

APPROVED
RISEBA Methodological council
24.09.2019. Minutes No. 19/1.1-40/2

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RISEBA University of Applied Sciences RISEBA Reviewer guidelines for Faculty of Architecture and Design

Thank you for agreeing to be a reviewer for RISEBA Master or Bachelor Thesis!

To ensure the quality of the review we recommend going through the Reviewer Guidelines. We offer these guidelines as suggestions which we encourage you to take to heart as the quality of the study programmes and the defense of the Thesis is based upon the reviews you provide for the students and State Examination Commission.

Prior to reviewing the paper, joint meeting with the student who is the author of the final paper and project is advised in order to be acquainted with the work prepared.

1. Review Format

You must submit your review within the given timelines by completing the templates that you will receive when agreeing to be a Reviewer – templates will be provided for Part A and Part B separately.

In the review of the A or the theoretical part you should evaluate the given aspects in five sections giving grade from 1 to 10. If needed, more detailed comments can be added for each section, numbered sequentially. In the review on Part B or design part please evaluate the given criteria by giving the grade from 1 to 10.

The Review template asks you to identify number of strengths and weaknesses of the Thesis. Provide a structured review by separating and numbering your comments. Also, where appropriate, cite specific page numbers, paragraphs, tables, and figures in your review. If you are uncertain about your comments in terms of some aspects of your review, please do your best to determine the accuracy of your position. Remember that inaccuracies in your review reflect on the programme you are reviewing for as a whole as well as on RISEBA.

At the end of the Review You should ask some questions to the students. The ideal number of questions in the Review is from 1 to maximum 4. Please remember, that the members of state Examination commission will also ask their questions, therefore it is not recommended to ask too many questions in the review.

At the end of the review, rate the final work with the grade. Your grade is part of the average estimated grade the student will receive for the thesis.

2. Areas to Cover

You should comment on the part A or theoretical development of a Thesis by evaluating the concept, used methodology and sources, research, formal aspects and conclusions, also paying attention to the technical correctness and formatting in accordance to RISEBA guidelines. In the review of Part B, you should evaluate the relevance of the project topic, the relevance and quality of the design brief and programme, the developed research section, the originality and architectural quality of the project, the understanding of construction technologies and design solutions, the graphics used, and formal criteria and progress according to the regulations. You should also consider the overall value-added contribution the Thesis offers. Consider whether the results have any practical or scientific value, and comment on its implications for the practice – company, industry and community – relevance to locally and globally actual urban planning and architectural processes.

The following points are some suggested criteria that might help you evaluate and form your review for part A.

Introduction

- Is there a clear research problem (or practical problem), with a solid motivation behind it?
- Is the aim and objectives relevant to the problem?

Theoretical part

- Does the Thesis contain a well-developed and articulated theoretical framework?
- Are the core concepts of the research clearly defined?
- Is extant literature appropriately reflected, or are critical references missing? Are there enough scientific articles referred?
- Are there the latest research papers (RISEBA guidelines state that the Thesis must include at least five research papers which are not older than 5 years)?

Empirical part

- Is the research methodology clearly described and justified?
- Is there a clear research model (this should be a picture representing the research variables)?
- Is the logic behind the hypotheses or research questions persuasive? Do the hypotheses or research questions logically flow from the theory or practical problem?
- Is the research sample appropriate?
- Is the data collection method consistent with the analytical technique(s) applied?
- Are the techniques of data analysis appropriate for the research questions or hypotheses?
- Are the results reported in an understandable way?
- Are all research questions answered (if there are research questions) or is there conclusion about the hypotheses (if there are research questions)?

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Are the conclusions related to the research findings? Are they specific enough?
- Are the recommendations related to the research findings?
- Are the recommendations applicable for the practice and/or scientific community (are there managerial implications)?
- Is there an addressee mentioned for each recommendation?

3. Setting the Tone of the Review

Authors deserve to be treated with respect, regardless of your evaluation of their work. Remember, you are representing the particular programme with your review and ultimately RISEBA.

Please ensure that the overall tone of the review is positive. Student has devoted about 4 months to this research and writing the thesis and he/she deserves a positive attitude. Please keep your comments constructive.

The Review template asks you to identify number of strengths and weaknesses of the Thesis. It is important to try to identify the strengths of a thesis even if the work is quite weak.

Identify areas of weakness in a Thesis, but also provide specific guidance on how the authors might address the limitations you have noted. The more specificity you provide in your review, the more likely it is that the authors will benefit from your evaluation and suggestions.

Please try to be open-minded to different authors using different theoretical frameworks. Try to judge the Thesis based on how well they stimulate thinking and discussion. Also, keep in mind that many students come from different backgrounds. Research traditions, as well as theoretical and methodological orientations are constantly

changing, therefor RISEBA embraces innovative methodologies to be applied in the Thesis research – both in theoretical research and project.

If there are multiple ways how to perform a specific task, students are free to choose. Do not criticize something only because you would do it differently. You can ask the student to explain his/her choice, but do not write it as a weakness. *For example:* there are multiple approaches how to formulate the research object and research subject, therefore, do not comment on this aspect.

Thank you for your time and contribution!