

RSM Master Thesis Defence Procedure
Updated August 2012

Can I defend my thesis throughout the year?	No, there are currently four possible graduation periods: September, December, March, June in a given academic year. Consult the RSM Master Graduation website for more specific, updated information on available dates. http://www.eur.nl/rsmmastergraduation
Which dates are available?	Consult the RSM Master Graduation website for more specific, updated information on available dates. http://www.eur.nl/rsmmastergraduation Please note: Graduation dates are officially accorded on a first come, first served basis. You are strongly advised NOT to wait until the final days for setting your graduation date!
When do I have to hand in the Admission to the Master Thesis Defence Form?	You must submit the <i>Admission to the Master Thesis Defence Form</i> in person at least one month before the preferred graduation month. At that point you and the Exam Administration (EA) will set the date for the thesis defence.
Do I need to have original signatures of my coach and co-reader?	Yes, you must have original signatures from your coach and co-reader. You may not hand in the <i>Admission to the Master Thesis Defence Form</i> with scanned or copied signatures of your coach and co-reader.
How are the graduation dates/slots assigned to the students?	The slots are assigned on a first come, first served basis. Please do NOT wait until the last days of the month to hand in your <i>Admission to the Master Thesis Defence Form</i> and setting the appointment. The EA is not responsible for the three-month delay that may occur if you wait too long. Please note that this warning is particularly relevant for the September graduation period.
Can I change my thesis between handing in the Admission to the Master Thesis Defence Form (at T minus one month) and submitting the e-thesis (at T minus 10 working days)?	No, you cannot change your thesis in any substantial way. Your coach and co-reader have signed for a version of your thesis that is ready to be defended in the graduation ceremony. What you may do, however, is tidy up the thesis with minor editorial changes, crossing the t's, dotting the i's, changing the colour of a graph, etc. Please note the EA may ask you to defend your thesis before the 10-day grace period ends. This may be the case when the graduation slots at the end of the month have already been reserved, and there are only slots available at the beginning of the month. You must be able to comply with this request.
Will I always have a 10-working day grace period to make minor editorial alterations to my thesis?	No. It may occur that graduation slots at your preferred time have already been reserved for other students, and that there are only slots available at the beginning of the month. In this case you must be able to comply with the EA's request to defend your thesis earlier than planned, and this may mean submitting your e-thesis directly. Please note that this situation can be avoided by handing in your documents well in advance of deadlines.
Where can I find more information on thesis submission?	All information and relevant forms can be found at, http://www.eur.nl/rsmmastergraduation including this FAQ document.
Why do I have to provide paper copies of the thesis to coach and co-reader when they also receive the PDF file?	We anticipate that, out of courtesy, you would like to provide your coach and co-reader with a proper hard copy version of your thesis. In addition, it ensures that during the ceremony there are paper copies available, printed in the shape, format, colour and quality you intend.
Can I send the signed Admission to the Master Thesis Defence Form by regular mail or e-mail to the Exam Administration?	No, you may not submit your signed <i>Admission to the Master Thesis Defence Form</i> by post or e-mail. It is absolutely necessary to hand in the signed form in person to the Exam Administration. If you send in your form by regular mail or e-mail, it will NOT be processed.

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What happens during the thesis defence session?

The time allowed for the thesis defence session is one hour, including

- the opening by the coach/chairperson;
- a presentation by the thesis candidate of the work completed, findings and main conclusion (10 minutes);
- a discussion led by the coach/chairperson between the thesis committee and the candidate on the work done, the findings and main conclusion (30 minutes);
- an intermission during which the thesis committee withdraws for consultation on the grade awarded for the thesis based on the work done, the findings, main conclusion and the defence thereof (10 minutes);
- the awarding of the certificate, including awarding of other accompanying documents such as the list of grades and the diploma supplement.

On what dimensions and criteria is the thesis project assessed?

RSM has established the dimensions and criteria on which the thesis project is graded in a master thesis assessment diagram. A copy of that diagram can be found at <http://www.eur.nl/rsmmastergraduation> under "Master Thesis Assessment Diagram" and "Master Thesis Manual."

What are the requirements for cum laude classification?

The 2011-2012 Teaching and Examination Regulations of RSM's one-year master degree programmes state the following:

1. A concluding examination classification is awarded only when the examinations entered on the list of grades that have been graded under the Dutch grading system cover at least two-thirds, as measured in ECTS, of the total of the study load of the degree programme as stated in the Teaching and Examination Regulations.
2. If the examinee has shown exceptional skill in the concluding examination, this may be stated on the certificate with the words 'cum laude'. Exceptional skill is shown if the student has fulfilled at least the following conditions:
 - a. a classification can be given under the conditions stated in paragraph 1,
 - b. the average of the grades for the examinations under the Dutch grading system as displayed on the list of grades, weighted on the basis of the credits is an 8.25 or higher, in addition to which
 - c. the grade for the examination of the thesis project is at least an 8.0.

The student is advised to consult the most recent Teaching and Examination Regulations (available at the Examination Board website: <http://www.rsm.nl/examination-board/examination-regulations/>) for the specific rules that apply to his/her concluding examination.

Can I fail my thesis defence?

Yes, it is possible to fail your thesis. RSM has however designed the process leading to the thesis defence so as to prevent (to the degree possible) the likelihood of such an event. Through signing the admission form, the thesis committee express their expectation that, in view of the work completed to date, the defence will be successful. Still, an expectation does not equate to a 100% guarantee.