

Guidelines literature thesis BMS

The literature thesis is an obligatory 6 ECTS course. The purpose of the literature thesis is to obtain a deep insight into a specific topic relating to a biomedical problem through guided self-study. The subject must be broad enough to justify writing a thesis of 6 EC on it, but not so broad that the existing knowledge cannot be summarized and critically evaluated in the time available. The literature thesis should be more than just a summary of literature. It is important that you formulate, deal with and then solve a problem/scientific question in your thesis. Preferably you take a defined angle/position about a controversy in the current literature which you defend (e.g. Nanomedicine: hope or hype?)

Learning objectives:

The purpose of the literature thesis is to obtain a deep insight into a specific topic relating to a biomedical problem through guided self-study. After this course you are able to:

- perform an in-depth literature research on a specific subject, chosen by yourself, relating to a biomedical problem in a defined, limited time;
- present the results of your literature research in a structured, concise fashion in the form of an essay using various articles from scientific journals;
- reflect on the state-of-knowledge for a given subject, place this subject into context, defend a putative controversy and propose future lines of research;
- support your text with figures to visualize key principles for the specific subject;
- work with various literature systems.

The following guidelines apply:

- The literature thesis comprises 6 ECTS: four weeks full-time course. If, according to the studyplan, the literature thesis is the only activity in the given period, then the literature thesis must be concluded (the thesis is submitted for grading) within the four weeks. If (an)other course(s) is/are taken in parallel, the time for the literature thesis may be extended by the time dedicated to these other activities, though can never be longer than 3 months.
- The student can choose the period in which the literature thesis takes place and defines this period in the study plan.
- Should the report not be concluded in time and there are no exceptional reasons to justify this delay, the literature thesis will be scored as failed. A repetition will require a new literature thesis with a new subject and supervisor.
- The literature thesis is performed under the supervision of a researcher with a PhD (i.e. a doctorate, abbreviation dr.) who has sufficient expertise in the field of study to guide the preparation of the thesis and evaluate the content and form.
- The subject of the literature thesis can relate to the subjects of the internships, however, in this case the choice of the subject must be motivated and it must be explained by the student in which way the subject is different/complementary to the subject of the internship.
- The student hands in an application form for the literature thesis containing the tentative title of the subject, a short description of the subject, the name of the supervisor and the planned time period for approval before the planned start of the thesis to the Board of Examiners (please check the deadlines for the planned Board of Examiners meetings). The student can start working on the literature thesis after approval by the Board of Examiners.
- The supervisor for the literature thesis cannot be the supervisor of an internship.
- The student is expected to meet at least four times with the supervisor (discussion of subject (start meeting), meeting to discuss progress after one week, meeting to obtain first feedback on the thesis, and final meeting to discuss the evaluation of the thesis). The initiative to arrange these meetings is with the student. Preferentially, all appointments will be made before the thesis starts.
- The supervisor cannot delegate the task of guidance/evaluation to another member in his/her research group.
- The length of the literature thesis should be 5000 to 6000 words.

- Assessment is registered using the literature thesis assessment form available on the website.
- The examiner/supervisor should check for plagiarism, for example via Urkund, before grading the thesis.

Structure of the thesis:

Each thesis should count between 5000 and 6000 words and must comprise the following:

- Title page (title, name of the author, place and date);
- A brief summary (abstract);
- An introduction in which a problem or controversy is formulated;
- A section in which the burden of proof, the articles used, is/are examined. Proof should preferably be presented in figures, graphs and tables, as well as be described in the text. The figures should have a legend that is self-explanatory.
- A discussion with critical comments with respect to the articles that are used and conclusions concerning the problem as formulated;
- References in an appropriate format.

The literature thesis will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Quality of the abstract
- Introduction: Quality of the introduction on the background in the field
- Introduction: Justification of the problem/scientific question/controversy
- In depth coverage of problem/scientific question/controversy
- Scientific quality of the discussion
- Conclusion: Answering of problem/scientific question/ defence of controversy
- Conclusion: Identification of relevant future lines of research
- Use of figures to illustrate key concepts & quality of figures, tables and layout
- Appropriateness of selected literature & correct citations / references
- Overall writing skills; grammar use in report

The literature thesis assessment form is used as a guideline for supervision and assessment.

Extra information:

Academic Writing Centre Nijmegen

The Academic Writing Centre Nijmegen (in Dutch: ASN) offers every student or teacher support based on one's individual needs concerning the execution or supervision of academic writing tasks. This support may vary from coaching with respect to various writing assignments to workshops in writing skills to assistance in sophisticating one's writing didactics. The services of the ASN are easily accessible, free of charge and intended for anyone associated with the university so as to contribute to developing a high-quality academic writing culture.

Visit www.ru.nl/asn for more information.

Practical information:

Use the application form and grading form on the website. You can hand in the completed and signed forms at the StIP.