

CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences



Guidelines for Writing a Dissertation Thesis

PhD and Research Office

2024

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1. Introduction

The aim of the presented guidelines is to facilitate and guide students in doctoral study programmes at the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTA), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CZU), in the elaboration of their Dissertation Thesis.

The guidelines are intended to promote consistency and good practice in writing a dissertation thesis. The guidelines are in accordance with the currently prevailing regulations: “*Study and Exam Rules for Study in Doctoral Study Programmes of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague*”, and the Dean’s Decision 1/2024 “*Specification of the Study and Exam Rules for Study in Doctoral Study Programmes of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague at the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences*”,

2. Dissertation Thesis

According to section 47(4) of Act No. 111/1998 Coll (the Higher Education Act), doctoral studies are duly completed by a state doctoral examination and a public defence of the dissertation thesis, which demonstrates the ability and readiness of the candidate for independent activity in the field of research and development, or for independent theoretical and creative activity. The thesis must contain original published results, or results accepted for publication.

The dissertation thesis is divided into:

- introductory part
- main text part
- appendices (annexes)

2.1. Introductory part of the dissertation thesis

The introductory part of the dissertation thesis should consist of the following mandatory sections: Imprint (only for a dissertation thesis with an ISBN), Title page, Declaration, Acknowledgements, Abstract and Keywords, Table of Contents, List of tables, List of figures, and a List of abbreviations used in the thesis.

2.1.1. The imprint

The imprint is obligatory only if the dissertation thesis is published with an ISBN. The imprint must be placed at the lower part of the first page of the thesis and should contain the following information:

- Title:
- Author:

- Publisher: Czech University of Life Sciences Prague
Kamýcká 129
16500 Praha Suchdol
Czech Republic
- Authorized by: Dean's Office of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences
- Number of pages:
- Edition: first
- Year of publication:
- ISBN
- Copyright © [Year of First Publication] by [Author and CZU]

All rights reserved.

No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher or author.

2.1.2. Title page

The title page of the thesis should contain the following (from top to bottom):

- Name of the university (Czech University of Life Sciences Prague)
- Name of the faculty (Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences)
- Logo of Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (black or orange)
- Title of the thesis
- Thesis specification in capitals (following text: DISSERTATION THESIS)
- Full name of the author
- Full name of the thesis supervisor
- Full name of the thesis consultant, if any
- Place and year of publication.

2.1.3. Declaration

The declaration of the Monograph-style Dissertation Thesis must contain the following text:

I hereby declare that I have completed this thesis entitled “**title of the thesis**” independently, all texts in this thesis are original, and that all information sources have been quoted and acknowledged by means of complete references. I also confirm that this work has not been previously submitted, nor is it currently submitted, for any other degree, to this or any other university.

In XX date

.....
Name of the student

The declaration of the Journal Article Format of Dissertation Thesis must contain the following text:

I hereby declare that I have completed this thesis entitled “**title of the thesis**” independently, except for the jointly authored publications that are included. In the case of such publications, my specific contributions have been clearly stated at the start of the relevant publication chapter. Furthermore, I confirm that proper acknowledgement has been provided within this thesis for any references made to the works of others, I also ensure that this work has not been, nor is it currently submitted, for any other degree, to this or any other university. All information sources have been quoted and acknowledged by means of complete references.

In XX date

.....
Name of the student

2.1.4. Acknowledgements

Express your appreciation to whom you want. It might be appropriate to remember your supervisor and consultants. It is obligatory to mention the financial sources accessed for performing the research work presented in the thesis. Pay attention to the fact that people read the Acknowledgement part relatively often. An extensive list is not usually the best option. About ten lines are often sufficient.

2.1.5. Abstract and key words

Abstract is needed in English only. The Abstract is one of the most important parts of your thesis, because many people will read the abstract first, before reading the whole text. According to the Abstract, they will decide whether the thesis is interesting or not and whether it is worth to read it or not. The Abstract represents a summary of the whole work; you should briefly describe the aim/s of your thesis, your methodology, the most important results, conclusions, and its significance to your field of science. This is why you should write your Abstract last. A list of approximately five keywords should follow the abstract. The keywords further define the topic of your thesis and so you should not repeat words from the title of your thesis. The recommended length for the abstract is about 200 – 350 words. Abstracts are written in the past tense.

2.1.6. Table of Contents

Use capital letters, bolding of text, or indenting to differentiate between main and sub-chapters. Page numbering should always be the same size. See the contents page of this document for an example of such formatting.

2.1.7. List of tables and List of figures

A list of the tables, and a list of figures keeps the information organized and provides easy access to specific information. Tables and figures are listed chronologically as they appear in the text of the dissertation thesis. Each table and figure in the list should have the same number as in the text part. The list of tables and list of figures should be presented separately in the dissertation thesis.

2.1.8. List of abbreviations used in the thesis

A list of abbreviations is a compilation of shortened forms of terminology used in the dissertation thesis. It explains the meanings of acronyms, initialisms, or shortened terms to help readers comprehend the text more easily.

2.2. Main text of the thesis

The main text of the thesis should be elaborated in accordance with the selected format of dissertation thesis. There are two possible formats of dissertation thesis at FTA: i) the monograph-style thesis and ii) publication-based, journal article format of dissertation thesis. Prior to selecting the dissertation thesis format, it is expected that the thesis supervisor will be consulted.

2.2.1. Subdivision - numbered sections

The main text should be divided into clearly defined and numbered sections. Subsections should be numbered 1.1 (then 1.1.1, 1.1.2, ...), 1.2, etc. Any subsection may be given a brief heading. Each heading should appear on its own separate line.

2.2.2. Monograph-style thesis

The monograph-style thesis format reflects the original concept of a thesis as a "book" presenting the candidate's research project. The monograph-style format is organized as a single narrative describing the research problem, the context of the research, the methods used, the findings, and the conclusions. There are two possible structures of the main chapters of the monograph-style format.

The first option consists of following main chapters:

- Introduction or literature review (state-of-the-art)
- Aims of the thesis
- Methods (and materials if relevant)
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusions (and recommendations)
- References

The second option consist of following main chapters:

- Introduction or literature review (state-of-the-art)
- Aims of the thesis
- Thematic Chapters
- Discussion
- Conclusions (and recommendations)
- References

The References should follow the (APA) American Psychological Association or Vancouver style of formation. Although both of the above formats are possible, the Vancouver (numeric) style is not recommended for the Monograph-style thesis as it is not easy to follow the relevant information sources for a large number of citations.

2.2.3. Publication-based Thesis - Journal Article Format of the Dissertation Thesis

A publication-based dissertation or Journal Article Thesis (JAT) is an alternative format for a dissertation thesis in which the core research work is presented as a series of research papers or articles rather than a single monograph-style document. A JAT must include the integration of no fewer than three published, or accepted manuscripts, centred around a common research theme, thus enabling the documents to be combined to create a single cohesive thesis. Co-authorship of the published papers is allowed; however, the student must be the principal author for at least two of the published works. A published work is defined as a refereed journal paper (review paper, full paper, short communication, etc.) published/accepted for publication in a journal with an impact factor according to the Web of Science. Proof of publication/acceptance must be provided to the committee for the dissertation thesis. These articles should be accompanied by other text sections which offer an additional synthetic overview and final conclusions of the papers.

Structure of the main text of the JAT format thesis

1. Introduction and/or literature review

The introduction part (10 – 30 pages) should clarify the aims of the study, identify its significance, and explain the link between the articles that follow. The introduction can be partially replaced by a published or accepted review paper. This depends on the content of the published review paper and the extent to which it covers the overall topic of the dissertation thesis. In this case the review paper counts towards the minimum required number of three published/accepted papers for the JAT format thesis.

2. Chapters 1 to X

These consist of individual papers in manuscript formatting. **Please note that the use of the final graphical layout “formatting” of the published paper in the respective journal is not recommended.** The manuscripts need to be integrated and therefore need to flow cogently from one to the other. It needs to be made clear how chapters are linked and how they contribute to each other. Chapter numbering is consecutive from the first through to the last (1, 2, 3, etc.). Table and figure numbering is consecutive by chapter (example, 1.1, 1.2, etc.).

- The chapter title page should consist of: the *chapter “manuscript” title*, a **full scholarly citation** of the paper indicating its publication status and entitled as “**Adapted from:**”, and a “**CRedit author statement**”. The CRedit (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) consists of the following 14 roles to choose from: *Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Software, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review and editing*¹. Please note that each “CRedit author statement” must be accompanied by a signed “Declaration of the authors' contribution” (see annex 1), which is submitted to the PhD and Research Office separately from the dissertation thesis.
- The structure of each chapter should respect the original structure of each manuscript published, or accepted for publication, in the respective scientific journal. The most typical structure of the manuscript consists of *Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion, Conclusions*, and *References*².

3. Conclusions

¹ Sample of a CRedit author statement – **Author XY**: Conceptualization, Methodology; **Author CA**: Data curation, Writing- Original draft; **Author DX**: Supervision; **Author PH**: Validation, Writing- Reviewing and Editing. Read more about CRedit here: <https://credit.niso.org/>

² The *References* after each chapter of the JAT format should correspond to the same reference style as the original manuscript submitted to a particular scientific journal.

The conclusions (2-3 pages) should provide an integrative summary, drawing together all of the work described in the journal-article-format sections of the thesis, and relating this back to the issues raised in the introduction. The recommendations for further work should also be provided here.

4. References

A list of references not provided in the manuscript chapters are provided here. The References should follow the (APA) American Psychological Association or Vancouver style formats.

2.3. Appendices

Larger tables and figures which are interesting but unsuitable for use in the main body of the thesis can be included in the appendices. The pagination of the appendices is usually different in style than in the main body of the thesis (e.g. Roman numerals). There is only one obligatory chapter in the appendices, the “Academic CV” of the candidate, which is a brief professional CV of the author with a list of publications should be provided.

3. General graphical layout

3.1. Thesis size and format

The binding of the dissertation thesis may be in the form of a glued paperback or hardcover, depending on the author's preference. The preferred format of the thesis is **A5 (148 × 210 mm in portrait orientation) or B5 (182 x 257 mm in portrait orientation)**. Occasionally, A4 format (210 × 297 mm) can be used as well if necessary, but it is not preferred. Page margins (top, sides, and bottom) should be the same size, and keep in mind that the thesis will be printed and bound, and that margins should thus be large enough for this.

3.2. Text size and line spacing

The text should be in 11-point characters and 1.15 line spacing for A5 and B5 formats, and 12-point characters and 1.5 line spacing for A4 format theses. Footnotes, tables, and figures should be in 9- or 10-point characters and single-spaced lines. Choose a commonly used font that provides a full character set; preferred fonts are: Calibri, Arial, Times New Roman, and Cambria.

3.3. Thesis Cover

The front cover of the thesis should contain the following (from top to bottom):

- title of the thesis;
- full name of the author;
- name of the university (Czech University of Life Sciences Prague);
- name of the faculty (Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences);
- logo of the faculty (black English version).

Insert an image, photograph, or drawing related to the thesis topic as the background of the front cover. Be aware of the copyright licences of these; only original graphics created by the author may be used.

The back cover of the thesis should contain the following (from top to bottom):

- an image, photograph, or drawing related to the thesis topic should be used on the back cover. The same image as in the front cover can be used. Be aware of the copyright licence of these; only original graphics created by the author may be used;
- ISBN number.

The spine of the thesis should contain the following (from top to bottom):

- full name of the author;
- title of the thesis (if the text fits in the corresponding text field);
- year of publication.

Templates (A5, B5, and A4) of the dissertation thesis cover are available in the document section on the web pages of Science and Research at <https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/r-9421-science-research/r-9543-doctoral-study>.

3.4. Pagination

The text should be paginated throughout the introductory section, main text, and appendices (annexes). The final thesis should be printed double-sided. Be sure that new sections and principal chapters numbered as X. and X.X. always start on a new page. The page numbering of the introductory section is usually in Roman numbers. The page numbering in Arabic letters should start with page 1, on the first page of the main text section of the thesis.

3.5. Tables and figures

It is possible to place tables and figures (graphs and pictures) in the text of your thesis, but all tables and figures included in your thesis must have some reason for their presence. Tables and figures can be placed either next to the relevant text in the thesis or in the appendices. Number them consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text and place any table notes below the table body. Be sparing in the use of tables and ensure that the data presented in them do not duplicate results described elsewhere in the text of the thesis. Please avoid using vertical rules and shading in table cells. Please ensure that all figures are in a high resolution for printing. All tables and figures must have descriptive captions. Captions for tables are placed before the table, while captions for the figures are placed under the relevant figure. It is possible to use whole words (Table, Figure, Graph) or shortened words (Tab., Fig.), but the style must be consistent throughout the thesis.

4. Language

All doctoral study programs at FTA are accredited in English. Thus, it is expected that the dissertation thesis is written in English as well. Please write your text using the scientific English language style (American and British English is accepted, but not a mixture of these. British English is preferred). This is not applicable for the published or accepted manuscripts in JAT format. Here the candidate can keep the English style of the original papers. Students who feel their English may require editing to eliminate possible grammatical or spelling errors, and to conform to correct scientific English usage, may wish to use a Language Editing service. Please note that any costs related to Language Editing must be covered by the student.

5. ISBN number

ISBN (International Standard Book Number) is a unique number which tells us where and by whom the publication was published. Assigning the ISBN is within the competence of the CZU Library <https://lib.czu.cz/en>.

Publishing the dissertation thesis with an ISBN is recommended by the FTA PhD and Research Office. However, the final decision should be made by the supervisor of the dissertation thesis in accordance with the quality of the thesis and the specific licensing agreement of the individual peer-reviewed scientific journals where the dissertation results were published. In general, publishing the dissertation thesis in journal article format (JAT) with ISBN is possible according to § 5, paragraph 2 of the Copyright Act no 121/2000 Coll., The Czech Republic, in case all used and previously published papers are appropriately cited. Please follow the instructions in chapter “2.2.2. *Publication-based Thesis - Journal Article Format of the Dissertation Thesis*” of this document.

5.1. Application for an ISBN

Please fill in the online form “Electronic request for ISBN” and wait for an e-mail response. <https://lib.czu.cz/en/r-11119-more-services/r-11197-publications-published-by-czu#i-a1141964749a018122bcc2d44abecb1f>

The ISBN is normally issued by e-mail communication no later than the next workday. However, it is recommended to allow for three working days.

5.2. After publishing your thesis

Students are obliged to hand in ten hard copies of the final dissertation thesis as soon as possible after printing – further information is provided below. CZU is obliged to send a "mandatory copy" of all of its publications to the libraries specified by law (2 x National Library of Czech Republic, Moravian Library, Research Library in Olomouc, Municipal Library of Prague). Five copies are placed in the CZU Library for CZU's academic community.

6. Dissertation thesis submission

The dissertation thesis must be submitted **at least four months** before the proposed date of the defence, together with the application for the thesis defence to the FTA PhD and Research Office. Please see the FTA Dean's Decision 1/2024. At this stage, the candidate must submit an electronic PDF form of the dissertation thesis only. The thesis must be submitted via the University Information System (UIS). Afterwards, the dissertation thesis is subjected to evaluation by three independent opponents, at least two of whom are not CZU employees, while at least one must be an associate professor or professor, and all of them must have PhD degrees. The candidate receives the opinions of the reviewers and shall amend the dissertation thesis according to the comments and suggestions of the reviewers. **Please note that not amending the thesis after the reviewer's comments may lead to an unsuccessful thesis defence if the candidate does not clearly justify why a certain reviewer's comment is not addressed.**

Once all reviewers' comments are addressed, the **final version** of the dissertation thesis is reuploaded to the UIS in PDF form. Together with the electronic version, **three** hardback copies of the dissertation thesis must be submitted to the FTA **PhD and Research Office**. Please note that another **ten hard copies** must be submitted to the CZU library in case the ISBN is used. The final version of the dissertation thesis must be submitted to the PhD and Research Office **two weeks** before the date of the thesis defence. Only the final version of the dissertation thesis is presented during the final dissertation thesis defence.

ANNEX 1

Declaration of authors' contribution

DECLARATION OF AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

We, the PhD candidate and the candidate's Supervisor, certify that all co-authors have consented to their work being included in the thesis and they have accepted the candidate's contribution as indicated in the *Declaration of authors' contributions*.

Name of the thesis chapter	
Citation of the relevant paper	
Name of the PhD candidate	CRedit author statement[‡]
Name of Co-Authors	

(Please insert this table for each chapter of your Journal Article Format Dissertation Thesis separately)

Name of the PhD candidate:

PhD candidate signature

Date

Name / title of the PhD supervisor:

PhD Supervisor signature

Date

[‡] The CRedit (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) consists of the following 14 roles to choose from: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Software, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing