

**TALLINN HEALTH CARE COLLEGE  
DIRECTIVE FOR ORGANISATION OF FINAL AND MASTER’S EXAM, AND OF  
FINAL THESIS**

Adopted based on [Higher Education Act](#) clause 2(3) and the Statutes of Tallinn Health Care College clause 14(34), [Standard of Higher Education](#) clause 6(1) and 6(2) and [The Uniform Grading System and the Conditions and Procedure for Issuing Diplomas and Diploma Supplements](#), and clause 3.1.2 of Academic Regulations approved by Tallinn Health Care College Council resolution No 1.1 of 24 August, 2021.

**1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1.1. Scope of application

- 1.1.1. Tallinn Health Care College Directive for Organisation of Final and Master’s Exam, and of Final Thesis (*hereinafter* Directive) determines the organization of final and master’s exam, and of final thesis at Tallinn Health Care College (*hereinafter* the College).
- 1.1.2. The aim of the Directive is to ensure purposeful and smooth organization of College’s final and master’s exam and of the final thesis.
- 1.1.3. It is compulsory to follow the Directive by the membership of the College, supervisors, chairperson of defence and exam committee, members and other people regarding the exam or the paper.
- 1.1.4. Study Information System Tahvel is College’s official information exchange environment for organization of studies. It includes gathering, processing, and retention of data regarding studies; and forwarding information.
- 1.1.5. Academic Regulations (*hereinafter* AR) constitutes the fundamental documents regulating the teaching and study-related relations at the College.

1.2. Terms

- 1.2.1. Final or master’s exam is assessment of knowledge and skills of students of degree-level studies by the committee of final or master’s exam, it certifies having sufficient competence in accordance with the study degree level.
- 1.2.2. Final thesis is independent research compiled by a student(s) demonstrating the student’s skills to clearly define the research problem and find a solution to the set problem.
- 1.2.3. Committee of final thesis defence and final and master’s exam (*hereinafter* Committee) is an assessment committee compiled according to the regulations set in this document, which is competent to assess final or master’s exam and final thesis at the College.

**2. ORGANISATION OF CONDUCTING FINAL OR MASTER’S EXAM AND  
DEFENCE OF FINAL THESIS**

2.1. Formation of Committee

- 2.1.1. The Committee is formed either separately for each curriculum, or there is a joint committee of several curricula.
- 2.1.2. In case curriculum allows the student to choose between the final exam or final thesis, both committees shall be formed.
- 2.1.3. Composition of the Committee is formed as follows:
  - 2.1.3.1. Master studies committee includes a chairperson who is the leading specialist in the field, and up to three lecturers. At least one member of the committee should have a PhD or an equivalent qualification;

- 2.1.3.2. Committee of applied higher education includes a chairperson who is a leading specialist in the field (prerequisite Master's degree or equivalent qualification), and up to two lecturers.
- 2.1.4. Tallinn Health Care College Council approves chairpersons and members of Committees of final thesis defence and final exams based on suggestions by the Vice Rector of Academic Affairs every year in November the latest.
- 2.2. Permission for final or master's exam/defence of final thesis
- 2.2.1. Students shall be given a permission for final or master's exam/defence of final thesis after completing their curriculum in full volume (except final thesis and/or final or master's exam).
- 2.2.2. Final or master's exam/defence of final thesis is carried out based on the timetable formed by specialist of studies of Study Department, the timetable is signed by the Head of the Study Department and the corresponding structural unit, and it is published a week before the beginning of the week for final or master's exam/defence of final thesis (defence week/period is determined in academic calendar) to the students on College's website.
- 2.2.3. If curriculum allows the student to choose between the final exam and final thesis, the student is obliged to submit their final selection in study information system Tahvel during first two weeks of last semester of their studies.
- 2.2.3.1. If the student has not selected either the final thesis or a final exam on time (except if the curriculum insists final thesis only) the College shall select instead of the student in default. If the student wishes to change the selected option, they need to submit a corresponding application (Other) in study information system Tahvel. Head of Study Department decides with the head of corresponding structural unit if to approve or reject the application. In case of approval, the choice is formed in study information system Tahvel by Study Department.
- 2.2.4. Student returning from academic leave, or a student having extended study period chooses (except if the curriculum insists writing the final thesis) either the final thesis or final exam, and in case of final thesis enters the initial title of the thesis and the name of supervisor during first two weeks of their last semester of study period.
- 2.2.5. In case the student writes their final thesis to graduate from the College, they enter the title (in Estonian and in English) and supervisor(s) during first two weeks in study information system Tahvel.
- 2.2.5.1. The student has a right to change the data of their final thesis during autumn semester until December 1, and during spring semester until May 1. Final thesis data are confirmed by Study Department in following five workdays.
- 2.3. Organisation of final exam process
- 2.3.1. Final exams are carried out according to fixed timetable in academic calendar in study information system at the beginning of the semester. Timetable will be published by the Study Department on the website of the College and information will be sent to the graduates electronically in the study information system Tahvel four weeks prior to the exam the latest.
- 2.3.2. The student submits statistics form in Moodle environment before the exam about employment and/or further plans.
- 2.3.2.1. The aim of gathering data is to monitor employment of the graduates in their professional field and further plans to get an overview of the employers of students working in their professional field.
- 2.3.2.2. Gathered data consist of first and last name of the student, curriculum group, marked/describable choice(s), in case of professional work name of the institution and their general e-mail. In addition, authentication data are collected in Moodle

environment. Data gathered in Moodle are compiled to the unified database. Data will be stored in Study Department for seven years, after that the data in the database shall be anonymised. Data in Moodle environment shall be deleted from the system and data in paper form are destroyed by being crushed once a year after transferring the data to the database. At the end of action, the destruction certificate is formed.

2.3.2.3. Data are published in reports and documents in a generalized way without references to personal data (first and last name).

2.3.3. The student has a right for final exam consultation two weeks before the exam week the latest, at least for four hours according to the timetable.

2.3.4. Head of curriculum group shall sign the exam questions two weeks before the exam the latest as a digital file in documentation management system in a document group specifically accessed and submits it to be confirmed (signed) to the head of structural unit and Rector of Academic Affairs.

2.3.4.1. Confirmed document shall be forwarded to the specialist of studies of the curriculum for its execution as defined.

2.3.5. Head of curriculum decides whether external materials are allowed to use on final exam. Use of external materials is fixed in curriculum.

2.3.6. In addition to the members of Committee, Rector, Vice Rector of Academic Affairs of the College, Head of Study Department, Head of Structural Unit, Head of Study Quality and Head of Curriculum Group may attend the final exam.

2.4. Organisation of process of final thesis defence and master's exam.

2.4.1. Defence of final thesis and master's exams are carried out according to the academic calendar. Timetable is published by the Study Department on College's website and informs the graduates electronically via study information system Tahvel four weeks prior the defence of final thesis/master's exam the latest.

2.4.2. The student is responsible for any plagiarism in their final thesis and follows the general standards of morality and professional ethics in the process of final thesis and master's exam.

2.4.3. All submitted final theses/development projects are checked for plagiarism by using plagiarism detection programme.

2.4.4. If final exam/master's exam is carried out in Moodle environment, Proctorio observation system may be used to identify academic fraud.

2.4.4.1. Activities allowed and forbidden during exams carried out with Proctorio observation and their extent is described in syllabus, it is configured corresponding to the description by the lecturer responsible for the subject on Moodle.

2.4.4.2. Information regarding configuration in Proctorio in syllabus should include following information: extent of recording, scanning of the room and necessity of personal identification. In addition, activities considered as breaching should be listed and activities, which may automatically close the exam environment.

2.4.5. Students are registered according to the committees and the timetable on Moodle environment to e-course of final thesis/master's exam three days before the deadline of submitting the final thesis/master's exam the latest. The students are divided to defence committees by registration according to the initial timetable.

2.4.6. The student submits statistics form in Moodle environment before the final thesis/master's exam about employment and/or further plans (see p 2.3.2).

2.4.7. Two files are submitted in case of final thesis and master's exam development project:

2.4.7.1. Digitally signed PDF-file, which is signed by author(s) and supervisor(s);

2.4.7.2. PDF-file without signature(s) to check in a plagiarism detection programme and to be published in a digital collection of the library.

- 2.4.8. The person submitting the paper is responsible for that both files are identical in contents.
- 2.4.9. In case there are differences in files, basis of grading is the file that is digitally signed.
- 2.4.10. PDF-file titles include symbols of the group and last names of all authors in alphabetical order.
- 2.4.11. If final thesis has more than one author, just one of the authors will submit the files to Moodle environment.
- 2.5. Organisation of work of Committees of final or master's exam and defence final thesis.
  - 2.5.1. Study Department ensures the access to the final theses/development projects to the members of Committees in Moodle environment.
  - 2.5.2. Head of curriculum/head of structural unit/determined person allows the Committee to get acquainted with:
    - 2.5.2.1. Students' timetable for final or master's exam/defence of final thesis;
    - 2.5.2.2. Final thesis, and in case of oral final or master's exam their sets of exam question papers, and with versions of written exam papers;
    - 2.5.2.3. Syllabus of the subject;
    - 2.5.2.4. [Guidelines on Preparing and Formalising Written Work at Tallinn Health Care College](#) and current directive.
  - 2.5.3. Committee assesses formalizing final thesis and master's exam according to assessment criteria approved in subject syllabus of the College.
    - 2.5.3.1. Committee evaluates the extent of plagiarism in the paper and marks the result of contents control as a comment on PDF-file entered in Moodle environment and passed the plagiarism check.
  - 2.5.4. Member of the Committee enters the results of meeting after the defence in the final protocol in study information system Tahvel, the chairperson of the Committee checks and approves the results of final protocol by signing it digitally according to the conditions mentioned in 2.10 of current directive.
- 2.6. Assessment of knowledge and skills
  - 2.6.1. Committee assesses students' knowledge and skills according to the assessment criteria of final or master's exam/final thesis. Assessment criteria are developed by structural units.
  - 2.6.2. Assessment criteria are described in subject syllabus and are available to the students according to the deadline set in AR. Assessment corresponds to the directive "The uniform grading system in higher education with conditions and procedures for cum laude diploma".
- 2.7. Organisation of final or master's exam/final thesis
  - 2.7.1. If the student fails to appear to final or master's exam/defence of final thesis, they will be marked in the final protocol as "in default", and in case they have no valid reason they shall be exmatriculated.
  - 2.7.2. If the student receives grade "F" for their final or master's exam/defence of the final thesis, they have not completed their curriculum conditions for graduation and shall be exmatriculated.
  - 2.7.3. Second chance to perform final or master's exam/defend the final thesis on higher education level is carried out on next planned defence as an external student.
    - 2.7.3.1. An external student may defend their final thesis or perform the re-examination up to twice for three years following exmatriculation.
  - 2.7.4. The person shall apply for an external student status to the Study Department to re-perform the final or master's exam/defence of final thesis prior to 14 calendar days before the begin of corresponding semester, which end marks the time when they wish to

- perform or defend it the latest.
- 2.7.5. Knowledge and skills of the person taking the re-exam should be in accordance with curriculum, which they have been confirmed as an external student.
  - 2.7.6. Fee for re-taking final or master's exam/final thesis is fixed in the contract for external student.
  - 2.7.7. Exceptionally, the student has the right to apply for calling for the Committee in semester when Committee was not planned to work, Vice Rector for Academic Affairs shall decide if to approve or reject the application with head of the structural unit according to the explanation of the student's application.
  - 2.7.8. If three years have passed since the exmatriculation, then one can graduate from the curriculum based on renewed version by applying again according to the valid admission requirements.

## 2.8. Graduation documents

- 2.8.1. Rector shall sign an order for graduates of higher education on issuing their diplomas and issues their final documents by applying „[The Uniform Grading System and the Conditions and Procedure for Issuing Diplomas and Diploma Supplements](#)“.
- 2.8.2. The graduate receives a diploma supplement in Estonian and in English with their diploma.

## 2.9. Fee for Committee's chairperson

- 2.9.1. Work of Committee's chairperson is paid for according to the an hourly fee set and confirmed by the College.
- 2.9.2. Specialist in Human Resources prepares agency contracts for parties to sign by the day of final or master's exam/defence of final thesis the latest based on the written submission submitted by the Study Department.

## 2.10. Paperwork for final or master's exam/defence of final paper

- 2.10.1. Head of Curriculum with the Study Department ensure signing the protocol of final or master's exam in study information system Tahvel in three days after performance of exam and protocol of final thesis on the same day as the defence.
- 2.10.2. Chairperson of the Committee shall submit a written report of final or master's exam/defence of final thesis to the head of curriculum in five workdays. The chairperson of Committee analyses in this report strong and weak aspects of graduate of corresponding curriculum, evaluates the organization of final or master's exam/defence of final thesis, and suggestions how to eliminate possible faults.
- 2.10.3. In case of appeals the chairperson of Committee compiles Committee's viewpoint on submitted appeal.
- 2.10.4. Protocols are stored digitally in study information system Tahvel.

## **3. APPEALING THE RESULTS OF FINAL OR MASTER'S EXAM/DEFENCE OF FINAL THESIS**

- 3.1. To appeal the results of final or master's exam/final thesis, the student has one workday after the announcement of the result. The student shall submit a written application to the head of the structural unit.
- 3.2. Head of structural unit, head of curriculum, supervisor of the student and chairperson of the Committee shall try to solve the dispute by negotiations in two work days.
- 3.3. If negotiations have no results, the student has the right to submit an appeal within three workdays after announcement of solution according to p 3.2 to the Rector of the College, describing the details of results not satisfying them.
- 3.4. Appeal is solved according to the AR p 7.

#### **4. IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS**

- 4.1. Current directive is approved by the College's Council.
- 4.2. Directive shall be amended based on necessity but no less frequently than after every three years.
- 4.3. Membership of the College and structural units have the right to suggest amendments and updates to the Directive.
- 4.4. Questions of final exam shall be stored as a digital file for five years in document management system specifically in the group of documents with reduced access.
- 4.5. Paper exams performed in written form shall be archived according to the deadlines set in the code of conduct.
- 4.6. Unregulated issues shall be resolved by the Vice Rector of Academic Affairs.
- 4.7. Current Directive is compulsory to all members of the College and heads of the fields are responsible for following it.