

May 2018

STUDY GUIDE

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Design-oriented MASTER THESIS

2017 - 2019

LAR-80436/39

*Ghana Aesthetics Limburg Scale Substantive Identity Agriculture Urbanism Procudural
Positivism Architecture Stability England Pragmatic Sublime Urban Growth Energy
Kenya Politics Advocacy Groningen Beauty Detroit Casco Research Design Shanghai
Contrast Local New Orleans Parks Economy Ecology Outdoor Netherlands Regional
Comfort Shrinkage Visualisation Landscape Phytoremediation Coast Sublime Climate
Change Enhance Theory Psychology Environment Participatory Ego Nature Socio-economic Agriculture Tourism Geography
Politics Visualisation Method Critics Analysis Evaluation Principles Legitimate Fit Level New York
Art New York Science Art Paradigms Casco Archiprix Plants Nature Constructivism
Institutions People Ghana Aesthetics Limburg Scale Substantive Identity Agriculture
Urbanism Procudural Positivism Architecture Stability England Pragmatic Sublime
Urban Growth Energy Kenya Politics Advocacy Groningen Beauty Detroit Casco Research
Design Shanghai Contrast Local New Orleans Parks Economy Ecology Outdoor
Netherlands Regional Comfort Shrinkage Visualisation Landscape Phytoremediation
Coast Sublime Climate Change Enhance Theory Psychology Environment Participatory
Ego Nature Socio-economic Agriculture Tourism Design Geography Politics Local
Visualisation Science Water Method Critics Analysis Evaluation Principles Legitimate Fit
Level New York Paradigms Archiprix Ghana Identity Aesthetics Limburg Substantive
Agriculture Life Urbanism Procudural Positivism Constructivism Stability England
Pragmatic Sublime Urban Growth Energy Kenya Advocacy Groningen Beauty Planet*



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INTRODUCTION

A thesis landscape architecture of 36 ECTS (LAR 80436 in the University's Study Handbook) is compulsory for master students who follow the master programme Landscape Architecture and Planning (MLP), specialization landscape architecture.

Students have a choice between a design-oriented or a research-oriented thesis and a choice regarding the size of the thesis. This document deals with the large design-oriented thesis as this is the most common type that students of MLP will do.

The typical characteristic of this thesis is that it entails, in addition to research, a substantial design component. At the end of this document some remarks are made on other types and lengths of theses.

This study guide is, in principle, written to guide landscape architecture students through the logistics of the compulsory master thesis, but it also contains useful information for those who include a second thesis in their master programme. A master thesis project must be undertaken individually, though co-operation with another student is possible. In the foreword of your thesis (and before that in your thesis proposal and contract), you need to motivate why you undertake your master thesis in cooperation with another student. However, every student needs to hand in an individual thesis with a specific part of research and design in which the cooperative part has to be documented in a clearly identified section of the report, so that the individual capacity of each student can be assessed. The MSc thesis landscape architecture is carried out in the English language including your thesis report and the various required presentations.

In order to streamline the thesis process as much as possible, there is a specific routing that you should follow. This routing runs from preparing a first initial proposal during the course research methodology for planning and design up to your final thesis examination. It is in the benefit of the student that you adhere as much as possible to this routing. The study guide at hand will take you through the routing protocol.

PREQUALIFICATION

The specific prerequisites for a master thesis are that a student has passed the following master landscape-architecture courses:

LAR-38806 Master Studio Regional Landscape Architecture: a Systems Approach

GEO-37806 Research methodology for planning and design

The completion of the 'Internship Landscape Architecture' (LAR-70421 up to LAR-70439) is advisable.

In the course 'GEO-37806 Research Methodology for Planning and Design, you practice with the topic, concepts and methods for writing the thesis. It is, thus, in your advantage to know your thesis subject at the start of that course. We also highly recommend that you match your choice of topic with the track you have chosen.

ROUTING

The routing is as follows:

1. Contact one of the MSc thesis coordinators for an intake (Ingrid Duchhart or Rudi van Etteger)

Based on running research programme of the chair group Landscape Architecture and the related PhD research projects, you choose a topic that matches best with your learning objectives and your design and research interest. You will maybe also be attracted by the landscape architectonic approach of a certain staff member. In planning the tutoring of your thesis, we will take into account as much as possible your wishes, but we also have to look at the availability of the staff members. The full and final proposal will be prepared under the supervision of the assigned supervisor(s).

It is possible to include a second or external supervisor. This second supervisor is usually drawn from another Wageningen University chair group. External supervisors can be invited from another university, or research institutes, such as Alterra or Deltares, or from a professional (landscape architecture) office or company. However, the first supervisor is a staff member of the chair group Landscape Architecture. He or she is the first responsible person (this is also expressed in the maximum amount of time the 2nd or external supervisor can spend on your supervision). Keep in mind that you contact the thesis coordinator at least two months before the start of your thesis work trajectory.

2. Contact supervisor(s)

Once the chair group supervisor agreed to your supervision, the thesis coordinator will inform you. It is wise to agree also upon a Green Light and 2nd examiner on forehand.

3. Study space and computer requirements

The ESG (Environmental Science Group) has allocated 'flexiworking' space with appropriate computer software in rooms A204, A205 in the Gaia building. Any questions about the software, you need to contact Monique Janssen (Gaia B.205). For other questions contact Audrey Raijmann-Schut (Gaia B.114).

4. Proposal and Thesis contract

As mentioned earlier, in collaboration with your supervisor, you prepare a final thesis proposal of a maximum 2.500 words. The desired content of the thesis proposal is indicated in a separate document

The proposal is added to the thesis contract. (<http://www.wageningenur.nl/web/file?uuid=525dbd2a-0b73-4dd9-bbb7-e510bd8ce6b2&owner=695d9494-935d-4a6e-9511-a774a34306ae>).

Usually, the percentages for contribution to the final grade for the thesis that you fill in are: 30% design; 30% thesis; 30% research and 5% examination and 5% colloquium. Different percentages (within a margin of 10% between the component research and design) must be discussed with your supervisors. This is also where the design-oriented thesis differs from a research-oriented thesis.

This contract needs to be signed by the supervisors and requires a confirmation of the study advisor in relation to the pre-requirements. Take the signed original of the thesis contract to Audrey Raijmann-Schut . She will take care that the examiner (Adri van den Brink) will sign the contract. She will send a digital copy of the signed contract to you, the supervisors and to the MSc thesis coordinator (Ingrid Duchhart).

The contract will establish the weight of your thesis (in ECTS) and the contact hours between the student and supervisors (usually 1 to 1.5 hours in three weeks). For a research thesis without a design objective, you use the general WUR contract (WUR/Forms).

The contract also includes a time schedule - it is important to mention how much time per week you can spend on the thesis. Valid reasons to spend less than 40 hours per week might relate to part-time work or invalidating circumstances.

5. 'Proposal' Presentation and Approval

A presentation of your proposal is a requirement. See Appendix 1 for a typical time line of a major thesis. On every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month, you can present your proposal to your supervisor, other LAR staff members, external supervisors, examiner and your peer students. Audrey Raijmann-Schut coordinates these presentations. The presentation of maximum 10 minutes and discussion takes half an hour. After the presentation you prepare 1 A4 with the most important comments and an indication of how you will address these points in your proposal. The improved proposal becomes formal after you have received the approval from the examiner (typical the chair) and your supervisor. The examiner, supervisor, and yourself sign the contract (see point 4). The proposal meeting has a go/no go character.

6. Research starts according to contract

Once the thesis contract is finalised and signed, you start with your research and design activities. You do your research and design work under the guidance of your supervisor(s) and according to your planning as agreed upon in your research proposal which is summarized in your contract. Any deviations from the planning must be communicated and discussed with your supervisor(s). During the period you work on your thesis, it is strongly advised to attend proposal presentations of other students and at least five colloquia of fellow students to get insight of the level of a MSc landscape architecture thesis and standards for colloquium presentations.

Typically if you do research for design or on design the research part(s) of your thesis will contain a landscape analysis, either reference or case studies, the development of a theoretical framework and exploration of the main terms used in the research, and supportive research related to your research topic resulting in the development of design cues and guidelines. The latter form the foundation and legitimation of your designs on a real site. In a research through designing set up the design forms the basis of research. The design part(s) whether 'design experiments', 'strategic design' or 'practical nearly implementable design' are clearly connected to the research part(s).

7. 'Green Light' Presentation

A 'green light' presentation is a presentation to benchmark your progress and to assess the accomplished research and design work. A 'green light' presentation is typically scheduled 14 weeks after your proposal presentation and 6 weeks before the date of your thesis examination. Your work is usually presented as a beamer presentation. Content wise, you need your designs and the supportive theory and legitimation (analysis, research and research methods) accomplished. Make clear how designs and supportive research are connected. A thesis outline is in order, but you are not obliged to deliver a full draft as yet. If you want good feedback it is better to have a full draft at this moment. Keep in mind that you are not 'selling' your design but defending the credibility and authenticity of your thesis (design and research included).

In principle, you present for your supervisor(s) and one member of the landscape architecture staff who was not involved in your tutoring ('green light' reviewer). In agreement with your main supervisor, you could include your peer students as well. The 'green light' procedure starts at a point in time when your supervisor believes you are ready for a successful rounding up of your thesis. The student is responsible for the invitations and for making room reservations. Consult with the supervisor(s) about the invitation of the 'green light' reviewer/examiner.

After your presentation of at the most 20 minutes, the supervisor (s) and the invited 'green light' reviewer will consult on the quality of your work. The qualification will be expressed as follows:

- Green light, the staff is satisfied with your progress and expects you to finalise your work in a satisfactory way within a time period of about 6 weeks. Green Light is not a guarantee for a pass of the final thesis.
- Orange light, the staff is positive about your progress, but also sees serious shortcomings. You will be asked to prepare a new presentation, scheduled 4 weeks away from the green light date. that addresses the shortcomings. You have to adapt your contract.
- Red light, the staff is not satisfied with your work. There are major flaws and a substantial revision is required. Only after these revisions have been addressed you can request your supervisor permission to organize for a new green light session. A new green light date is 8 weeks away from the previous date. If you fail twice the next step is that you will have to apply for an exam 8 weeks later. If you fail that exam you need to discuss with the examiner a follow-up procedure; possible solutions are – you are paired with a new supervisor; or you start afresh with a new thesis topic.

8 Colloquium and Examination

After your work is assessed with a 'green light' you prepare your final work. This includes writing the thesis report, refining and completing designs, a beamer presentation (Powerpoint or PDF) and three posters (A0, A1 or a size required for a competition entry). Keep in mind that you have different objectives (maybe even different target groups) with each medium.

The design thesis will not exceed 100 pages A4 or 50 pages A3, including images, maps, reference list and appendices, and typically covers the sections mentioned earlier. Text is single spacing Times New Roman 12-point or comparable format

To help you to prepare concise and challenging posters, you are advised not to represent the full thesis, but to focus on the design and provide the findings of the research in so far as they support the design. The poster needs to be readable from 1 to 1,5 meters, it needs to be clearly structured and inviting.

A final presentation of your thesis results, i.e. your colloquium, your thesis report (see also point 8), posters, and a final examination by your supervisor(s), examiner and 2nd staff member (typically the person present at your green light) forms the basis for your assessment. In case you have only one supervisor or the second supervisor is from outside the WUR, the presence of a second landscape-architecture staff member as a reviewer is compulsory. The chair holder, who is the formal examiner of all LAR MSc theses, Prof. Adri van den Brink, will in principle preside over the exam or he may delegate this position to a chair group member.

You first present your thesis in English in maximum 20 minutes in a public colloquium. After that there is room for informative questions and some discussion with the

audience. After that a closed oral examination takes place. After this the supervisor(s), reviewer(s), and examiner determine your mark. The students receives immediate feedback on the level of pass and fail. The precise grades takes into account your performance at the exam and will be passed on at a later moment. The marking follows a standard Excel sheet (Appendix 2) and the underlying rubric which are available. Your mark is forwarded by the first supervisor to Audrey Raijmann-Schut, who enters it into the central student administration (CSA), but only after full delivery of hardcopy and digital materials. After the examination the supervisor arranges for the signatures of your examination committee (see Appendix 2).

9. Hard and soft copies

You have to provide (at least) three hard copies of the thesis report. Two or more copies are for your supervisor(s) and reviewers and examiner, one copy is for the library. Take care to include a signature page and ask for the signatures of supervisors, reviewers, and examiner (see Appendix 3). The posters need to be handed in to your supervisor.

You also have to provide your thesis document in pdf format (print quality 300 dpi and screen quality 72 dpi), as well as separate folders with 5 crucial illustrations (300 dpi), the colloquium 'beamer' presentation, posters (print quality of 300 dpi and screen quality 72 dpi), and an abstract in the English and Dutch language, maximum of 300 words. Also add your contact (address, email and 06-phone number). **All materials need to be handed on your examination day. Failing to do so may delay the processing of your examination results.**

You hand the hard copy thesis report for the library in to Audrey Raijmann-Schut and the digital materials to Monique Jansen (Gaia B.205). Audrey Raijmann-Schut needs to upload your thesis, so provide her too with a PDF version of your thesis.

To allow sufficient preparation time for your supervisor(s) and examiners, the final thesis report needs to be handed in in printed form 2 weeks before your examination date.

10. Financial compensation

You can request Audrey Raijmann (secretary for the Chair Group Landscape Architecture) for a compensation of (a part of) your thesis costs. This is a fixed amount of money (currently Euro's 150,00). You have to provide the receipts of printing costs that are confirmed with a signature of the thesis supervisor.

11. What if there are problems?

What if you experience problems during your final thesis studies process? You might have difficulties with your health, guidance, or finances. Wageningen University has a

professional Student Counselling Service (DSB) comprised of student deans, psychologists, and student physician. In the case of problems, do not wait too long to contact your study advisers (Maaïke Prangma) as soon as possible. Issues related to supervision and the like, can be in first instance be discussed with your supervisor(s), then with the thesis coordinator or the chair professor of Landscape Architecture.

Theses of other formats:

In general a smaller (24 ECT) design oriented thesis could be based on research performed by others. In practice however it is extremely rare to find research tailored for this purpose. For this reason the production of small design theses is not recommended.

Usually a 24 or 27 ECT research theses covers a landscape related topic without the need for a design. In that case the general rules for theses at WUR apply. Students are reminded that the capacity for tutoring smaller theses, beyond the specific research interests of the chair-group landscape architecture is very limited. A small and large thesis cannot be supervised by one supervisor. Neither can the small thesis be constituted of a substantial part of the large thesis (for example, case analysis). The central theme for the small and large thesis can be the same, e.g. micro-climate, but then the small thesis is undertaken at a different Chair Group than LAR chair group. In principle the green light step of the procedure is not required for a small thesis.

Appendices

Appendix 1

8 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks	16 weeks	4 weeks	2 weeks
Contact thesis coordinators	Start thesis	Present proposal	Deliver final proposal	Green light presentation	Deliver printed thesis
					Exam

Appendix 2 (36 ects – major design thesis)

Thesis evaluation Wageningen University LAR Design Thesis

Fill out the single lined fields. Use a comma or a point as decimal sign, depending on the language chosen.

Name chair group	Landscape Architecture	
Name student		
Registration number		
Study programme	Msc Landscape Architecture and Planning	
Specialisation	Landscape Architecture	
Code thesis	LAR 804**	
Short title thesis		
Date examination		Signature
Supervisor chair group		
Supervisor outside chair group (if so)		
Examiner		

Research competence (20-50%) *

- 1 Commitment and perseverance
- 2 Initiative and creativity
- 3 Independence
- 4 Efficiency in working with data
- 5 Handling supervisor's comments and development of research skills
- 6 Keeping to the time schedule

grading mark 1-10	relative weight *
	30%
	0.0

Thesis report (20-50%) *

- 1 Relevance research, clearness goals, delineation research
- 2 Theoretical underpinning, use of literature
- 3 Use of methods and data
- 4 Critical reflection on the research performed (discussion)
- 5 Clarity of conclusions and recommendations
- 6 Writing skills
- 7 Graphical Skills

	30%
	0.0

Design competences (20-50%) *

- 1 Architectural Composition
2. Creative thinking landscape architectonic design and aesthetical enhancement
3. Conceptual strength that expresses, leads, or predicates the design

	30%
	0.0

Colloquium (5-10%) *

- 1 Graphical presentation
- 2 Verbal presentation and defence

	5%
	0.0

Examination (5%) *

- 1 Defence of the thesis
- 2 Knowledge of study domain

	5%
	0.0

* please choose weights such that there sum is 100.

TOTAL	0.00
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FINAL GRADE	
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Comment by supervisor

Comment by 2nd reviewer/examiner

24-36 ECTS research thesis

Thesis evaluation Wageningen University

Fill out the single lined fields. Use a comma or a point as decimal sign, depending on the language chosen.

Name chair group		
Name student		
Registration number		
Study programme		
Specialisation		
Code thesis		
Short title thesis		
Date examination		Signature
Supervisor chair group		
Supervisor outside chair group (if so)		
Second reviewer/examiner		

	grading mark 1-10	relative weight *
Research competence (30-60%) *		<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
1 Commitment and perseverance	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; border: 1px solid black;" type="text" value="0.0"/>
2 Initiative and creativity	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
3 Independence	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
4 Efficiency in working with data	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
5 Handling supervisor's comments and development of research skills	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
6 Keeping to the time schedule	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	

Thesis report (30-60%) *		<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
1 Relevance research, clearness goals, delineation research	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; border: 1px solid black;" type="text" value="0.0"/>
2 Theoretical underpinning, use of literature	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
3 Use of methods and data	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
4 Critical reflection on the research performed (discussion)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
5 Clarity of conclusions and recommendations	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
6 Writing skills	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	

Colloquium (5%) *		<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
1 Graphical presentation	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; border: 1px solid black;" type="text" value="0.0"/>
2 Verbal presentation and defence	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	

Examination (5%) *		<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
1 Defence of the thesis	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%; border: 1px solid black;" type="text" value="0.0"/>
2 Knowledge of study domain	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	

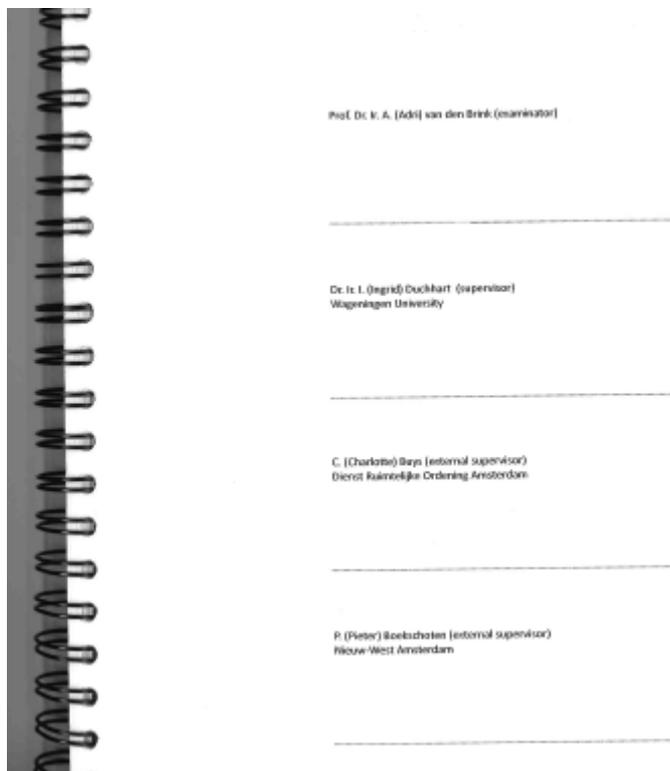
* please choose weights such that there sum is 100.

TOTAL	0.0
FINAL GRADE	0

Comment by supervisor

Comment by 2nd reviewer/examiner

Appendix 3 Example of a Signature Page in the Thesis



Solicit for the signatures of the examiner, supervisor, and reviewer at the end of your examination. Scan the signed page and add it to the digital version of your thesis! This copy will be uploaded to the library. Hand the signed hard copy of your thesis to Audrey Rajjmann-Schut.