

REGULATION ON FINAL EXAMINATIONS AT RIGA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1.1. This Regulation sets the procedure for organization and conduct of final examinations, as well as the procedure for submission and consideration of appeals regarding the conduct of the final examinations. The Regulation also determines general requirements for the graduation papers, as well as the procedure for their development and public presentation. Detailed requirements to the graduation papers, guidelines and methodological instructions for the procedure of developing and presenting the graduation papers pursuant to this Regulation is elaborated by the respective faculty or institute and is approved by the council of the faculty or institute.
- 1.2. This Regulation is applied to studies of all types and levels, except for Doctoral studies.
- 1.3. There are the following types of final examinations:
 - 1.3.1. graduation examinations – upon completion of academic Bachelor and Master studies;
 - 1.3.2. state examinations – upon completion of professional higher education programs.
- 1.4. The final examinations, in accordance with the program requirements, include:
 - 1.4.1. development and public presentation of the graduation paper;
 - 1.4.2. testing of knowledge in the most important fundamental, theoretical industry-specific and field-specific study subjects.
- 1.5. The final examination commissions are:
 - 1.5.1. Graduation Examination Commission – upon completion of academic Bachelor and Master studies;
 - 1.5.2. State Examination Commission – upon completion of professional higher education programs;
 - 1.5.3. State Final Examination Commission – upon completion of the first level professional higher education (college) programs.
- 1.6. A graduation paper is a work developed at the final stage of studies, which demonstrates the level of achievement of learning outcomes set by the study program. Development and public presentation of the graduation paper is a precondition for awarding an academic or professional degree and/or a professional qualification. Students develop their graduation papers within the deadline set by the study plan and publicly present the papers at the final examination.

2. PROCEDURE OF PREPARING FINAL EXAMINATIONS

- 2.1. Final examinations are organized within the framework of autumn and spring examination sessions or beyond them within the time limits specified by the respective faculty, affiliation or institute not affiliated with any faculty.
- 2.2. Final examinations may be passed by students who:
 - 2.2.1. have successfully completed all study courses within the study program and have received successful assessment at tests set for the study courses; faculties and institutes not affiliated with any faculty may also set additional requirements;
 - 2.2.2. have developed their graduation papers and have submitted it for the viva voce within the specified time period.
- 2.3. Final examinations are administered by the final examination commission, the establishment and approval of which is organized by the head of the responsible organizational unit.

3. FINAL EXAMINATION COMMISSION

- 3.1. The performance of students at final examinations is assessed by the final examination commission (hereinafter – the Commission).
- 3.2. There is one Commission established for every study program, or several Commissions may be established when required. In the event of a small number of students, one Commission may be established for a group of thematically related study programs.
- 3.3. The Graduation Examination Commission of the academic study programs consists of a Chairperson of the Commission and minimum two members of the Commission. The Chairperson of the Commission is the head of the responsible organizational unit or a professor or an associate professor subordinate to the head. Members of the Commission are specialists of the respective field of science with a Doctoral or Master degree. The composition of the Commission is proposed by the responsible organizational unit and approved by the Dean of the faculty.
- 3.4. The State Examination Commission of a professional study programs and the State Final Examination Commission consist of a Chairperson of the Commission and minimum four members of the Commission. The Chairperson of the Commission and at least half of the Commission members are representatives of professional organizations or employers of the respective industry, whose main workplace is not RTU. The State Examination Commission shall include minimum two Doctors in the respective branch of science (this requirement is not mandatory for the State Final Examination Commission of the first level higher professional education study programs). The composition of the Commission is proposed by the responsible organizational unit and approved by the RTU Rector minimum a month prior to the final examination.

4. ORGANIZATION OF FINAL EXAMINATIONS AND DECISION-MAKING ON AWARDING THE HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATION

- 4.1. Final examinations are passed at an open, publicly accessible meeting of the Commission.
- 4.2. If a graduation paper contains information, which is determined by its provider (natural or legal person) as restricted access information or commercial secret in accordance with the procedures specified in regulatory enactments, the public presentation thereof, based on a decision of the head of the responsible organizational unit, takes place at a closed meeting of the Commission.
- 4.3. The time and venue of the Commission meeting is announced not later than 10 (ten) working days prior to the examination.
- 4.4. The graduation paper is developed and the final examinations are passed in the official language. The usage of other languages is allowed in cases prescribed by regulatory enactments, for example, to foreign students, students of study programs implemented in English and students of language study programs.
- 4.5. The final examination is assessed by one grade on the 10-grade scale. The lowest successful assessment is 4 (almost satisfactory).
- 4.6. The performance of students at final examinations is assessed by the Commission at a closed meeting based on the presentation of the students and the quality of their replies to questions pertaining to the developed paper, the most important fundamental, theoretical industry-specific and field-specific study courses, reviews of the scientific advisor and the reviewer, as well as with account of their assessments.
- 4.7. In the event a paper is developed by several students in a group, it is required to precisely specify the contribution of each participant of the group in the final result and the Commission assesses the work results of each participant of the group with a separate grade.
- 4.8. The course of the Commission meeting, including questions asked to the students, is recorded in the minutes. The recording is performed by a secretary who is not a member of the

Commission and who does not have the right of assessment. The minutes are signed by the Chairperson of the Commission, its members and the secretary. The minutes and the presented graduation paper are stored and archived in accordance with the requirements set by the RTU File Nomenclature.

- 4.9. A decision on awarding the higher education qualification – a degree and/or a professional qualification, based on the result of the final examination, is taken by:
 - 4.9.1. the Faculty Council – regarding awarding of the academic Bachelor and Master degree;
 - 4.9.2. the State Examination Commission – regarding awarding of the professional Bachelor and Master degree and the fifth level professional qualification;
 - 4.9.3. the State Final Examination Commission – regarding awarding of the fourth level professional qualification;
 - 4.9.4. when an academic Bachelor and Master study program is implemented by an institute not affiliated with any faculty, a decision on awarding the degree is taken by the institute council.
- 4.10. In the event of receiving a failing assessment at the final examination, the student is exmatriculated. Passing of the final examination repeatedly is permitted not earlier than at the end of the next study semester. To pass the final examination repeatedly, applicants are matriculated at the proposal of the study program Director. For a repeated passing of the final examination, the matriculated students develop a graduation paper on another subject or, pursuant to a decision reflected in the minutes of the Commission meeting, redevelop their previous paper assessed with a failing grade.

5. SUBMISSION OF APPELLATION REGARDING THE FINAL EXAMINATION AND THE PROCEDURE OF ITS CONSIDERATION

- 5.1. A student may submit an appellation regarding the conduct of the final examination and the assessment procedure.
- 5.2. Such appellation may be submitted to the Dean of the faculty, the Director of the institute not affiliated with any faculty or the affiliation not later than by the end of the next business day after the examination.
- 5.3. An appellation is considered by the Appellation Committee consisting of minimum 3 (three) persons.
- 5.4. The composition of the Appellation Committee is determined by the Dean of the faculty, the Director of the institute not affiliated with any faculty or the affiliation.
- 5.5. The recommended composition of the Appellation Committee is:
 - 5.5.1. the Dean of the faculty, the Director of the institute not affiliated with any faculty or the affiliation – the chairperson of the Committee;
 - 5.5.2. the Deputy Dean of the faculty, the Deputy Director of the institute not affiliated with any faculty or the affiliation;
 - 5.5.3. one or more members invited by the Dean of the faculty.
- 5.6. The composition of the Appellation Committee is determined by taking into account that it may not include members of the Commission whose activity is appealed against.
- 5.7. The Appellation Committee considers an appellation and makes a decision not later than within five business days after receiving the appellation. To consider an appellation, it is allowed to involve one or more attracted experts. Change of the assessment received by the student is not in the competence of this Committee.
- 5.8. The decision taken by the Appellation Committee is notified to the applicant in writing.
- 5.9. A decision of the Appellation Committee may be appealed against to Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs.
- 5.10. The Academic Arbitrage is the highest authority for resolution of disputes at RTU.

6. ORGANISATION AND SUPERVISION OF THE GRADUATION PAPER DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1. Graduation papers, depending on the type and level of the study program, are:
 - 6.1.1. a Bachelor Paper – for academic Bachelor study programs;
 - 6.1.2. a Bachelor Paper or a diploma project – for professional Bachelor study programs;
 - 6.1.3. a Master Thesis – for academic and professional Master study programs;
 - 6.1.4. a diploma project – for the second level professional higher education study programs, where a professional degree is not awarded;
 - 6.1.5. a qualification paper – for the first level professional higher education (college) study programs.
- 6.2. Requirements to the graduation paper are set in accordance with the achievable learning outcomes for the respective education level in line with the European Qualification Framework (EQF):
 - 6.2.1. for a Bachelor Paper and a diploma project – in accordance with the EQF level 6;
 - 6.2.2. for a Master Thesis – in accordance with the EQF level 7;
 - 6.2.3. for a qualification paper – in accordance with the EQF level 5.
- 6.3. Students select a topic of their graduation paper from the list of topics offered by the organizational unit administering the study program (hereinafter – the responsible organizational unit), or the topic is initiated by the student. The selection of the topic is coordinated by the study program Director or a professor, an associate professor or an assistant professor appointed by an order of the head of the responsible organizational unit.
- 6.4. Several students may be allowed to develop a joint graduation paper, when it is possible to precisely determine the contribution of each participant.
- 6.5. The topic of the graduation paper and the scientific advisor, based on the student's written application, is accepted by the responsible organizational unit and approved by:
 - 6.5.1. the head of the responsible organizational unit – for a Bachelor Paper and professional higher education graduation papers, except for professional Master studies;
 - 6.5.2. the Dean of the faculty – for graduation papers of academic and professional Master study program.
- 6.6. The scientific advisor of the graduation paper can be:
 - 6.6.1. for a Bachelor Paper at academic study programs – member of RTU academic staff or an employee of another organization with a Doctoral or Master degree in the respective industry, or an employee with the highest (level 5) professional qualification;
 - 6.6.2. for a Master Thesis at academic study programs – a person appointed for the position of a professor, an associate professor, an assistant professor, a leading researcher, a lector, a researcher or a scientific assistant with a Doctoral degree, in exceptional cases – an assistant professor without a Doctoral degree; one person may simultaneously supervise the development of not more than seven Master Theses;
 - 6.6.3. For a graduation paper at professional study programs – persons mentioned in Paragraphs 6.6.1 and 6.6.2, as well as persons with the higher education and minimum 7 (seven) years of practical work experience in the respective industry of practical activities.
- 6.7. The task for the graduation paper is issued to the student not later than by the start of the last semester of studies. The task is signed by the scientific advisor and approved by the head of the responsible organizational unit. Students confirm the receipt of their tasks with signatures.

6.8. Development of the graduation paper takes place in accordance with the work performance schedule developed by the student jointly with the scientific advisor. The actual course of the development of the graduation paper is supervised by the scientific advisor and monitored minimum twice by an appointed representative of the academic staff or a commission of the responsible organizational unit.

7. SUBMISSION OF THE GRADUATION PAPER FOR VIVA VOCE

- 7.1. Students draw up their graduation papers in conformity with the “Guidelines for Development of Graduation Papers” approved by Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and submit them for viva voce in a printed form and as an electronic copy.
- 7.2. Students upload the electronic copy of their graduation papers to the RTU internal portal in the ORTUS system. Upon uploading the paper in the system, a confirmation is provided that the work has been performed independently, that only the indicated sources of information have been used in the paper and that the electronic copy of the paper is identical to its printed copy. The procedure of uploading the electronic version of the graduation paper and access to it is determined by the order of Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs.
- 7.3. The printed form of the paper is submitted in the bound form. It is recommended to attach an envelope to the back cover of the paper, where references of the scientific advisor, reviews or other documents related to the paper can be inserted.
- 7.4. Readiness of the paper for submission to the responsible organizational unit is confirmed with signatures of the author of the paper, the scientific advisor and the consultant (when available) on the work performance and assessment page.
- 7.5. The paper with the author’s confirmation, which is obtained when uploading the electronic version of the paper in the ORTUS system, is submitted by the student to the secretary of the final examination commission or a person appointed by the head of the responsible organizational unit not later than 5 (five) workdays prior to the paper viva voce day. Papers are not accepted after the set deadline.
- 7.6. The paper is approved for viva voce by the head of the responsible organizational unit with a signature on the work performance and assessment page.
- 7.7. The responsible organizational unit hands over the graduation paper to the reviewer and ensures an opportunity for students to see a review of their paper not later than one business day prior to the paper viva voce day.
- 7.8. The reviewer of the graduation paper is selected by the head of the responsible organizational unit. The reviewer is approved not later than 5 (five) workdays prior to the paper viva voce day by:
 - 7.8.1. the head of the responsible organizational unit – for a Bachelor Paper and professional higher education graduation papers, except for professional Master studies;
 - 7.8.2. the Dean of the faculty or the Director of the institute not affiliated with any faculty – for Master graduation papers of an academic and professional study program.
- 7.9. Reviewers of the graduation paper can be:
 - 7.9.1. for graduation papers of an academic study program – specialists of the respective field or sub-field of science (with minimum Master degree for Bachelor Papers and the Doctoral degree for Master Theses), who work beyond the RTU organizational unit (department, institute) represented by the scientific advisor of the graduation paper or at another organization beyond RTU;
 - 7.9.2. for graduation papers of a professional study program – high qualification specialists of the respective practical activity, who work beyond the RTU organizational unit represented by the scientific advisor of the graduation paper or at another organization beyond RTU.

- 7.9.3. If the responsible organizational unit cannot ensure reviewers who meet the aforementioned requirements, exceptions are possible with a permission of the Dean of the faculty or the Director of the institute not affiliated with any faculty.
- 7.10. Prior to viva voce of the graduation paper, the student's confirmation, a reference of the scientific advisor and a review provided by the reviewer must be attached to it.
- 7.11. A reference of the scientific advisor is recommended to include:
- 7.11.1. characteristics of independence of the student's work;
 - 7.11.2. conformity of the work to the set task and the requirements of awarding the higher education qualification – degree and/or professional qualification.
The scientific advisor may provide an assessment of the paper in the ten-grade system, which can be attached to the reference separately.
- 7.12. A review is a concise, objective and substantiated comprehensive assessment of the research included in the graduation paper, concepts, methodologies and performance of the work in the opinion of the reviewer. A review is recommended to include:
- 7.12.1. title of the paper;
 - 7.12.2. general characteristics of the volume and content of the paper – topicality, the novelty of the issue analyzed in the paper, relevance to the current scientific level in the respective field, etc.;
 - 7.12.3. positive features of the paper and the established deficiencies;
Apart from the requirements mentioned herewith, a review may also contain wider characteristics and assessment of the paper.
- 7.13. A conclusion about the paper, whether it conforms (or does not conform) to the requirements of obtaining the higher education qualification – degree and/or professional qualification, as well as an assessment of the paper in the ten-grade system and a recommendation on awarding the higher education qualification may be attached to the review by the reviewer separately.
- 7.14. If the assessment of the scientific advisor and the reviewer differs by more than 3 points, a second reviewer must be appointed for the paper.

8. OTHER PROVISIONS

This Regulation takes effect with the autumn semester of academic year 2015/2016.