

Dean's Regulation No. 5/2025

Dissertation thesis rules and recommendations for students of doctoral study programmes at FLD

Article 1 Introductory Provisions

- (1) This Dean's Regulation is valid for the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences (hereinafter "FLD") of the Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague (hereinafter "CZU") and sets guidelines for assigning final dissertation theses (hereinafter "DissT"), the elaboration of DissT assignment, DissT methodology, literature review on the dissertation topic, and the actual DissT for doctoral study fields and programmes (hereinafter "DSP") at FLD.
- (2) This Regulation is elaborated in particular in accordance with Act No. 111/1998 Coll., On Higher Education Institutions, as amended, the valid Study and Examination Regulations for Study in Doctoral Study Programmes at the CZU in Prague (hereinafter also "SER") and valid Dean's Regulation concerning the Rules and Requirements for DSP at FLD.

Article 2

Rules for assigning dissertation theses and elaboration of dissertation thesis assignment

- (1) The DSP Field of Study Board (hereinafter "FSB") regularly, at least once a year before the start of the admission procedure, discusses the framework topics or thematic areas of the DissT and the supervisors for these topics.
- (2) These topics and thematic areas are published on the public part of the FLD webpage.
- (3) Upon agreement with the supervisor, a student can write a DissT on a topic that he/she proposes. Subsequently, this topic together with the individual study plan, must be approved by the FSB.
- (4) The DissT topic must be related to the profile of the graduate of the relevant DSP.
- (5) The DissT assignment is created and approved via UIS. The supervisor is responsible for formal and content accuracy of the DissT assignment. The DissT assignment must be created within 6 months of the student's enrolment in the study and is valid after the Dean's approval.
- (6) In the event that during the research there are fundamental changes within the DissT assignment, e.g. in the objectives or methodology, the DissT assignment must be modified. The modified DissT assignment must again be approved by the supervisor, the FSB Chairman, and the Dean. The assignment content is described in the Methodological instructions for assignment, elaboration and defence of DissT and other papers within DSP at FLD, which are attached to this Dean's Regulation.
- (7) When writing the DissT, a student follows the valid SER, individual study plan, valid Dean's Regulation concerning Rules and Requirements for DSP, FLD schedule, instructions of the supervisor, or consultant and FSB. When elaborating the DissT, it is recommended to follow the *Methodological instructions for the assignment, elaboration and defence of the DissT and other papers within the DSP at FLD*.

Article 3

Rules for submitting and assessing DissT

- (1) The deadline for submitting the DissT is governed by the student's individual study plan, the valid SER, and valid Dean's Regulation concerning the Rules and Requirements for DSP at FLD.
- (2) The student submits his/her DissT in electronic and printed form, according to the valid SER and valid Dean's Regulation concerning the Rules and Requirements for DSP at FLD.
- (3) The electronic version of the final thesis is sent to check the content conformity after uploading to the CZU information system and after the 24-hour protective period, in which the student is entitled to make corrections in the uploaded file.
- (4) The check is carried out through the Theses.cz portal and its subject is to determine the conformity of the student's final thesis with the texts of other authors. Its outcome will be displayed retroactively in UIS and is accessible to the student, the supervisor, the head of the department and the Vice-Dean for Science and Research (hereinafter the Vice-Dean for S&R).
- (5) If the DissT match with another author's texts is greater than or equal to 15%, it is the duty of the DissT supervisor to comment on this match. The chapter Results is not included in this match if the DissT is in the form of an annotated set of published articles, i.e. if the thesis contains scientific articles where the DissT author is listed in the author's team (also applies to points 10 and 11 in Article 3 below). However, the supervisor must comment on this conformity in the "Results" chapter (in the form of an annotated set of published articles) and to state the specific original contribution of the student within these scientific publications.
- (6) Applications based on artificial intelligence (hereinafter "AI") can be used as an auxiliary tool only in the research part of the thesis, to check grammar and stylistics, to design text structure, stylistic text reforming, and search for sources.
- (7) AI-based applications are not permissible either for wording of one's own work results or in discussion and summarizing the conclusions.
- (8) If a student used AI tools to create the content part of the final thesis, he is obliged to quote this source in the final thesis. In this case, it is recommended to use a footnote where it will be explained that the text has been created or modified using AI and in what way, ideally the whole text of the query (prompt).
- (9) If the AI tools are used, the student is obliged to complete the usual statement of the originality of the final thesis: *"I declare that I used the AI tools in accordance with the internal regulations of the university and the principles of academic integrity and ethics. I refer to the use of these tools in a suitable way."*
- (10) Plagiarism is considered to be the final thesis with the texts of another author greater than 10%, if these texts are listed without proper citations.
- (11) The DissT, which coincides with the text of another author of over 20% even with the indication of proper citations can be considered unsatisfactory at this stage, as it is taken as a compilation of the comprehensive parts of another author.
- (12) DissT compliance with the previously published texts of the author (e.g. diploma thesis) is not considered unsatisfactory. The size of such compliance (sum of compliance with individual papers) must not exceed 20%.

- (13) The final thesis is also considered unsatisfactory which does not contain proper citations of more than 10% of bibliographic sources listed in the references.
- (14) The decision on whether or not the DissT can be considered unsatisfactory ("plagiarism") is entitled to the relevant dissertation defence committee.
- (15) If the DissT is marked by the committee as plagiarism according to the previous point, the student is given the evaluation "failed" and the whole case is handed over to the relevant FLD disciplinary committee.
- (16) A case of plagiarism, defined according to the previous points in Article 3, is handed over to the FLD disciplinary committee even if the student's defence before the committee at the SDE does not take place.
- (17) The actual process of defending a DissT is governed by the valid SER and valid Dean's Regulation concerning the Rules and Requirements for DSP at FLD. The defence may run according to the *Methodological instructions for the assignment, elaboration and defence of the DissT and other papers within the DSP at FLD*.
- (18) The student is informed about the assignment to the SDE Committee via UIS and also by email automatically sent via UIS.
- (19) The date and place of the DissT defence and SDE are published in UIS, on the public part of the CZU website and on the FLD notice board.

Article 4 **Final Provisions**

- (1) This Regulation applies and is binding for all DSP students at FLD.
- (2) This Regulation shall enter into force and effect on the day of its publication on the public part of the CZU website.

Prague, 26th March 2025

prof. Ing. Róbert Marušák, PhD.
FLD Dean

Appendix 1

Methodological instructions for the assignment, elaboration, and defence of the DissT and other papers within the DSP at FLD

(I) DissT assignment

The DissT assignment contains (a) thesis title, (b) thesis objectives, (c) methodology, (d) recommended scope, (e) keywords, (f) recommended sources, (g) supervisor, (h) consultant.

a. Thesis title

It must clearly specify and focus the topic (temporally, spatially, in terms of approach, method used, research sample, etc.). The title should be concise, clear, and unambiguous so that its meaning can be clearly understood. It should contain a technical term or terms from the terminology of the thesis field of study. The FSB may permit a change of the thesis title on the basis of the supervisor's request.

b. Thesis objectives

The thesis objectives must be formulated unambiguously and intelligibly. They must be concrete, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. Hypotheses can also be stated in this part of the assignment. These are defined as a solution to a problem or a relationship between specified variables.

c. Methodology

The methodology clearly describes the key methodological parts of the thesis: locations of data collection, time period of data collection, set minimum range of number of measurements and samples, used statistical procedures, etc. Part of the methodology is also the schedule of submission of key components of the DissT to the supervisor. The student is obliged to follow this schedule when working on the DissT. The DissT schedule may be adjusted on the basis of the supervisor's instructions, due to objective reasons arising from the course of the work. In the case of modification of the schedule change, on the basis of these circumstances and the supervisor's consent, the assignment does not have to be modified and approved again by the Dean.

d. Recommended scope

The recommended scope of the DissT without appendices is determined for individual DSPs by the valid Dean's Regulation concerning Rules and requirements for DSP at FLD.

e. Keywords

4–7 keywords that must not be part of the thesis title.

f. Recommended sources

At least 10 sources of scientific literature, the vast majority foreign. The sources must be up-to-date and correspond to the current level of knowledge in the field.

g. Supervisor

For each particular DissT, a supervisor is approved by the FSB. The supervisor guides the DSP student throughout the study. In the course of the study, the Dean may change the DissT supervisor after FSB discussion.

h. Consultant

If a DissT topic requires the need for specific guidance or professional consultations, which cannot be done by the supervisor, a consultant is appointed who oversees the part of the DSP student's study agreed with the supervisor. The consultant is usually a leading expert with a scientific degree or the academic title of "doctor" and is proposed by the supervisor. After FSB approval, the consultant is appointed by the Dean according to the valid SER.

(II) DissT form

Pursuant to Section 47, Paragraph 4 of Act No. 111/1998 Coll., the study is duly completed by an SDE and a public DissT defence, which demonstrates the ability and readiness for independent activity in the field of research or development or for independent theoretical and creative artistic activity. The DissT must contain the original and published results or the results accepted for publication.

The dissertation thesis is divided into:

- Introductory part;
- Main text part;
- Appendices;
- Final and complementary parts.

Only the specialised text from the main text part, without references, is included in the minimum scope of the DissT set by the FSB.

Introductory part includes:

- a. Front cover and inside cover
 - the front cover contains the title page essential elements: the name of the university (Czech University of Life Sciences) and faculty (Faculty of Forestry and Life Sciences), type of thesis (dissertation thesis), name of the author and year of elaboration;
- b. Title page
 - contains the name of the university and faculty, the name of the study programme, the title of the thesis in Czech and English, the name of the author, the name of the supervisor, or consultant, number of appendices, place and year of elaboration;
- c. DissT assignment (see above);
- d. Annotation

- annotation means a brief description of the DissT in terms of its content, methodology, results, and contribution (in Czech, English and some other global language), up to a maximum of one page;
- e. Keywords in Czech and English (4–7 words);
- f. Declaration of independent elaboration and citation of all used sources;
- g. Acknowledgements (optional);
- h. List of contents;
- i. List of used symbols and abbreviations (in alphabetical order);
- j. List of tables and list of figures (together with the number of the page on which they are printed).

Main text part includes:

- a. Introduction;
- b. Objectives and hypotheses;
- c. Literature review on the DissT topic;
- d. Methodology describing solutions and research results;
- e. Results;
- f. Discussion (in particular synthesis of results; comparison of DissT results, opinions and recommendations with other studies, etc.);
- g. Conclusion (summary of the most important findings and results; contribution to the scientific field, practice, society, etc.);
- h. List of references.

On the recommendation of a supervisor, the form of citations in the text and the form of a list of bibliographic citations and other sources is taken from a recognized scientific periodical, or the DissT may be processed according to the APA citation (7th edition, *American Psychological Association*), a set of rules and instructions for effective writing of a specialised text.

The list of references contains only the sources which the text refers to. It is recommended to sort the list of references alphabetically by authors and year of publication.

If a DissT is in the form of an annotated set of published articles, its necessary part is a specialised text of at least 30 standard pages, which includes in particular:

- a. Introduction;
- b. Objectives and hypotheses;
- c. Literature review on the DissT topic;
- d. Methodology describing solutions (only fundamental methodological procedures leading to the fulfilment of the DissT objectives);
- e. Results – copies of scientific articles (they are not part of appendices);
- f. Discussion (in particular synthesis of DissT results; comparison of DissT results, opinions and recommendations with other studies, etc.);
- g. Conclusion (summary of the most important findings and results; contribution to the scientific field, practice, society, etc.);
- h. List of references, or other sources.

The above-mentioned division is only a recommendation. The main part of the commented set should be the synthesis of results, their overall evaluation and a benefit for the scientific field, practice and society.

Appendices

Appendices include additional information supplementing the main text, such as explanations of research methods and techniques which are summarized in the text, visual documentation, user manuals and instructions for use, tables, figures, photographs, etc. If the appendices are extensive, they can be bound separately. The individual parts of the appendices must be separated by clear marking. Each individual appendix must start on a new page.

Final and complementary parts includes:

- a) Index (optional);
- b) Errata (if needed);
- c) Inside back cover and back cover;
- d) Complements (CD ROM, samples, etc.).

(III) SDE and DissT defence schedule

Recommended SDE schedule

- a) SDE is an oral exam conducted in front of a Committee. The SDE is opened by the Committee chairman, who introduces the Committee members, makes a proposal for the appointment of a recorder and a scrutineer, and lets the Committee members vote on them. He/she then gives the floor to the supervisor (not a Committee member), who briefly introduces the student and his/her previous activities, activities within the doctoral study, and the DissT topic. The chairman then gives the floor to the student.
- b) SDE consists of an expert discussion on the researched topic and three professional subjects arising from the DissT topic.
- c) In the form of a presentation, the student briefly introduces the DissT topic (introduction to the SDE part – expert discussion on the researched topic). The presentation should be prepared in PowerPoint or similar programs. The length of the presentation should be 15–20 minutes.
- d) Subsequently, there is an expert discussion on the researched topic. The student takes opinions on the researched topic, and answers the Committee members' questions according to the Committee chairman's instructions.
- e) The exam from three professional subjects arising from the DissT topic follows.
- f) After the candidate answers all the Committee's questions (or does not answer some of them), the public part is closed by the Committee chairman.
- g) After closing the public discussion, the chairman shall exclude all guests, including the candidate, from the meeting and open a closed Committee meeting, which may be attended by the Committee members. In this part, the SDE result is decided.

- h) The SDE result with the grade "passed" is conditioned by the result of the "passed" in all SDE subjects. If the student does not pass one or more subjects, or the professional discussion on the DissT topic, the SDE must be repeated in full.
- i) The announcement of the result is public.
- j) The examination Committee issues a record of the SDE on a standardised form and the record of the SDE is registered in the UIS. If the student does not pass the SDE, the SDE can be repeated at the earliest after sixty calendar days from the date of the unsuccessful attempt to pass the SDE.

Recommended DissT defence schedule

- a) The defence is public. It is opened by the Committee chairman, who introduces the Committee members, makes a proposal for the appointment of a recorder and a scrutineer, and lets the Committee members vote on them. He/she also presents the DissT topic and an overview of the student's important published original scientific papers. He/she then gives the floor to the supervisor (not a Committee member), who briefly introduces the student and his/her previous activities, and activities within the doctoral study. The chairman then gives the floor to the student.
- b) In the form of a presentation, the student briefly introduces the DissT topic and its contribution. The presentation should be prepared in PowerPoint or similar programs. The length of the presentation should be 20–25 minutes.
- c) Opponents give reviews; the chairman or another designated member of the defence Committee shall read a report for an absent opponent.
- d) The student takes opinions on the opponents' reports, and answers the opponents' questions according to the Committee chairman's instructions.
- e) After the candidate answers all the Committee's questions (or does not answer some of them), the discussion is closed by the Committee chairman.
- f) After closing the public discussion, the chairman shall exclude all guests, including the candidate, from the meeting and open a closed Committee meeting, which can be attended by the DissT defence Committee members, and also opponents and supervisor with the consent of all Committee members. At a closed meeting, the Committee evaluates the course of the defence. The defence result is decided by secret ballot and evaluated by the words: "defended" or "did not defend". Subsequently, the Committee chairman publicly announces the result to the candidate.
- g) The DissT defence Committee keeps minutes of the DissT defence course and the adopted resolutions, which are signed by the dissertation defence Committee chairman, and a record is made of the voting, which is signed by all voters. The minutes and record are forwarded to the Dean.

(IV) DissT methodology

The DissT methodology must be submitted, signed by the supervisor, **within three months of enrolment to study** in printed form at the FLD S&R Department and entered into the UIS system

(unless the S&R Vice-dean determines different conditions for submitting the DissT methodology in a given year).

The DissT methodology is approved by the relevant FSB (according to the valid Rector's Directive – Rules of Procedure of Field of Study Boards).

In the event that the FSB approves the DissT methodology, the FSB Chairman forwards this information to the S&R Department in the form of meeting minutes.

The S&R Vice-dean enters the fulfilment of this obligation in the UIS within the student's individual study plan.

DissT methodology usually includes:

- a) A brief up-to-date overview of the researched topic;
- b) Established objectives and scientific hypotheses;
- c) Selected methods described in detail;
- d) A time schedule;
- e) A list of references.

The scope of the DissT methodology is approximately 3–5 standard pages of specialised text, without references (see Appendix 2).

(V) Literature review and its defence (Theoretical and methodological analysis of the DissT topic)

The deadline, manner of submission and the method of evaluation of this study obligation shall be determined by the Chairman of the relevant Field of Study Board each year.

The theoretical and methodological analysis of the DissT topic (hereinafter “the document”) must provide the student with information about the research that has already been made on the DissT topic, including the errors that have been made during this research. The aim of the document is to create a critical overview of current knowledge on the DissT topic. Its basic aim is to give the student an up-to-date overview of current literature on the topic and provide a basis from which it is possible to evaluate the accuracy of the proposed research and methodology. On its basis, the student can also find new suitable methods for his/her own research and build on previous research.

The document must be of high quality from a professional point of view, and the individual parts must follow on from each other logically. It must contain relevant bibliographic references in a consistent and appropriate format, use the correct terminology, be an unbiased and comprehensive overview of previous research on the topic, and a synthesis of the information presented (see Appendix 2).

Within this study obligation, the compulsory defence of this document will be conducted before the Committee set by the FSB; it may request a defence of all existing activities during the first year of doctoral studies based on the instruction of the FSB chairman. The Committee consists of members of

the FSBs of individual FLD study programmes and possibly other experts. The Committee members of shall be appointed by the FSB Chairman.

The Committee prepares a brief report on the literature review defence, which will include recommendations and opinions for the student and the FSB (this report will be available at the FSB chairman). In its assessment, the FSB takes into account the Committee's opinion and decides in the following form: (i) the student must rework his/her literature review, re-submit, and re-defend before the Committee, (ii) the shortcomings of the literature review are not serious and the FSB requires a reworking of the DissT according to the their comments and submit to the FSB for re-assessment, (iii) the literature review meets all requirements, is of high quality and defended before the Committee. In this case, the FSB forwards this information to the FLD S&R Department in the form of meeting minutes. The S&R Vice-dean enters the fulfilment of this obligation in the UIS system within the student's individual study plan.

Appendix 2

Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences Department

DissT methodology / Literature review

Thesis title

Author: name

Supervisor: name

2025