

## Sak 7 (15/2019) Revidert forslag av sensorveiledning for HGO4080 og HGO4090

### GRADING GUIDE – HUMAN GEOGRAPHY master thesis 60-credits

**Course code:** HGO4090 Master thesis, 60 credits

**Type of examination:** Master thesis and oral examination

<https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/sv/iss/HGO4090/index.html>

The master thesis constitutes independent academic research and the core of the master's degree programme in Human Geography. The master's thesis prepares students for developing and carrying out an independent academic research project. Students gain experience in the use of research methods and in linking theory to empirical evidence. Students develop their theses under the guidance of an academic staff member.

High academic quality in terms of formulation of the research question, argumentation and presentation of the material is required of all master's theses in human geography. ~~both 60 and 30 credits. The independent research should be conducted with an expected input that corresponds to the credits that the Master's thesis are allocated.~~ The assessment of the individual thesis must take into consideration the required workload involved in the production of the thesis.

#### I. About the 60-credits Master Thesis in Human Geography

The fulfillment of HGO4090 implies the delivery of a master thesis for evaluation and an adjusting oral examination on the thesis and its topic.

The 60-credits master thesis reflects research carried out over the period of two semesters. Students are encouraged to start working on the thesis in the second semester, allocating time corresponding to a 10-credits course workload. The workload increases to 20-credits the third semester, and full-time workload (30-credits) in the fourth ~~and~~ (final) semester of the programme.

#### II. Criteria for evaluating a 60-credits master thesis in Human Geography

The evaluation of a master thesis is based on an overall assessment of the thesis as academic work. The following criteria should be considered in evaluating a 60-credits master thesis in human geography:

Aim of the thesis – Problem statement

- The aim of the research should be clearly formulated. The thesis should have clear and limited research questions.
- The student should address the scientific relevance of the study (theoretically, methodologically and/or empirically), as well as its relevance for the discipline and/or society.

→ Does the thesis have a clear aim/research question(s) and focus?

Theory and previous research, literature review

**Formatert:** Kantlinje: Boks: (Enkel heltrukket linje, Automatisk, 0,5 pkt. Linjebredde)

**formaterte:** Ikke Utheving

- The thesis should include a review of the relevant research field, providing a critical assessment of previous research on the chosen theme/topic.
  - The thesis should be informed by a selected theoretical framework/point of departure, concepts and model of analysis. These should be presented in a coherent and argumentative way, explicitly indicating how they contribute to address the research questions.
- Does the thesis demonstrate a satisfactory overview of the research field?  
→ Is there a critical discussion of the literature presented?

#### Methods and the reliability and validity of the data

- The thesis should include a detailed presentation of the method(s) used, explicitly stating the reasons for the choice of methodology.
  - The student should explicitly address the strengths and weaknesses of the methods chosen.
  - The thesis should provide an exact account of how the data may be influenced by problems during data collection.
  - A discussion of ethical issues of the data gathering process should be provided.
  - Detailed explanation of how the data are treated/analysed.
  - If the thesis does not include primary data collection, there must be a critical review of information sources.
- Does the thesis demonstrate a satisfactory use of methods?  
→ Is there a critical discussion of the methods used?

#### Analysis

- The analysis must be done in a systematic, logical, sophisticated and independent manner.
  - There must be a clear “red thread”, i.e. link, between research questions, theory, method and the use of the data.
  - The interpretation of the empirical material presented in the thesis must be informed by and based on ~~the~~ a critical assessment of the chosen theoretical framework.
  - ~~(The findings must refer be completely based on to the data collected.)~~
  - The research questions must be answered explicitly and fully.
- Is the argument made well formulated and anchored in the presented material?  
→ Is the analysis well done? Does the thesis demonstrate appropriate, independent and critical analysis?

#### Conclusions

- The conclusions of the study must be formulated in a clear and concise manner, highlighting the main findings of the research as well as the contribution to the discipline.
  - The findings must be discussed in a wider empirical perspective.
  - Suggestions of policy implication of the findings and future research may be given.
- Does the thesis answer its own research questions?  
→ Does the thesis contribute to the research front?

#### Structure and form

- Does the thesis have a well organized and logical structure?
- Is there any unnecessary content in the thesis outside of the “red thread”?
- Does the thesis apply the theoretical framework presented? Is the use of concepts consistent?
- Does the thesis comply with established scientific norms and formal rules regarding referencing in academic writing?

- Does the thesis comply with the formal requirements established by the master's programme in Human Geography?

### III. Formal requirements for the 60-credits master thesis

The following requirements apply for 60-credits master theses:

- Course work equivalent to 60-credits must be completed before delivering the thesis for evaluation.
- The length of a 60-credit master's thesis is maximum 48 000 words all inclusive (summary, table of contents, bibliography, annexes, etc.).
- There is no lower word limit, but the programme recommends a minimum length of 38 000 words.
- The thesis will include a summary of 1-2 pages, to appear after the cover page.
- The master thesis must be page numbered, and include a table of contents and list of references.
- Font size 12 points, line spacing 1 1/2.
- Projects involving the use of personal information must be registered at Norsk senter for Forskningsdata (NSD), se Personvernombudsordningen for forskning (<http://www.personvern.uio.no/pvo/forskstu.html>)

#### *About the cover page of the thesis*

The cover page must include the following information:

- Full title of the thesis
- Full name of the student
- Semester (Spring/Autumn), year of delivery
- Study programme, department, faculty, university
- Word count (total)

#### *About the length of the thesis*

- Theses that exceed the word limit of 48 000 words will be rejected, and a new submission deadline will apply.
- If there is a need to deviate from the word limit, the student must, together with his/her supervisor, apply to the head of studies three weeks before the submission deadline. The application must be academically justified.

### IV. Guidelines for the oral examination

The oral examination takes place after the thesis has been graded.

The aim of the adjusting oral examination is to engage into academic dialogue with the candidate on the basis of the master thesis. The evaluation committee will provide general feedback on the thesis and address both strengths and weaknesses of the work, as well as potential areas in need of clarification.

The evaluation committee can adjust the final grade of thesis as a result of the oral examination, either one grade up or one grade down. Adjustments apply normally in situations where the committee is in doubt about the grade most appropriate for the thesis, or when the thesis is at the edge of another grade. Deviation from this rule must be justified by the committee in written form.

## GRADING GUIDE – HUMAN GEOGRAPHY master thesis 30-credits

**Course code:** HGO4080 Master thesis, 30 credits

**Type of examination:** Master thesis and oral examination

<https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/sv/iss/HGO4080/index.html>

The master thesis constitutes independent academic research and the core of the master's degree programme in Human Geography. The master's thesis prepares students for developing and carrying out an independent academic research project. Students gain experience in the use of research methods and in linking theory to empirical evidence. Students develop their theses under the guidance of an academic staff member.

High academic quality in terms of formulation of the research question, argumentation and presentation of the material is required of all master's theses in human geography, ~~both 60 and 30 credits~~. The independent research should be conducted with an expected input that corresponds to the credits that the Master's thesis are allocated. Delimitation of the study in order to complete it within the time frame is part of the challenge. The assessment of the individual thesis must take into consideration the required workload involved in the production of the thesis.

### I. About the 30-credits Master Thesis in Human Geography

The fulfillment of HGO4080 implies the delivery of a master thesis for evaluation and an adjusting oral examination on the thesis and its topic.

A master thesis of 30 credits is an option for students who wish to combine carry out independent academic research of a minor scope [than a 60 credit master's thesis]. The 30-credits master thesis reflects research carried out over a period of one semester. Students are encouraged to start planning for their thesis topic/project in advance, but are expected to engage on full-time workload (30-credits) in the fourth (final) semester of the programme.

"Minor scope" refers to how comprehensive the academic work required for the individual research project is. Independent research of a minor scope involves:

- More limited research questions and/or narrowly defined research topic.
- More focused and selective review of relevant literature and analytical framework.
- More extensive use of secondary sources.
- No expectation for students to collect their own data (i.e. surveys, fieldwork, interviews).

### II. Criteria for evaluating a 30-credits master thesis in Human Geography

The evaluation of a master thesis is based on an overall assessment of the thesis as academic work. The following criteria should be considered in evaluating a 30-credits master thesis in human geography:

**Formatert:** Kantlinje: Boks: (Enkel heltrukket linje, Automatisk, 0,5 pkt. Linjebredde)

**formaterte:** Ikke Utheving

**formaterte:** Skrift: (Standard) + Brødtekst (Calibri), Skriftfarge: Automatisk, Ikke Utheving

**formaterte:** Ikke Utheving

**formaterte:** Skrift: (Standard) + Brødtekst (Calibri), Skriftfarge: Automatisk

**formaterte:** Ikke Utheving

**formaterte:** Ikke Utheving

**Formatert:** Listeavsnitt, Punktmerket + Nivå: 1 + Justert ved: 0,63 cm + Innrykk ved: 1,27 cm

**Formatert:** Normal, Ingen punktmerking eller nummerering

#### Aim of the thesis – Problem statement

- The aim of the research should be clearly formulated. The thesis should have clear and limited research questions.
- The student should address the scientific relevance of the study (theoretically, methodologically ~~and~~/or empirically), as well as its relevance for the discipline and/or society.

→ *Does the thesis have a clear aim/research question(s) and focus?*

#### Theory and previous research, literature review

- The thesis should include a **focused and selective** review of the relevant research field, providing a critical assessment of ~~previous research on~~ the chosen **theme/topical material**.
- The thesis should be informed by a **focused selected** theoretical framework, ~~/point of departure~~, concepts and model of analysis. These should be presented in a coherent and argumentative way, explicitly indicating how they contribute to address the research questions.

→ *Does the thesis demonstrate a satisfactory overview of the research field?*

→ *Is there a critical discussion of the literature presented?*

#### Methods and the reliability and validity of the data

- ~~The thesis should include a detailed presentation of the method(s) used, explicitly stating the reasons for the choice of methodology.~~
- ~~The student should explicitly address the including strengths and weaknesses.~~
- ~~If primary data is collected, t of the methods chosen.~~
- ~~The thesis should provide an exact account of how it the data may be influenced by problems during data collection, as well as a-~~
- ~~A discussion of ethical issues of the data-gathering process should be provided.~~
- ~~Detailed explanation of how the data are treated/analysed.~~
- If the thesis does not include primary data collection, there must be a critical review of information sources.
- ~~Detailed explanation of how the data are treated/analysed.~~

→ *Does the thesis demonstrate a satisfactory **and reflective** use of methods?*

→ *Is there a critical discussion of the methods used?*

#### Analysis

- The analysis must be done in a systematic, logical, sophisticated and independent manner.
- There must be a clear “red thread”, i.e. link, between research questions, theory, method and the use of the data.
- The interpretation of the empirical material presented in the thesis must be informed by and based on a critical assessment of the chosen theoretical framework.
- The findings must refer to the data collected.
- The research questions must be answered explicitly and fully.

→ *Is the argument made well formulated and anchored in the presented material?*

→ *Is the analysis well done? Does the thesis demonstrate appropriate, independent and critical analysis?*

#### Conclusions

- The conclusions of the study must be formulated in a clear and concise manner, highlighting the main findings of the research as well as the contribution to the discipline.
- The findings must can be discussed in a wider empirical perspective.
- Suggestions of policy implication of the findings and future research may be given.  
→ *Does the thesis answer its own research questions?*  
→ *Does the thesis contribute to the research front?*

#### Structure and form

- Does the thesis have a well organized and logical structure?
- Is there any unnecessary content in the thesis outside of the “red thread”?
- Does the thesis apply the theoretical framework presented? Is the use of concepts consistent?
- Does the thesis comply with established scientific norms and formal rules regarding referencing in academic writing?
- Does the thesis comply with the formal requirements established by the master’s programme in Human Geography?

#### III. Formal requirements for the 30-credits master thesis

The following requirements apply for 30-credits master theses:

- Course work equivalent to 90-credits must be completed before delivering the thesis for evaluation.
- The length of a 30-credit master’s thesis should be a total of between 20,000 and 25,000 words (inclusive of summary, table of contents, reference list, etc)
- The thesis will include a summary of 1-2 pages, to appear after the cover page.
- The master thesis must be page numbered, and include a table of contents and list of references.
- Font size 12 points, line spacing 1 1/2.
- Projects involving the use of personal information must be registered at Norsk senter for Forskningsdata (NSD), se Personvernombudsordningen for forskning (<http://www.personvern.uio.no/pvo/forskstu.html>)

#### *About the cover page of the thesis*

The cover page must include the following information:

- Full title of the thesis
- Full name of the student
- Semester (Spring/Autumn), year of delivery
- Study programme, department, faculty, university
- Word count (total)

#### *About the length of the thesis*

- Theses that exceed the word limit of 25 000 words will be rejected, and a new submission deadline will apply.
- If there is a need to deviate from the word limit, the student must, together with his/her supervisor, apply to the head of studies three weeks before the submission deadline. The application must be academically justified.

#### V. Guidelines for the oral examination

*Utkast til diskusjon D-sak 7 (15/2019)*

The oral examination takes place after the thesis has been graded.

The aim of the adjusting oral examination is to engage into academic dialogue with the candidate on the basis of the master thesis. The evaluation committee will provide general feedback on the thesis and address both strengths and weaknesses of the work, as well as potential areas in need of clarification.

The evaluation committee can adjust the final grade of thesis as a result of the oral examination, either one grade up or one grade down. Adjustments apply normally in situations where the committee is in doubt about the grade most appropriate for the thesis, or when the thesis is at the edge of another grade. Deviation from this rule must be justified by the committee in written form.

**Karakterskala for masteroppgaver i samfunnsgeografi – HGO4090/4080 (oversettes!)**

**A:**

En særdeles god og velskrevet oppgave som er godt disponert, har en godt presisert problemstilling, avansert og adekvat teori- og metodebehandling, en særdeles vel gjennomført analyse samt svært godt formulerte konklusjoner eller anbefalinger. Kandidaten viser usedvanlig god reflekterende og analytisk evne og uvanlig stor grad av faglig modenhet og selvstendighet.

**B:**

En meget god og velskrevet oppgave som er godt disponert, har en presisert problemstilling, adekvat teori- og metodebehandling, en vel gjennomført analyse samt godt formulerte konklusjoner eller anbefalinger. Kandidaten viser god reflekterende og analytisk evne og stor grad av faglig modenhet og selvstendighet. Mindre mangler kan aksepteres.

**C:**

En relativt velskrevet oppgave som er tilfredsstillende på de fleste områder: stort sett bra disponert og presisert, en noenlunde adekvat teori- og metodebehandling, en tilfredsstillende analyse samt stort sett greit formulerte konklusjoner eller anbefalinger. Kandidaten viser en viss reflekterende og/eller analytisk evne og en viss grad av faglig modenhet og selvstendighet. En del mangler kan aksepteres.

**4**

Alternativt en oppgave med en mer original problemstilling og/eller et høyere teoretisk og metodisk ambisjonsnivå, men hvor gjennomføringen viser svakheter av teoretisk og/eller metodisk art.

**D:**

En oppgave som har en del faglige kvaliteter, men som samtidig har vesentlige mangler eller svakheter på ett eller flere av følgende områder: disposisjon, formuleringsevne, presisering av problemstilling, teori- og metodebehandling, analyse, formulering av konklusjoner eller anbefalinger. Kandidaten viser en viss svakhet når det gjelder reflekterende og/eller analytisk evne og har relativt lav grad av faglig modenhet og selvstendighet.

**E:**

En oppgave som har enkelte faglige kvaliteter, men som samtidig har vesentlige mangler eller svakheter på de fleste av følgende områder: disposisjon, formuleringsevne, presisering av problemstilling, teori- og metodebehandling, analyse og/eller formulering av konklusjoner eller anbefalinger. Kandidaten viser klare svakheter når det gjelder reflekterende og/eller analytisk evne og har lav grad av faglig modenhet og selvstendighet.

**F:**

Oppgaven er preget av så alvorlige feil og mangler av teoretisk, metodisk og fremstillingsmessig art at den ikke kan godkjennes.