
- clarity and logic in the structure of the work, also visible in the title of the thesis and in all chapter titles (the title of the thesis will be shown on the certificate)
- indication of sources.

When completing written assignments or thesis work at Diak, the instructions in part 2 of this guide should be followed. They give guidelines

on, for example, the structure, layout and indication of sources. Written assignments may also contain interplay of pictures and text, concept maps, portfolios and other documentary forms in accordance with the nature of the task. For development projects in professional specialisation studies, these instructions should be used where applicable. More instructions on the form of written work are available, for example, in Hirsjärvi, Sirkka; Remes, Pirkko & Sajavaara, Paula 2009, *Tutki ja kirjoita* (15th, rev. ed.). The recommended professional writing guide for Finnish is Husu, Mirja; Tarkomaa, Elise & Vuorijärvi, Aino 2008, *Ammattisuomen käsikirja*. In addition, the student can have valuable support for writing from the book Lambert, Pirjo & Vanhanen-Nuutinen, Liisa (eds.) 2010 *Hankekirjoittaminen – Välineitä hanketoimintaan ja opinnäytetyöhön*.

#### *4.6.2 Preliminary Examination, Publication Seminar, Submitting a Ready-Written Thesis*

The thesis is first presented for preliminary examination, and the ready-made thesis is submitted according to a separate schedule available in Diak's Study Guide. Students in degree-oriented education present their theses for preliminary examination by the due date; they should also provide them in electronic form. The thesis will be introduced in a publication seminar within two weeks from the time it was presented for preliminary examination (in the degree programme of Communication and Media, in an opponents seminar, see later in this chapter). The student presents his/her work in the seminar and receives feedback from the referee (see chapter 4.7.1), the supervising teacher, the working-life supervisor (if any) and the public. Publication seminars are public events open to all.

In a publication seminar, the student has a chance to demonstrate his/her expertise in the field and his/her skill in providing valid justifications for his/her decisions, and to inform the public about the work. The student can also use the communicative or educational skills required by his/her profession. Essential aspects in a seminar include the following:

- congruence of medium, form and message
- communicating power
- versatile presentation
- use of argumentation skills

- aesthetic quality of production, mastery of form and technique
- mastery of content and meaning.

After the publication seminar, the student edits his/her work along the guidelines provided by the feedback. The student submits the bound archive copy of the finalised work by the given date and stores the work in pdf-format in the Theseus database, which is in common use by universities of applied sciences. If there is a product output involved, one copy must be provided for the archives. When the student stores the thesis in the thesis database, he/she should give permission to publish and distribute the thesis. The publication permission is located on the save-page of the Theseus database. One copy of the finalised thesis should be given to the supervisor and one to the examiner.

*In the degree programmes of Communication and Media and Sign Language Interpretation*, theses are submitted as follows: The thesis will be introduced in an opponents seminar within two weeks from the time it was presented for preliminary examination. The student receives feedback from the opponent and the peer group. In addition, the student receives feedback in one-on-one meetings from the supervisor and, regarding the language and aspects of form, from the teacher of the language. After the opponents seminar, the student edits his/her work along the guidelines provided by the feedback. The student submits the bound archive copy of the finalised work to the supervising teacher by the given date and stores the work in pdf-format in the Theseus database. If there is a product output involved, one copy must be provided for the archives. The student presents the finalised work in a publication seminar open to the public.

More detailed instructions on conversion into pdf-format and database storage are available in the student intranet (Vopa). Instructions on the arrangements for binding the finalised thesis and on the appropriate place to deliver it are given individually by each Diak site. Diak uses uniform covers for theses, with the colours showing the type of work:

Purple: Education leading to a UAS degree

Orange: Master's Degree

Green: Professional specialisation studies

If agreed, the thesis is also given to the community the development of

which the results of the thesis are expected to promote and which has been involved in the work. Finalised and assessed theses may be published in open seminars arranged by Diak sites on research or on regional development or on a similar topic. The publication of the thesis may also involve the publication of an article in a professional journal. A part of publication may consist of a video, musical presentation or photo exhibition. The written thesis paper on a development project under professional specialisation studies is submitted to the supervising teacher as agreed.

#### *4.6.3 Maturity test*

The student must write a maturity test on the subject matter of his/her field to demonstrate his/her expertise and language proficiency. The Board of Examiners decides separately on the maturity test in cases in which the student is not required to demonstrate his/her language proficiency as intended in the Degree Regulations (Decree on Studies in Polytechnics 256/1995).

A maturity test is an essay written in 120 minutes under supervision concerning one of several topics provided by the supervisor in the subject area of the thesis. The test takes place after the thesis is submitted for final assessment. The maturity test essay should demonstrate the depth of the author's understanding concerning the area with which his/her thesis deals. The author shows his/her mastery of the subject regarding its contents, the related methodology and the language. The answer should be logical and structured to contain an introduction, treatment, and conclusion to tie the strings together. The maturity test essay written for a Master's degree takes the form of a press release.

The maturity test is graded as pass or fail. The contents are assessed by the supervising teacher. The form and language are assessed by the language teacher.

#### **4.7 Assessment**

Assessment continues during the thesis process as a whole. The point is to guide the student in visualising the totality, in making choices, and in giving justifications. In addition, the objective is to encourage the student

to make his/her own choices creatively and to support his/her long-term professional growth.

The thesis and the thesis process at Diak are assessed as presented in Appendices 1 and 2; assessments are based upon the assessment criteria set for UAS Bachelor's and Master's theses and upon the criteria set for development work under professional specialisation studies. These assessment criteria are used for self-assessment by the student and as a tool by the supervisor, referee and examiner in the different phases of the thesis process, and also when the final grade for the thesis is decided upon. The grade proposed for the thesis is that with a definition for which the key elements (not necessarily all elements) are identifiable in the thesis.

In a thesis process, self-assessment, the peer assessment and the assessments and feedback provided by the supervisor and the working-life representative are all fundamental for the student's professional development. An essential part of peer assessment is the use of opponents or referees. The expert assessments by supervising teachers and working-life representatives ensure the larger public of a work of high quality.

#### *4.7.1 Peer assessment*

A peer assessor or referee, an opponent, is nominated for every thesis. Functioning as an opponent is an important part of developing an analytic, systematic, i.e. research-oriented approach to professional practice, and therefore, assessments note the student's refereeing skills as well. The opponent studies the work under evaluation carefully and provides constructive feedback using the given assessment criteria. In addition, the opponent drafts questions and proposals which demonstrate the expertise of the author(s) in the subject matter, show the pros and cons of the work, and encourage dialogue concerning the work. The opponent chairs seminars arranged during the thesis process, and presents his/her view of the work and the progress of the process.

The thesis group and seminars along the way train the student in giving feedback and peer guidance. Peer assessment provides the student with an opportunity of demonstrating his/her skills in critical discussion, in providing justifications, in accepting feedback and in bringing up issues and opportunities which facilitate the work. The opponent gets practice in

chairing seminars and public events. All participants should get the floor during a discussion. The functioning of the presenter and opponent in these events is assessed according to the criteria explained in Diak's study guide under skill level criteria.

The discussion sessions arranged during the thesis process are devoted to evaluating what new knowledge will be gained from the thesis for professional development and practice. Discussions are intended to bring up possible discrepancies, the ethical questions of the work, and the challenges relating to its impacts on the community. The arrangements and the atmosphere or the event are also considered.

When the thesis is about to be finalised, the opponent must use Diak's thesis assessment criteria in his/her assessment (see Appendix 1). The opponent should also note:

- whether the subject area is of current interest
- the logic and originality of the whole
- the viewpoint and theory selected for the study
- the posing and delimitation of the research questions for a production or an R&D assignment
- the method used, data acquisition
- the use and indication of sources
- the results and conclusions
- the final paper and the final output together with the publication event.

#### *4.7.2 Overall Assessment*

The finalised thesis is checked and assessed by the supervisor and at least one more person, the examiner. They assess the work according to the criteria given in Appendix 1, and propose a grade for the thesis that is defined in terms of the key elements identifiable in the thesis. The assessment considers the work process, the final output (in productions) and the paper.

The supervisor and examiner write a statement to be attached to the thesis, containing their assessment of the work and the grade. One grade (1-5) is given to the student on the thesis (15/22 cr) as a whole. When a thesis is prepared by a pair or a group, the grade is given jointly to all of the group, or separately to each student.

The statement concerning the thesis is public, and according to the assessment criteria, it contains the following parts:

## **a) Bachelor's Degree (UAS)**

1 Author/authors, title of thesis, where published, when published

2 Task-setting

Working-life orientation: how this thesis benefits working life and develops work at the level of the workplace or the field, how the thesis fulfils their needs (produces new knowledge, operational models, methods, products etc.)

Professional growth: goals set for learning and professional development.

Task-setting: clarity of task-setting and posing the research problem; rationality, clarity and justifications of delimitations made.

3 Implementation

Functioning of the approach: the logic of the selected approach from the viewpoint of the task-setting; justification and assessment of the type of the thesis (research work or functional work) and the selected work methods and research methods.

Mastery of work, development and research methods: mastery of practices, tools and methods, skills of material production and acquisition, sufficiency and relevance of data, mastery of analytical methods, transparency of the work or development process or the research process.

Management of the thesis process: organisation of the work process and time, initiative, sense of responsibility, sense of ethics. For development projects and productions, the interfacing of the planning, implementation and evaluation of the process to working life. Work share, if there are more authors than one.

4 Justifications and originality of thinking

Conceptualisation of issues: knowledge base and framework for activities and research, appreciation and definition of concepts, visualisation of issues as parts of more extensive phenomena

Utilisation of sources, data acquisition: extent, relevance and variety of data acquisition, utilisation of sources, source criticism

Originality of thinking and argumentation: originality of thinking in the thesis, justification of conclusions, development proposals, handling of

ethical issues, innovativeness

Meaningful interaction: responsiveness to supervision, participation in seminars, ability to give, accept and use feedback.

## 5 Structure and publication

Structure: clarity, logic, layout, appearance and indication of sources all accord with instructions from Diak.

Language: grammatical, the style suits a thesis, internally coherent, fluent and rich in expression.

Publication of the thesis: preparation, justifications, presentation.

## 6 Overall assessment

## 7 Grade

Place \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the supervising teacher

Signature of the examiner

## **b) Master's Degree (UAS)**

1 Author/authors, title of thesis, where published, when published

2 Task-setting

Working-life orientation: how this thesis benefits working life and develops work at the level of the workplace or the field, how the thesis fulfils their needs (produces new knowledge, operational models, methods, products etc.).

Professional growth: goals set for learning and professional development.

Task-setting: clarity of task-setting and posing the research problem; rationality, clarity and justifications of delimitations made.

3 Implementation

Functioning of the approach: the logic of the selected approach from the viewpoint of the task-setting; justification and assessment of the type of the thesis (research work or functional work) and the selected work meth-

ods and research methods.

Mastery of work, development and research methods: mastery of practices, tools and methods, skills of material production and acquisition, sufficiency and relevance of data, mastery of analytical methods, transparency of the work or development process or the research process.

Management of the thesis process: organisation of the work process and time, initiative, sense of responsibility, sense of ethics. For development projects and productions, the interfacing of the planning, implementation and evaluation of the process to working life. Work share, if there are more authors than one.

#### 4 Justifications and originality of thinking

Conceptualisation of issues: knowledge base and framework for activities and research, appreciation and definition of concepts, visualisation of issues as parts of more extensive phenomena

Utilisation of sources, data acquisition: extent, relevance and variety of data acquisition, utilisation of sources, source criticism

Originality of thinking and argumentation: original thinking in the thesis, justification of conclusions, development proposals, handling of ethical issues, innovativeness.

Meaningful interaction: responsiveness to supervision, participation in seminars, ability to give, accept and use feedback

#### 5 Development of expertise, professional impact

Research and development: development of research and development skills, use of international and domestic research data and professional practice.

Structuring of current issues in the field: connecting of workplace-level phenomena to larger regional, national and international contexts, noting the historical perspective.

Professional practice: expertise, appreciation of leadership and power relations in the field, significance of the thesis.

#### 6 Structure and publication

Structure: clarity, logic, layout, appearance and indication of sources all accord with instructions from Diak.

Language: grammatical, the style suits a thesis, internally coherent, fluent and rich in expression.

Publication of the thesis: preparation, justifications, presentation.

6 Overall assessment

7 Grade

Paikka \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_\_\_

Ohjaavan opettajan allekirjoitus

Tarkastajan allekirjoitus

The certificate shows the grade and the title of the thesis. The clarity and wording of the title should be paid particular attention to because the title is shown on the degree certificate and the work is published under it.

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## **PART 2**

### **GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AT DIAK**

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# 1 APPEARANCE AND LANGUAGE

Detailed formatting instructions for written assignments and theses at Diak are available in the student database Vopa under Opiskelu - Opinnäytetyö.

## 1.1 Layout

Left alignment should be used: all lines including headings should begin from the same location on the left. Hyphenation and page justification should be used. The left margin needs to be a minimum of 4 cm to allow for binding. The right margin should be set to 2 cm and the top and bottom margins to 2.5 cm. Line spacing should be 1.5 and the font size 12.

Main chapter headings should be written in CAPITALS and subheadings in normal lower case letters. The main chapters in a thesis should be started from a new page each, with two blank lines below the main chapter heading. Subheadings should be preceded by two blank lines and followed by one blank line. The last heading on a page should be followed by a minimum of two text lines. If the lines do not fit on the page, the heading must be placed on the following page. In shorter written assignments, a new main heading may be placed on the same page with the preceding chapter. In such cases the main heading should be preceded by three blank lines.

If the author wants to separate a part of the text, e.g. a definition or an example, from the main text by indentation, the indent starts from the following tabulator stop, i.e. 2.3 cm from the beginning of the lines of the main text. The line spacing for indented paragraphs should be smaller (1), but, however, inverted commas should not be used even if the indented paragraph is a direct quotation. The indentation itself is enough to point out that the section is a direct quotation.

## 1.2 Page Numbers

Page numbers should be placed on the right hand corner (in the header). The pages should be numbered in Arabic numerals starting from the title page (page 1). However, the page number should first appear on the second actual text page. The title page, abstract, possible preface, list of contents and the first page of the introduction are unnumbered but counted as pages. Page numbering continues through all pages, including appendices.

## 1.3 Title Page

The title page tells the reader the name of the work. The title should be written in CAPITAL LETTERS in the centre of the paper. The font should be larger in the headings than in the main text. The title should be informative but also verbally concise. The title should reveal what the text is about and preferably also the author's perspective. The main title may be accompanied by an explanatory subtitle, which should be written in lower case letters.

The bottom right hand corner of the cover should show the author's name, type of the paper (e.g. Thesis, Summarising Assignment on the Childhood and Youth Module, International Training Report etc.), time and place of publication, degree programme, specialisation option and degree title. An example of the lower right hand corner (identification information):

Mari Diakilainen and Ari Pohtiva  
Thesis, Spring 2010  
Diaconia University of Applied Sciences  
Diak East, Pieksämäki  
Degree Programme in Social Services  
Option in Christian Child and Youth work  
Bachelor of Social Services (UAS) + qualification for the  
office of youth work leader in the Church of Finland

## 2 ABSTRACT

A thesis paper always includes an abstract. It should not extend over more than one page. It is a summary of the main content and the key results of the thesis work. The abstract is a self-contained entity that quickly provides an overview of the research paper. It briefly presents the purpose of the research, material, methods and results. Finnish students will write the abstract both in Finnish and English. They should use the past tense. In the degree programme Sign Language Interpretation, the abstract is also prepared in Sign Language.

The abstract is written in complete sentences and placed immediately after the title page. No page number is indicated on it, but it is included in the page count. The line spacing should be set at 1.

At the end of the abstract, a list of key words should be included, which describe the thesis content, help in saving the thesis in databases and facilitate searching databases. The key words in a Finnish-language abstract should be taken primarily from the YSA (Yleinen suomalainen asiasanasto, General Finnish Thesaurus). This thesaurus is available in the web as the Vesa-thesaurus (<http://vesa.lib.helsinki.fi/ysa/index.html>). The link is included in the alphabetical listing of Diak's virtual library pages.

The identification information at the beginning should give the total number of pages including appendices. If the students represent different optional studies, two options are given, separated by a slash, e.g. Option in Christian Youth Work/Option in Social Services and Education.

Sample structure for an abstract:

#### ABSTRACT

Diakilainen, Mari & Pohtiva, Aki. Challenges of Youth Work in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church. Diak East, Pieksämäki, Spring 2010, 72 p., 3 appendices.

Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, Degree Programme in Social Services, Option in Christian Child and Youth Work, Bachelor of Social Services (UAS) + qualification for the office of youth work leader in the Church of Finland.

Aim of the study

Material/Data

Methods/Process

Main results/evaluation of the output

Conclusions

Key words: church youth work, challenges, future, qualitative research

The thesis must also include an abstract in English. Hyphenation should not be used. The selection of English-language key words is facilitated by glossaries and thesauri on different specialties. Links are available in Diak's virtual library (<http://kirjastot.diak.fi/sanakirjat>).

The degree programme, option and degree title are indicated in the abstract. They are the following:

Degree Programme in Nursing

- Option in Nursing (degree title: Nurse)
- Option in Diaconal Nursing (degree title: Nurse)
- Option in Health Care (degree title: Public Health Nurse)

Degree Programme in Social Services (Degree title: Bachelor of Social Services)

- Option in Social Services and Education
- Option in Christian Youth Work
- Option in Diaconal Social Work

Degree Programme in Sign Language Interpretation (Degree title: Sign Language Interpreter)

Degree Programme in Communication and Media  
(Degree title: Bachelor of Media)  
- Option of TV, Radio and Web Journalism  
- Option of Media Education

### 3 CONTENTS

The heading of the table of contents should be short, such as CONTENTS. A table of contents is used in all extensive written works but not, for example, for essay-like products.

The table of contents must include all the headings of the paper in exactly the same form as in the text. A good heading is informative, easily comprehensible and fairly short. It should, however, reflect the most significant limits of paper.

Headings (including introduction) and any subheadings should be numbered consecutively both in the table of contents and in the text. The numbers in a heading are separated by a full stop, but there should not be a full stop after the last number. Main headings should be written in CAPITAL LETTERS and subheadings in lower case letters. Use increasingly indented lines for different levels of subheadings (in the table of contents only).

The starting page of a chapter (this also applies to the table of contents and appendices) should be shown in the table of contents. It is customary to have more than one subchapter; thus, there should be at least two subheadings of the same level. The text should be structured to have no more than three levels of headings.

## 4 STRUCTURE

### 4.1 Introduction

The introduction is an invitation to an exhilarating and rewarding reading experience. It explains to the reader the starting situation: why does the author want to explore that exact subject, what broader thematic entity is the subject related to, what practical benefit can be gained from the work and its results, what is the actual research task or research problem, and from what perspective is it dealt with? The length of the introduction should be 1—2 pages.

It is recommended that the title of the introduction be naturally related to the content of the introduction chapter such as “The Starting Points for Training for Confirmation Class Work”.

### 4.2 Main Body

The main body is divided into several chapters. In the main body, the author communicates what she/he has learnt, read and experienced in a factual style. References must be used to separate the author’s own ideas from information obtained from source literature.

Research problems and questions should be presented in the form of questions that cannot be sufficiently answered by “yes” or “no”. The concepts should be defined. The reader should be able to determine in what sense the author uses the main concepts.

The main body contains the documentation of the various phases of the thesis project and the selection criteria used. For more detail on suggested structures for different types of work, please see chapter 4.6.1. The results should be explained in relation to the problems and the reader should be able to find the main results without difficulty. The results section does not

normally include the interpretation of the results. However, if the author wants to interpret the results and draw conclusions at this point, it should be indicated in the heading: Results and Conclusions. The results can be presented in writing and by using tables and figures. The presentation of results may also be supplemented with web pages, DVDs, video clips, drama or music performances, or study materials.

The author should pay conscious attention to the use of tenses. When the author refers to her/his thesis project process, the appropriate tense is the past tense. The past tense should also be used when referring to previously published research and to the author's or other researchers' special results.

When the author refers to the completed research in question it is natural to use the present tense. The present tense is also suitable when the author writes about the theoretical background and wants to give the impression that she/he agrees with the source. It is also justified to use the present tense when examining the results, if the author thinks that the issue has broader significance.

### **4.3 Discussion and Conclusions**

The most important results will be gathered in the discussion part and analysed critically. The results will be assessed in relation to previous research results, and the suitability and reliability of the methods, ethical dimensions and factors that have influenced the results will also be assessed. The discussion part includes suggestions for further research and possible additional questions that have been raised during the research. The author may discuss the relation of each individual result to practice and to the general problems concerning the phenomenon and related theory.

Conclusions may be written in a separate paragraph. In this paragraph, the author should consider the practical applications of the results and the whole thesis project and the conclusions in terms of research-orientation in professional practice.

It would be best to formulate the heading of the discussion part on the basis of the core idea of the chapter.

#### **4.4 Tables, Figures and Pictures**

The subject may be illustrated by using figures, tables, pictures or other means. They should be numbered consecutively in their categories. Traditionally the number and title of a table are placed above the table, whereas the number and title of a figure are placed below the figure. In a title the word TABLE or FIGURE is capitalised. A full stop should be placed after the number of a table or figure before the title text. The title text should not be followed by a full stop.

Figures and tables should be self-contained entities. Figures and tables are referred to or commented on in the text preceding them, but they will not be explained again. If a figure, table or picture, etc. is copied from another source, this should be indicated by using a reference.

## 5 REFERENCING

### 5.1 References in the Text

In-text references tell the reader where and from whom the information comes from. References are written in (parentheses) and placed after the cited section, for example at the end of a sentence or paragraph. Reference notes must be used at the end of summarised and direct citations. References must also be used when the sources referred to are other than literary sources. For example, if pictures are included, the author should make sure that their publication in the thesis does not violate the copyright of others.

There are several commonly used reference styles. The style to be used at Diak is described below (see Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009). The following content should be placed in parentheses:

- the author's last name; if not available then use the title of the publication or text, or in case of Internet sources the name of the corporate author
- the publication year if known or n.d. (no date)
- comma and space
- page number (not necessary, if the citation refers to a large entity or internet source).

The place of the full stop depends on whether the author refers to one or more preceding sentences. If the reference note only covers one sentence, the full stop is placed after the closing parenthesis:

The market economy is an economy in which the production of goods and services is based on the motivation of material interest; distribution of goods and services is entrusted to the market, which sets the price that brings supply and demand together for the exchange of goods and services (Evers & Laville 2004, 18).

If the reference note covers more than one preceding sentence, the full stop is placed inside the parentheses:

The non-market economy is an economy in which the production and distribution of goods and services are entrusted to redistribution organised under the tutelage of the welfare state. Redistribution is mobilised to provide citizens with individual rights, thanks to which they are entitled to social security benefits, or last resort assistance if they are part of the most disadvantaged groups. (Evers & Laville 2004, 18-19.)

If the text is cited from more sources than one, the references are separated by the semi-colon; for example (Uusitalo 1991, 10; Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 56.).

If there are two authors, both of them should be mentioned in every reference note. Within the text, the word “and” should be placed between the authors’ names, whereas the character “&” should be used within parentheses:

Raittila ja Sutinen (2008, 14) korostavat...

Uusperheen arki on haastava (Raittila & Sutinen 2008, 14).

If there are 3—5 authors, all of them should be mentioned the first time the reference occurs. Subsequent reference notes to the same source there should have the first author’s last name followed by *et al.* If there are six or more authors, the first reference note may have the short form *first author’s last name et al.*, for example: (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009, 47–48.)

Primary sources should always be used if possible. The source must be mentioned even if the original author’s ideas are cited from another author’s work:

Salomon (1987; 1990) and Lewis (1997) discuss the theoretical implications in more detail (cited in Evers & Laville 2003, 21.)

WWW pages are referred to in the same manner as other sources: Internet sources are entered in the list of references similarly to the other sources (see chapter 5.2). The reference note should include the name of the author, organisation or site, as well as the publication year if it is mentioned on the pages. The reference note does not include the internet address. For

example, the following information comes from the web pages of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) at [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org):

Only 20 per cent of the world's population has adequate social security coverage, and more than half lack any coverage at all. (International Labour Organisation)

Laws are referred to by the name and the year of the Act, for example (Act on Social Assistance 1997).

Reference to a personal communication, e.g. a phone conversation, letter or e-mail should include the person's first name and last name, as well as the date as accurately as possible:

According to Raili Mikkonen (personal communication 28.4.2005) the connection between the stated issues has been confirmed.

The reference to personal communication can also be placed in parentheses at the end of a sentence or paragraph:

(Raili Mikkonen, personal communication 28.4.2005)

Lecture recordings are referred to in the same way as other lecture materials: (Näkki 2006.) The alphabetical list of references will give the precise source in N, Näkki.

Bible references should use the same conventional form as in other contexts, for example Ps. 139:7—18.

More detailed information on referencing can be found in the book Hirsjärvi, Sirkka; Remes, Pirkko & Sajavaara, Paula 2009. *Tutki ja kirjoita*. Helsinki: Tammi.

## **5.2 List of References**

The list of references is an alphabetical list of those sources that the author has actually used in her/his work and to which she/he refers in the text. Respectively, all sources referred to in the text must be found in the list of references with a matching beginning. This way the in-text reference note directs the reader to the right item in the list of references. The list

of references provides the reader with details on the source that are as comprehensive as possible, so that the reader can find it, for example, in a library.

The title of the list of references should be REFERENCES. The layout of the list of references should be clear and easy to browse. To make it easier to find the reference entries, the second and subsequent lines of each reference should be indented (a hanging indent).

Books should be referenced with the following information: author(s), publication year, title of the book, edition (if more than one exists), name of the publication series and serial number, as well as publisher and place of publication. If an article referred to is part of a compilation, the name of the article should be mentioned first, followed by the title of the compilation, possibly the name of the publication series and the serial number and, finally, the page range of the article within the publication. If a text referred to is part of a thesis, the name of the author should be mentioned first, followed by the title of the thesis, university (school), the site or department, degree programme if necessary, and the type of thesis (e.g. Pro gradu -thesis).

Examples:

Evers, Adalbert and Laville, Jean-Louis 2004. Defining the third sector in Europe. In Evers, Adalbert & Laville, Jean-Louis (ed.): The Third Sector in Europe. Cheltenham, Edgar Elgar, 11-42.

Rose, Nikolas 1999. Powers of Freedom. 4th edition. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

A journal article or an article in a scientific journal is entered in the list of references with the following details: name of the author, publication year, name of the article, name of the journal, volume (if possible), issue or date and page range. It is enough to give the date and page number, if the cited article was published in a daily newspaper.

Examples:

Bronstein, Laura R. & Admiraal, Kristen 2005. Implications of an Aging Population

on the Delivery of Public Sector Social Services. *Families in Society* 86 (1), 47–54.

Leventhal, Emily A. & Mears, Daniel P. 2002. Will Churches Respond to the Call? Religion, Civic Responsibility, and Social Service. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare* 29 (2), 53–77. Accessed 9.5.2005 <http://search.enet.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&an=7054656>

Liiten, Marjukka 2005. Koululaisten itsetunto on kohentunut. *Helsingin Sanomat* 3.6., A12.

### Examples of official publications

National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008—2010. Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Helsinki, 2008.

References to electronic sources should include the same details as references to any other sources, but the internet address should be stated instead of, or in addition to, publishing details. Moreover, the date of access or reference date should be mentioned. Single Web pages should be printed out or saved. It is unnecessary, and often impossible, to print out large, protected Web publications that are possibly published as printed versions and can be compared to printed sources (e-books and e-magazines).

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2008. Government Resolution on Development Guidelines for Health Enhancing Physical Activity and Nutrition. Helsinki, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Accessed 2nd of December 2009. <http://www.stm.fi/Resource.phx/publishing/store/2008/11/hm1227863203755/passthru.pdf>

International Labour Organisation. Mission and objectives. Accessed 2nd of February 2009. [http://www.ilo.org/global/About\\_the\\_ILO/Mission\\_and\\_objectives/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Mission_and_objectives/lang-en/index.htm) Printed and filed by the author

The internet addresses of e-books and e-journals acquired through the Nelli-portal do not always allow finding the material again with the same address, or they may be too long or cumbersome to include. In those cases, the source should be indicated with the text ”available at <http://www.nelliportaali.fi> ” and the name of the data or database.

## Examples:

Farrell, Warren 2005. Why Men Earn More: The Startling Truth Behind the Pay Gap and What Women Can Do about It. New York: AMACOM. Accessed 9th May 2005 <http://site.ebrary.com>

Isokorpi, Tia 2004. Tunneälytaitojen ja yhteisöllisyyden oppiminen reflektoinnin ja ryhmäprosessin avulla. Hämeenlinna: Hämeen ammattikorkeakoulu. Accessed 9th of May 2005 <http://www.eweline.com>

Raike, Antti 2005. Löytäjät – elokuvantajua rakentamassa [Yhteisöllinen www-palvelun tuotanto]. Taideteollisen korkeakoulun julkaisusarja. A, 57. Helsinki: Taide-teollinen korkeakoulu. Väitöskirja. Accessed 9.5.2005 <http://www.uiah.fi/ISBN/951-558-172-9/>

The following provides an example of a book in Ellibs used via the Diana database:

Isokorpi, Tia 2004. Tunneälytaitojen ja yhteisöllisyyden oppiminen reflektoinnin ja ryhmäprosessin avulla. Hämeenlinna: HAMK University of Applied Sciences. Accessed 9.5.2005. Available at <http://diana.amkit.fi>, Ellibs.

If the author is not known, the title of the book and the publisher should be mentioned first both in the reference note and the list of references. In case of internet sources, the corporate publisher should be stated first.

## Examples:

Diaconia University of Applied Sciences 2010. Maahanmuuttajataustaisten ammattikorkeakouluopintoihin orientoiva koulutus 2010–2011. Accessed 23.4.2010. <http://www.diak.fi/maahanmuuttajille>.

Kriminaalihuoltolaitos & vankeinhoitolaitos 2006. Vuosikertomus 2006. Helsinki: Criminal Sanctions Agency.

Lastensuojelun Keskusliitto 2007. Varpu eli Varhaisen puuttumisen -hanke. Accessed 15.6.2007. [http://www.lskl.fi/showPage.php?page\\_id=66](http://www.lskl.fi/showPage.php?page_id=66).

If the sources include several works by the same author, they should be given in the order of publication with the oldest first. If these works are dated the same year, they should be identified by the letters a, b, etc. after

the publication year. The reference note should follow this practice as well.

The required data of a lecture recording is provided as follows:

Näkki, Pirjo 2006. Velat vankien sosiaalisen integroitumisen esteenä. Lecture in the seminar Tutkimus ja kehittäminen vapautuvien vankien jälkihuollossa 7.12.2006. Diaconia University of Applied Sciences: Oppimateriaalipankki.

If unpublished sources are used, the type of the source should be mentioned, for example an interview, lecture or letter. If the author refers to an interview, e-mail or oral communication, the role, work place and date of communication should be stated if necessary. The recipients of e-mail messages should be given. If the author uses several unpublished sources, the published and unpublished sources can be placed into separate groups in the list of references.

Examples:

Mikkonen, Raili 2010. Sosiaalityöntekijä, Vaalijalan kuntoutuskeskus. Pieksämäki. Personal communication 15.4.

Manninen, Seija 2010. Deaconess, Heinävesi Parish. Heinävesi. E-mail 12.5. Recipient Mari Diakilainen. Print-out kept by the author.

If the citations include material from online discussion forums, the titles and dates of the strings are given followed by the name of the forum, access date and the internet address. Blog references should give the writer, the title of the writing (if any), the name of the blog, the date of the cited writing, access date and internet address.

Examples:

Kohtaamisia päihdehoidoissa 2007. Discussion forum Päihdelinkki 8.6. Accessed 1.6.2007 <http://www.paihdelinkki.fi/keskustelu/>.

Milloin sitä ei enää ole syöpälapsen äiti? 2007. Discussion forum Syöpäjärjestöt – Lap- sellani on syöpä 9.5. Accessed 21.5.2007 <http://www.cancer.fi/keskustelut/keskus- telufoorumi/>.

Niinistö, Ville 2007. Apurahatyöläisten sosiaaliturva korjattava pikaisesti. In blog Heijastuksia 15.7. Accessed 21.6.2007 <http://www.villeniinisto.blog-spot.com/>.

Siukonen, Antti 2006. In blog Nuorikirkko.net 9.11. Accessed 21.6.2007 <http://nuorikirkko.net/index.php>.

References to the Bible should use the form that is adopted, e.g. in the Faculty of Theology of the University of Helsinki. The cited section of the Bible should not be mentioned in the list of references, but the entry should only include the bibliographical details found in the title page of the Bible used.

Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005

References to movies should give the title (also the original title), country and year of origin. The authors are given as the director, script-writer, producer (if known) and actors and other persons involved as necessary.

Mies vailla menneisyyttä. Finland 2002. Director Aki Kaurismäki. Script Aki Kaurismäki. Producer Aki Kaurismäki.

Kuolleiden runoilijoiden seura (Dead Poets Society). USA 1989. Director Peter Weir. Script Tom Schulman.

References to TV and radio programmes should include the name of the programme, the country and year of origin and names of person involved (director, editor, producer). The broadcast time and channel should also be given.

Tosi tarina: Suvun ensimmäinen. Finland 2007. Director Hilikka Säävälä. Producer: Kuvakieli Ky. Broadcast on 14.6.2007 YLE TV1.

Silminnäkijä - Suomi sairastaa: Avuton vanhuus. Finland 2007. Ed. Tiina Merikanto. Broadcast on 19/06/2007 YLE TV2.

Tuhat kiloa dynamiittia. Finland 2007. Ed. Marko Lehtimäki. Broadcast on 20/06/2007 Radio Dei.

References to DVD, VHS and CD recordings should include the name, format of recording, author(s), publisher and place of publication (distributor). If a DVD presents a movie or TV series which originates

from a year earlier than the DVD, the year of the original publication should be given in parentheses. Movies and programmes should always be given under their names in the list of references and in reference notes.

Laki omaishoidon tuesta DVD 2007. Rovaniemi: Euro TV-News.

Levottomat lapset: ADHD - uusi kansantautimme? VHS 2005. Editor, director, script-writer Tom Östling. Helsinki: YLE Cassette and Disc Sales.

Star Wars: Episodi 1 – Pimeä uhka (Star Wars: Episode I – Phantom Menace). (USA 1999) DVD 2006. Director Georg Lucas. Distribution FSFilm.

Tanssi tasavertaisuudelle: video vertaistukitoiminnasta DVD 2004. Choreography Riikka Kekäläinen. Directors Tarja Lapila and Timo Lapila. Helsinki: Finnish Central Association for Mental Health.

## 6 APPENDIXES

Only material that has been referred to in the text can be attached to the paper as an appendix. Appendices should be numbered consecutively and they should have a heading. (E.g. APPENDIX 1: Regulations of the Youth Home). Appendices may include e.g. charts, drawings, lists, questionnaires and maps. The research permit should not be appended to the thesis for reasons of data protection. Appendices are listed in the table of contents in the numerical order of their titles. The consecutive page numbering continues through the appendices; or in other words, appendices are included in the total page count.

## **APPENDIX 1: THESIS ASSESSMENT CRITERIA – BACHELOR'S DEGREE (UAS)**

### **Areas assessed in education focusing on the basic UAS degree (Bachelor's Degree)**

#### **I TASK-SETTING**

Working-life orientation: how this thesis benefits working life and develops work at the level of the workplace or the field, how the thesis fulfils their needs (produces new knowledge, operational models, methods, products etc.)

Professional growth: goals set for learning and professional development.

Task-setting: clarity of task-setting and posing the research problem; rationality, clarity and justifications of delimitations made.

#### **II IMPLEMENTATION**

Functioning of the approach: The logic of the selected approach from the viewpoint of the task-setting; justification and critical assessment of the type of the thesis (research work or functional work) and the selected work methods and research methods.

Mastery of work practices and research methodology: Mastery of practices, tools and methods, skills of material production and acquisition, sufficiency and relevance of data, mastery of analytical methods, transparency of the work or development process or the research process.

Management of the thesis process: organisation of the work process and time, initiative, sense of responsibility, sense of ethics. For development projects and productions, in particular, the interfacing of the planning, implementation and evaluation of the process to working life. Work share, if there are more authors than one.

### III JUSTIFICATIONS AND ORIGINALITY OF THINKING

*Conceptualisation of issues:* knowledge base and framework for activities and research, appreciation and definition of concepts, visualisation of issues as parts of more extensive phenomena.

Utilisation of sources, data acquisition: extent, relevance and variety of data acquisition, utilisation of sources, source criticism.

Originality of thinking and argumentation: original thinking in the thesis, justification of conclusions, development proposals, handling of ethical issues, innovativeness.

Meaningful interaction: responsiveness to supervision, participation in seminars, ability to give, accept and use feedback.

### IV FORM

Language: grammatical, the style suits a thesis, internally coherent, fluent and rich in expression.

Structure: clarity, logic, layout, appearance and indication of sources all accord with instructions from Diak.

Presentation of the thesis: preparation, justifications, presentation style.

### TABLE 1. BASIC UAS DEGREE ORIENTED EDUCATION - ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The table presents the criteria for grades 1, 3 and 5. Grades 2 and 4 will be between the criteria presented below.

Assessment criteria	Satisfactory 1	Good 3	Excellent 5
I Task-setting	<u>Working-life orientation</u> : The topic is related to the professional field and interfaces with working life, but does not meet working life needs as such.	<u>Working-life orientation</u> : The topic is closely connected to working life needs and benefits working life.	<u>Working-life orientation</u> : The thesis develops practices or products at the level of the workplace or the field, or produces new, significant knowledge to respond to working life needs.
	<u>Professional growth</u> : The goal-setting for the development of professional competence is not very clear.	<u>Professional growth</u> : The goal-setting for the development of professional competence is clear..	<u>Professional growth</u> : The goals for the development of professional competence have been set high.
	<u>Task-setting</u> : The clarity of task-setting is compromised, the delimitation of the topic is not entirely successful (too extensive or too narrow) and its justifications are lacking.	<u>Task-setting</u> : The task-setting is clear, sensible and well-justified.	<u>Task-setting</u> : The task-setting shows insight, it is challenging, clear and sensible, and it is justified from the points of view of working life and research equally.

II Implementation	<p><u>Functioning of the approach:</u> The approach is not particularly well-suited for the task. The justifications presented for the approach are insufficient.</p>	<p><u>Functioning of the approach:</u> The approach is appropriate from the viewpoint of the task, and clear justifications are presented to explain why it was selected.</p>	<p><u>Functioning of the approach:</u> The approach is clear and well-justified from the point of view of the task-setting. Different alternatives have been critically examined and the selected approach and methods have been clearly justified from different viewpoints.</p>
	<p><u>Mastery of work practices and research methodology:</u> There are obvious gaps in the mastery of the required tools and methods. The data is deficient or one-sided in scope. The description and analysis of data acquisition as well as the description and analysis of the project or product process are superficial and unsystematic. The phases and methods of analysis have been described, but the clarity and precision of the description are insufficient.</p>	<p><u>Mastery of work practices and research methodology:</u> The student masters the required tools and methodologies at the level required of this thesis. The material is sufficient and appropriate and has been acquired by expedient means. The data acquisition, the project or product process as well as the phases and methods of the analysis have been clearly described. The analysis is of high quality and proceeds fluently.</p>	<p><u>Mastery of work practices and research methodology:</u> The student masters the required tools, methodologies and product processes at the professional level. The material is ample and versatile and it has been acquired by expedient means. The data acquisition, the project or product process as well as the phases and methods of the analysis have been described precisely, clearly and logically. The analysis shows insight and demonstrates a systematic approach.</p>

<p>II Implementa- tion</p>	<p><u>Management of the thesis process:</u> There have been obvious problems related to the mastery of the thesis process and time management. The student has not succeeded in independent work nor has he/she demonstrated the required sense of responsibility and ethics. The working life connection has been problematic in all or some of the process phases. The work share has been problematic (if more authors than one).</p>	<p><u>Management of the thesis process:</u> The thesis process and time management have taken place as planned; the student has mostly been able to abide by the agreed schedules. The student has worked in a responsible and ethical manner and kept all agreements made. The working-life connection has been appropriate and has functioned well in the different process phases (planning, implementation, evaluation). The work share has been appropriate and just (if more authors than one).</p>	<p><u>Management of the thesis process:</u> The thesis process and time management have been well-planned; the student has been able to abide by the agreed schedules. The student has worked independently in a responsible manner, shown ethical consideration and kept all agreements made. In all process phases (planning, implementation, evaluation), the working-life connection has been well-planned and expedient, and the student has demonstrated a sense of responsibility. The work share has been appropriate and just (if more authors than one).</p>
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III Justifications and original thinking	<p><u>Conceptualisation:</u> An attempt has been made to justify the selection of concepts, but their definitions and use are insufficient. The knowledge base is insufficient. The appreciation of issues is relatively narrow.</p>	<p><u>Conceptualisation:</u> The selection of concepts is well-justified and their definitions are clear. Issues are connected to wider contexts. The knowledge base is varied. Appreciation of issues is demonstrated in their treatment, justifications and selections.</p>	<p><u>Conceptualisation:</u> The selection and definition of concepts are logical, insightful and well-justified. Issues are effortlessly connected to wider contexts. The knowledge base is varied. The good appreciation of issues is demonstrated in their treatment, justifications and selections.</p>
	<p><u>Sources and data acquisition:</u> The use of domestic and foreign sources is limited. Source criticism is insufficient.</p>	<p>The sources are relevant. <u>Sources and data acquisition:</u> The use of domestic and foreign sources is appropriate, and they have been assessed with sufficient judiciousness. The sources are relevant and of current interest.</p>	<p><u>Sources and data acquisition:</u> The use of domestic and foreign sources is ample, varied and expedient. Sources have been judiciously assessed. The sources are relevant, of high quality, and of current interest.</p>
	<p><u>Originality of thinking:</u> The student's own thinking and argumentation are seen only sporadically. Justifications and conclusions are presented, but they are not carefully considered. Ethical questions have been dealt with.</p>	<p><u>Originality of thinking:</u> Original thinking, argumentation skills and the appreciation of the subject matter are demonstrated. Justifications and conclusions are clear. Ethical choices have been dealt with and the student has explained his/her grounds. The thesis contains some innovative ideas.</p>	<p><u>Originality of thinking:</u> Original thinking, argumentation and the appreciation of the subject matter are demonstrated in many ways. Justifications and conclusions are clear, insightful and logical. Ethical choices have been dealt in many ways, and the student has explained his/her grounds. The thesis is innovative in character.</p>

<p>III Justifications and original thinking</p>	<p><u>Interaction:</u> The student has participated in guidance sessions only occasionally and has not made the best possible use of guidance and peer feedback in his/her thesis. The student has not prepared sufficiently for guidance sessions and seminars. The student's seminar work has been relatively passive.</p>	<p><u>Interaction:</u> The student has participated in guidance sessions appropriately and made some use of the guidance and peer feedback in his/her thesis. The student has prepared properly for guidance sessions and seminars. The student's seminar work has been active.</p>	<p><u>Interaction:</u> The student has participated in guidance sessions actively and made good use of the guidance and peer feedback for the improvement of his/her thesis. The student has prepared well for guidance sessions and seminars. The student's seminar work has been active, constructive and encouraging.</p>
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IV Form	<p><u>Language:</u> The language is not very fluent, and mistakes occur. Some aspects of the style are not appropriate in a thesis. The text forms a whole.</p>	<p><u>Language:</u> The language is fluent and almost faultless. The style is appropriate for a thesis. The text forms a coherent whole.</p>	<p><u>Language:</u> The language is fluent and faultless. The style is appropriate for a thesis. The text forms a coherent, logical, easy-flowing whole rich in nuances.</p>
	<p><u>Structure:</u> The structure of the thesis is clear. The layout, form and references contain a few mistakes.</p>	<p><u>Structure:</u> The structure of the thesis is clear. The layout, form and references correspond to the relevant instructions.</p>	<p><u>Structure:</u> The structure of the thesis is clear and justified. The layout, form and references correspond to the relevant instructions.</p>
	<p><u>Form of product</u> (in a thesis that contains a production): The product is unpolished in its expression, form and technical implementation.</p>	<p><u>Form of product</u> (in a thesis that contains a production): The product functions well as to its expression, form and technical implementation.</p>	<p><u>Form of product</u> (in a thesis that contains a production): The product functions excellently as to its expression, form and technical implementation.</p>
	<p><u>Presentation:</u> The live presentation is clear. The student justifies his/her solutions as well as his/her responses to questions.</p>	<p><u>Presentation:</u> The live presentation is clear and interactive. The student justifies his/her solutions as well as his/her responses to questions.</p>	<p><u>Presentation:</u> The live presentation is clear and skilfully prepared. The presentation is interactive and flexible. The student justifies his/her solutions as well as his/her responses to questions.</p>

## **APPENDIX 2: HIGHER UAS DEGREE - THESIS ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

### **Areas assessed in education focusing on the higher UAS degree**

#### **I TASK-SETTING**

Working-life orientation: This thesis benefits working life and develops work at the level of the workplace or the field and fulfils their needs (produces new knowledge, operational models, methods, products etc.).

Professional growth: Goals set for learning and professional development.

Task-setting: Clarity of task-setting and posing the research problem; rationality, clarity and justifications of delimitations made.

#### **II IMPLEMENTATION**

Functioning of the approach: The logic of the selected approach from the viewpoint of the task-setting; justification and critical assessment of the type of the thesis (research work or functional work) and the selected work methods and research methods.

Mastery of work practices and research methodology: Mastery of practices, tools and methods, skills of material production and acquisition, sufficiency and relevance of data, mastery of analytical methods, transparency of the work or development process or the research process.

Management of the thesis process: Organisation of the work process and time, initiative, sense of responsibility, sense of ethics. For development projects and productions, the interfacing of the planning, implementation and evaluation of the process to working life. Work share, if there are more authors than one.

### III JUSTIFICATIONS AND ORIGINALITY OF THINKING

Conceptualisation of issues: Knowledge base and framework for activities and research, appreciation and definition of concepts, visualisation of issues as parts of more extensive phenomena.

Utilisation of sources, data acquisition: Extent, relevance and variety of data acquisition, utilisation of sources, source criticism.

Originality of thinking and argumentation: Original thinking in the thesis, justification of conclusions, development proposals, handling of ethical issues, innovativeness.

Meaningful interaction: Responsiveness to supervision, participation in seminars, ability to give, accept and use feedback.

### IV DEVELOPMENT OF EXPERTISE, PROFESSIONAL IMPACT

Research and development: Development of research and development skills, use of international and domestic research data and professional practices.

Structuring of current issues in the field: Connecting of workplace-level phenomena to wider regional, national and international contexts, noting the historical perspective.

Professional practices: Expertise, appreciation of leadership and power relations in the field, significance of the thesis.

### V FORM

Language: Grammatical, the style suits a thesis, internally coherent, fluent and rich in expression.

Structure: Clarity, logic, layout, appearance and references all accord with instructions from Diak.

Presentation of the thesis: Preparation, justifications, presentation style.

**TABLE 2. HIGHER UAS DEGREE ORIENTED EDUCATION - ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

The table presents the criteria for grades 1, 3 and 5. Grades 2 and 4 will be between the criteria presented below.

Assessment criteria	Satisfactory 1	Good 3	Excellent 5
I Task-setting	<p><u>Working-life orientation:</u> The topic is related to the relevant professional field as well as to the regional development needs and/or the development needs of working life.</p> <p><u>Professional growth:</u> Some goal-setting for the development of professional competence has been attempted.</p> <p><u>Task-setting:</u> The clarity of task-setting is compromised, the delimitation of the topic is not entirely successful. The task-setting is justified from a narrow perspective.</p>	<p><u>Working-life orientation:</u> The topic is closely related to the regional development needs and/or the development needs of working life.</p> <p><u>Professional growth:</u> The goal-setting for the development of professional competence is clear. Goals related to professional development have been set upon the work community and/or parties operating in the field.</p> <p><u>Task-setting:</u> The task-setting is clear and sensible, and its justifications are explained.</p>	<p><u>Working-life orientation:</u> The topic is innovative and significant from the perspective of the regional development needs or the development needs of working life.</p> <p><u>Professional growth:</u> The goals for the development of professional competence have clearly been set high, they suit the task-setting, and they are attainable.</p> <p><u>Task-setting:</u> The task-setting shows insight, it is challenging, clear and sensible, and it is justified from the points of view of working life and research equally.</p>

<p>II Im- plemen- tation</p>	<p><u>Functioning of the se- lected approach:</u> The approach is somewhat problematic in view of the task-setting. The justifications presented for the approach are insufficient.</p> <p><u>Mastery of work prac- tices and research meth- odology:</u> There are gaps in the mastery of the required work methods. The data is deficient and one-sided in scope. The analysis remains superficial and unsystematic. The phases and methods of the work, research data acquisition and analysis have been described, but the clarity and precision of the description are insufficient.</p> <p><u>Management of the the- sis process:</u> There have been obvious problems related to the mastery of the thesis process and time management. The student has not succeeded in independent work. The student has not demonstrated the sense of responsibility and ethics required for higher UAS degrees. The work share has been problematic (if more authors than one).</p>	<p><u>Functioning of the ap- proach:</u> The approach is appropriate from the viewpoint of the task, and clear justifications are presented to explain why it was selected.</p> <p><u>Mastery of work practices and research methodology:</u> The student masters the research tools and methods at the level required for this thesis. The material is sufficient and appropriate and it has been acquired by expedient means. The analysis of the data or work is smooth. The phases and methods of data acquisition and analysis have been clearly described.</p> <p><u>Management of the thesis process:</u> The thesis process and time management are planned and work sufficiently well. The student has proceeded according to the agreed schedule. The student has worked in a responsible and ethical manner . The working-life connection has been appropriate and has functioned well in the different process phases (planning, implementation, evaluation). The work share has been appropriate and just (if more authors than one).</p>	<p><u>Functioning of the ap- proach:</u> The approach is suitable from different perspectives. Different alternatives have been critically examined and the selected approach and methods have been clearly justified from different viewpoints. <u>Mastery of work practices and research methodology:</u> The student masters the research tools and work processes excellently. The material is ample and versatile and it has been acquired by expedient means. The data analysis shows insight and demonstrates a systematic approach. The phases and methods of data acquisition and analysis have been clearly and logically described.</p> <p><u>Management of the the- sis process:</u> The thesis process and time management have been well-planned; the student has been able to abide by the agreed schedules. The student has worked independently in a responsible manner, shown ethical consideration and kept all agreements made. In all process phases (planning, implementation, evaluation), the working-life connection has been well-planned and expedient, and the student has demonstrated a sense of responsibility. The work share has been appropriate and just (if more authors than one).</p>
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<p>III Justifi- cations and origi- nality of thinking</p>	<p><u>Conceptualisation:</u> The selection, definition and use of concepts are mostly faultless, but the perspective is narrow. The knowledge base is rather limited. The subject matter is understood, but justifications lack scope and the logic may be slightly faulty.</p> <p><u>Sources and data acquisition:</u> The use of domestic sources is appropriate, but foreign sources are scarce. Source criticism has been presented, but it is somewhat narrow in scope. The sources are relevant.</p> <p><u>Originality of thinking:</u> The student's own thinking and argumentation are seen only sporadically. Justifications and conclusions are presented, but they are somewhat one-sided. Ethical questions have been dealt with from a narrow perspective.</p> <p><u>Interaction:</u> The student has not made the best possible use of guidance sessions and peer feedback in his/her thesis. The student has not prepared sufficiently for guidance sessions and seminars.</p>	<p><u>Conceptualisation:</u> The selection and definition of concepts is logical, insightful and varied. Phenomena are connected to wider contexts. The knowledge base is varied. The appreciation of the whole is demonstrated in treatment, justifications and selections.</p> <p><u>Sources and data acquisition:</u> The use of domestic and foreign sources is appropriate, and they have been assessed with a critical eye. The sources are relevant and of current interest.</p> <p><u>Originality of thinking:</u> Original thinking, argumentation skills and the appreciation of the subject matter are all well demonstrated. Justifications and conclusions are clear. Ethical choices have been dealt in many ways, and the student has explained his/her grounds well. The thesis contains some innovative ideas.</p> <p><u>Interaction:</u> The student has participated in guidance sessions appropriately and made good use of guidance and peer feedback in his/her thesis. The student has prepared properly for guidance sessions and seminars. The student's seminar work has been active.</p>	<p><u>Conceptualisation:</u> The selection and definition of concepts is logical, insightful, well-justified and of expert quality. Phenomena are effortlessly connected to wider contexts. The knowledge base is extensive and varied. Deep appreciation of the phenomena is demonstrated in treatment, justifications and selections.</p> <p><u>Sources and data acquisition:</u> The use of domestic and foreign sources is ample, varied and expedient. Sources have been judiciously assessed with a critical eye. The sources are relevant, of high quality, and of current interest.</p> <p><u>Originality of thinking:</u> Original thinking, argumentation and the appreciation of the subject matter are demonstrated in many ways. Justifications and conclusions are clear, insightful and logical. Ethical choices have been dealt in many ways, and the student has explained his/her grounds. The thesis is innovative in character and it improves working life.</p> <p><u>Interaction:</u> The student has participated in guidance sessions actively and has made insightful use of guidance, peer feedback and his/her working-life knowledge for the improvement of his/her thesis. The student has prepared well for guidance sessions and seminars. The student's seminar work has been active, constructive and encouraging.</p>
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<p>IV Development of expertise, professional impact</p>	<p><u>Research and development:</u> The student's R&amp;D skills are at the level required of good work for the basic UAS degree. Foreign and domestic research data and professional practices have been used.</p> <p><u>Structuring of current issues in the field:</u> Workplace-level phenomena have been placed into wider contexts.</p> <p><u>Professional practices:</u> Elements and phenomena relating to leadership and power-relations in the field have been treated. The student's expertise is seen only sporadically. The broader significance of the thesis has been discussed from a narrow perspective.</p>	<p><u>Research and development:</u> The student's R&amp;D skills are more advanced than required for the basic UAS degree. Foreign and domestic research data and professional practices have been used.</p> <p><u>Structuring of current issues in the field:</u> Workplace-level phenomena have been connected to wider regional, national and international contexts. The significance of historical change has been seen.</p> <p><u>Professional practices:</u> Elements and phenomena relating to leadership and power-relations in the field have been understood. The student's expertise is seen clearly. The broader significance of the thesis has been discussed from several perspectives. Ideas for further development have been presented.</p>	<p><u>Research and development:</u> The student's R&amp;D skills are clearly more advanced than required for the basic UAS degree. Foreign and domestic research data and professional practices have been used well in a versatile manner.</p> <p><u>Structuring of current issues in the field:</u> Workplace-level phenomena have been connected to wider regional, national and international contexts. The significance of historical change has been noted well.</p> <p><u>Professional practices:</u> Elements and phenomena relating to leadership and power-relations in the field have been analysed with insight. The student's expertise is seen clearly and in many ways in the thesis. The broader significance of the thesis has been discussed from many perspectives using a critical eye. Ideas for further development have been presented from many perspectives.</p>
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V Form	<p><u>Language:</u> The language is not always fluent, and there are mistakes. The style is mostly appropriate. The text forms a whole.</p> <p><u>Structure:</u> The structure of the thesis is clear. The layout, form and references contain a few mistakes.</p> <p><u>Presentation:</u> The live presentation is clear. The student justifies his/her solutions as well as his/her responses to questions..</p>	<p><u>Language:</u> The language is fluent and almost faultless. The style is very appropriate for this thesis. The text forms a coherent whole.</p> <p><u>Structure:</u> The structure of the thesis is clear. The layout, form and references correspond to the relevant instructions.</p> <p><u>Presentation:</u> The live presentation is clear and interactive. The student justifies his/her solutions as well as his/her responses to questions.</p>	<p><u>Language:</u> The language is fluent and faultless. The style has been carefully considered and it is appropriate for this thesis. The text forms a coherent, logical, easy-flowing whole rich in nuances.</p> <p><u>Structure:</u> The structure of the thesis is clear and justified. The layout, form and references correspond to the relevant instructions.</p> <p><u>Presentation:</u> The live presentation is clear and skilfully prepared. The presentation is interactive and flexible. The student justifies his/her solutions as well as his/her responses to questions. The student offers alternative solutions in his/her justifications.</p>
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## **Publications of the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, series C**

This series of publications describes the activities of the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences or presents the results of Diak's activities such as learning materials, instructions, seminar reports, project reports and research of minor scope.

1. Gothóni, Raili & Pesonen, Marja 1998. Tietopaketti harjoittelusta ja työelämäyhteistyöstä.
2. Gothóni, Raili & Pesonen, Marja 1998. Tutkiva ammattikäytäntö.
3. Gothóni, Raili & Pesonen, Marja 1999. Diakin harjoittelukäytännöt ja työelämäyhteistyö.
4. Tolppi, Reijo 1999. Laadun lähteet verkossa. Kokonaisarviointiraportti 1.
5. Kinttula, Outi 2001. Laadun lähteet verkossa. Kokonaisarviointiraportti 2.
6. Kalmari, Arja & Wallenius, Tuula (ed.) 2002. Tuutorin tuki. Opintojen ohjaus ja tuutorointi Diakissa.
7. Kainulainen, Sakari; Gothóni, Raili & Pesonen, Marja 2002. Kohti tutkivaa ammattikäytäntöä. Opas Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulun opinnäytetöitä varten.
8. Meretmaa, Anne 2002. Supervisor's Handbook.
9. Kuokkanen, Ritva; Kivirinta, Mervi; Määttänen, Jukka & Ockenström, Leena 2005. Kohti tutkivaa ammattikäytäntöä. Opas Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulun opinnäytetöitä varten.
10. Kuokkanen, Ritva; Kivirinta, Mervi; Määttänen, Jukka & Ockenström, Leena 2007. Kohti tutkivaa ammattikäytäntöä. Opas Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulun opinnäytetöitä varten. 4 rev.ed.

11. Weissenfelt, Kerttu; Läksy, Marja-Liisa; Ruotsalainen, Kari ja Haapalainen, Paula 2008. Verkosto arjen työtä tekevien voimavaraksi.
12. Marttila, Marjaana & Häkkinen, Johanna 2008. POLULLA-projekti – Erityistä tukea ammattikorkeakouluopinnoissaan haasteita kohdanneille.
13. Vähäkangas, Auli 2008. Aimojen kokemuksia ohjauksesta. Aikuisten monimuoto-opiskelijoiden kokemuksia ohjauksesta kevään 2007 Monikulttuurisuus-opintokokonaisuudessa Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulun Järvenpään toimipaikassa.
14. Pesonen, Helena 2008. Omalle yrittäjäuralle maahanmuuttajanainen. Omalle yrittäjäuralle, maahanmuuttajataustaisten naisten yrittäjävalmiuksien kehittämisprojekti 1.8.2006 – 40.4.2008 Project report.
15. Holopainen, Anne; Lind, Kimmo & Niemelä, Jorma 2009. Ammattikorkeakoulut kansalaistoiminnassa
16. Eriksson, Elina; Markkanen, Arja & Tast, Marianne (eds.) 2009. Hoitotyön ammattikorkeakoulutuksen ja työelämän yhteinen hanketoiminta – kolmen ammattikorkeakoulun näkökulmaa

## CRITERIA FOR THE SERIES

### **Studies**

In the series, scientific studies yielding new and innovative knowledge are published in the fields of teaching, research and development of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences. The publications are, for the most part, doctoral dissertations, high-quality collections of articles, and licentiate theses, the publication of which in the A series is endorsed by a researcher with a PhD. In addition to the outside PhD referee, the licentiate thesis to be published in the A series is read by a reader with a PhD, who is a member of the publication committee. For consideration in the series, employees of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences as well as outside writers can submit publications.

The publications are printed, and also, if so agreed, open access web publications. Also, other formats, e.g. a DVD, are possible.

### **Publication:**

The publication committee makes a decision concerning the publication based on the review statement of two reviewers.

### **Reports**

In the series, studies of the staff (licentiate theses, pro gradu theses), excellent student theses of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences as, well as reports of development projects of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences yielding innovative and significant results to develop working life, are published.

### **Publication:**

The publication committee makes a decision concerning the publication based on the review statement of one referee or the review of the student thesis.

The publications are either printed or open access web publications or both. Also, other formats, e.g. a DVD, are possible.

### **Reviews and materials**

In the series, publications which have come about as a result of research, development and teaching of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, for example, student theses originating in the learning environment and other projects of working life, learning materials, sets of instructions and seminar and project reports, are published.

### **Publication:**

The publication committee makes a decision concerning the publication based on the suggestion of the planner of the publication activities.

Publications are either printed or open access web publications or both. Also, other formats, e.g. a DVD, are possible.

### **Working papers**

In the series, expert statements and standpoints on topical issues, different background research documents made for planning work (e.g. an extensive project plan), and interim reports of projects are published. The series enables a quick dissemination of experiential and expert knowledge.

### **Publication:**

The planner of the publication activities decides on the publication based on the argumentation presented by the author of the work. The decision is sent as information to the members of the publication committee, who can, if needed, suggest that the decision is to be made in the publication committee.

The publication is primarily an open access web publication but, if needed, it can be printed. Also, other formats, e.g. a DVD, are possible.

