

# **MCT4091 – Master's Thesis in Music, Communication and Technology**

## *Guidelines for Examiners*

### **About the Master's programme in Music, Communication and Technology (MCT)**

The MCT Master's programme has a duration of 2 years (120 ECTS) of full-time study and is offered by the Department of Musicology of the University of Oslo (UiO), which is part of Faculty of Humanities. The programme has a diverse cohort, recruiting students with different types of Bachelor's degrees, from the arts and humanities, social and natural sciences, as well as engineering and computer sciences. Applicants to the programme must document their competences in both music and technology which they may have gained also from non-academic or extracurricular activities. We consider any type of musical and technological experience. In the programme, 50 ECTS are earned from compulsory courses, 40 ECTS from elective courses selected by students according to the topic of their thesis, and 30 ECTS from the Master's thesis. More information about the programme [structure](#) and [learning outcomes](#).

### **About the thesis**

The thesis represents one quarter (i.e. 30 ECTS) of the coursework in the MCT programme and is carried out during the 4<sup>th</sup> and last semester of the programme. The topic and supervisor are allocated during the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, in which the student also develops the thesis proposal. The scope of the thesis is limited by the timeframe available to the student, which is approximately 17-to-19 weeks or 750 hours. During this period, the student receives up to 8 hours of direct supervision from a single supervisor. For many students, this is the first experience with research-based academic work (i.e. no equivalent research-based thesis in their Bachelor's degree). The length of the thesis should be approximately 18 000 words (+/- 10%), including tables, figure captions and footnotes, but excluding the table of contents, acknowledgements, references, and appendices. The thesis may include attachments or accompanying material such as video, audio, source code, data, high-resolution images, etc. More information about the [thesis](#).

### **Thesis assessment process**

The thesis is examined by two experts in the field of study, one internal (within UiO) and one external (academia or industry). Supervisors are responsible for suggesting appropriate examiners to the exam officer. The internal examiner is responsible for coordinating the examination process with the external examiner, including arranging a meeting to discuss and agree on a grade and compiling a document (around one page) to motivate the given grade. The internal examiner submits the report to the exam officer. Both examiners must also send the grade to the exam officer. This process should be completed in a period of time agreed with the exam officer. In case the two examiners cannot agree on a grade, the exam officer will involve a third examiner. Students will not have the opportunity to further improve their thesis

unless they receive a fail grade, therefore the document produced by the examiner should be limited to explaining the given grade rather than providing feedback to the candidate.

### **Thesis expectation and assessment criteria**

The MCT programme has a very interdisciplinary character and students define their path throughout the coursework according to their diverse interests and expertise. This diversity is also reflected in their theses, which may present technical or reflective depths that one would expect from candidates in more technologically-focused or arts/humanities-directed programmes. However, it is common for MCT theses to span across a wide breadth of multidisciplinary knowledge, blending technological competence, musical sensibility, humanistic reflection, and creative sense, as one would expect from a technological humanist. In such cases, the end result may not be as sophisticated as one would expect for more disciplinary theses in either technology or arts/humanities. So, it is important to evaluate the work as a whole.

Examiners assess the thesis with respect to the following criteria:

- research question(s), objective(s) and limitation(s) of the study;
- critical review of relevant literature;
- explanation of methodology and theoretical justification of framework or design choices;
- originality of thesis contributions;
- depth and breadth of critical reflection with respect to the field of specialization;
- discussion of results and possible continuation of the work;
- structure and layout of the thesis, use of academic language, citations and referencing.

The thesis is graded using a scale A to F against these [general descriptors](#) adjusted to the thesis' scope and to the number of credits.