

Guide to Writing a Thesis at ELTE Faculty of Primary and Pre-School Education

2026

Introduction

The rules for writing and submitting a thesis are stipulated in the “Academic Regulations for Students” (ARS) found in *Eötvös Loránd University Organizational and Operational Regulations, Volume II*. The general rules are contained in Sections 76-80, while additional regulations related specifically to the Faculty of Primary and Pre-School Education are in Sections 490-492.

By preparing and defending a B.A. thesis, the candidate demonstrates the following:

- The ability to apply knowledge acquired in the course of his or her studies to a chosen research topic in a manner that is both creative and independent;
- A familiarity with and the ability to utilize academic research methods;
- The ability to review and analyze the research literature examining the research topic;
- The ability to follow the formal and stylistic rules of academic publication.

Topic selection:

Selecting a thesis topic is exclusively done through the Neptun system: thesis topics are announced on Neptun, students can apply for a topic via Neptun and the chosen/requested thesis adviser also posts his or her response on Neptun. **Before choosing a topic, the student must contact the chosen supervisor, and a consultation on the specific topic is required.** The supervisor can be an ELTE lecturer, scientific researcher or external expert. If the supervisor is not a faculty lecturer, a co-supervisor (who is a faculty lecturer) must be assigned. The Neptun interface for choosing a thesis topic can be accessed every autumn semester, from the second week of the study term at the latest. The Registrar’s Office informs students of the exact deadline date by Neptun. The detailed rules regarding topic selection and information for applying for a topic and the means for determining the deadline can be found in ARS, Section 490.

Students can read about the technical details of choosing a thesis topic in Neptun under **Thesis** on the [For Current Students | Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem](#) website.

Timeframe for preparing and submitting a thesis:

The student must agree on the schedule for preparing the thesis with the supervisor. The completion of the thesis is facilitated by thesis discussions held within the framework of the thesis seminar course, but regular consultation with the supervisor is also expected in the meantime. The supervisor may set his own deadlines for the progress of the thesis work, by which he/she ensures compliance with the submission deadline. **At least three weeks before the official submission deadline, the student must present to the supervisor the version of the thesis that he has declared ready, possibly requiring only formal corrections.** After the presentation, no substantial changes to the content are possible. The student must take into account that the supervisor needs sufficient time to study the thesis and formulate substantive suggestions as he/she works on several theses at the same time.

ELTE ARS Section 491, Paragraph 1: For final examinations held in the summer, students must submit a thesis by 20 April. For final examinations held in the winter, students must submit a thesis by 20 November. The submission deadlines cannot be modified.

Thesis genre types:

The genre and structure of the thesis are determined jointly by the thesis writer and the supervisor, agreeing on research methodology issues that fit the topic. It should be noted that different types of research require different research methodologies; what is learned in research methodology courses provides valuable information on this. Depending on the topic of the thesis, the following three genres can be recommended for every student writing a thesis and their supervisor.

(1) **Research that is theoretical or even historical in approach** and can contain meta-analysis, i.e., a synthetic review of a number of previous, experimental works and a summary of their results. In other words, this type of thesis provides an analytical introduction to “state of the art” developments in a given field. Usage of databases containing international research literature (Ex. Educational Research Complete) is recommended for exploring and analyzing the more significant, relevant, international research papers related to the thesis topic. An important characteristic of theory-based research is that the author expresses a perspective or viewpoint that is then contrasted against different opinions found in the research literature.

(2) **A qualitative or quantitative, empirical examination.** Qualitative research studies typically reply upon the preparing of interviews, the recording of observations, the posing of open, written questions, case studies made based upon fieldwork, iconographic analyses, content analyses of drawings, etc. Quantitative research studies characteristically contain a survey (Ex. a questionnaire) that (in the case of comparative analyses) collects data from a minimum of 20-40 participants while a survey seeking to examine correlations should have gathered answers from at least 100-120 participants. In its discussion of the related theoretical background, the thesis must review both the local and more significant international research literature and tendencies. Qualitative research frequently seeks answers to research questions while quantitative examinations are more focused upon answering research questions or proving hypotheses. The statistical techniques used to analyze the data must always be determined based upon the given task to be solved; utilization of Excel, SPSS or other types of software can be expected.

(3) **A description of an innovation or development in the field of education** discusses a teaching material, teaching aid or new method/practice introduced within the context of a daycare, preschool, or elementary school environment. The student is expected to reflect upon the pedagogical process while providing a detailed documentation of the innovation’s content and application in a way that is similar to the portfolio prepared by educators in the Hungarian state education system. Describing the teaching innovation or development must follow the same formal requirements that have been set for other types of theses. In short, this type of thesis also contains a literature review and clearly cites the utilized research literature. Introducing a given teaching innovation or development must be supported by various, detailed documents (including factual data) while a reflection upon the introduced process, its results and impact constitutes a mandatory element of this type of research.

No matter what type of thesis is written, respecting the **fundamental rules of research ethics** is required. In studies that include children, particular attention must be paid to gaining the parents' permission while informing them of the nature of the research, the protection of personal data, the guarantee of anonymity and the voluntary nature of participation, including the right to refrain from being a part of the research study.

Technical editing of the thesis:

In general, the minimum length of a thesis is 50,000 characters (approximately 25-30 pages), not including interspacing between words, bibliographical materials or appendices.

When binding the manuscript, the inner margins must be increased by 1 centimeter, leaving 2.5 centimeters above, below and on the right-hand edge. It is recommended to leave 3.5 centimeters on the left-hand edge. Two-sided printing is requested.

The Faculty primarily requests that students use Times New Roman type with 12-point letter size. Using the automatic title format found in Word for Windows is not only suggested for aesthetic reasons, but also because this feature makes it much easier to assemble the table of contents.

Parts of a thesis:

- a cover (bearing the word THESIS, the author's name and the year of submission)
- a flyleaf: a blank page
- a title page
- a table of contents (the numbering of pages begins on this page)
- the body of the thesis
- a bibliography
- appendices (numbered in Arabic numerals)

title page example:

Eötvös Loránd University
Faculty of Primary and Preschool Education

Recent Trends in Early Childhood Education

Written by:

Samantha Smart

Student in Early Childhood Education BA

Thesis Supervisor:

Dr. János Kiss

Professor

Budapest

2026

Citing the research literature:

The kinds of reference sources:

In compliance with the aims that have been set for preparing his or her thesis, the author must primarily utilize and reference various academic works when writing a thesis. Out of these works, academic journals or works that publish the most recent scientific results are to be in the forefront of any literature review. Articles from academic journals are similar in length and style to chapters found in edited, academic volumes. When citing other sources, great care must be taken in determining whether the source has been adequately fact-checked and can therefore be viewed as a reliable source.

Conference lectures or presentations should only be referenced if they contained new results and occurred recently enough that a sufficient amount of time has not yet passed for those results to have been published (ex. a few years) in an academic journal or volume.

Manuscripts, images or video files that were located on the Internet may be used, but the thesis author must ensure the requirements listed above regarding inclusion of the author's name, the work's title, the date of most recent retrieval and the URL. The reader must be able to locate

these sources as well. It is furthermore recommended that the student be particularly careful when choosing these sources for the reasons of reliability already mentioned above.

Reference systems and citation:

Various reference systems can be used to display and clearly inform the reader regarding the exact source of each work used by the student in the course of writing his or her thesis.

Sources are generally cited using in-text citations based upon the requirements of the APA (American Psychological Association) system for references.¹ If the thesis concerns an academic field that has its own requirements, another accepted and consistent citation system (such as MLA or Chicago) may be used. In the field of education or other areas of the social sciences or humanities, in-text citation primarily means displaying the author's name and the work's date of publication. In the sciences, it is common to reference sources by placing a number within brackets. When using the APA (American Psychological Association) reference system, students should consult the actual APA handbook. When writing about a topic from the sciences, the Vancouver reference system should be followed. No matter what reference system has been chosen, the most important requirement is for the thesis author to ensure that research sources can be clearly identified and located; as regards formal requirements, all references must be displayed in a consistent manner.

Citations do not only refer to textual documents: pictures, videos or any other form of media that is necessary for analyzing the thesis topic are also referenced. When citing Internet sources, other than providing the author's name and the source's title, the file name must be given as an URL (Uniform Resource Locator, i.e., the line beginning with <http://> shown in the search engine) with the date of the most recent retrieval given in parentheses. Please make sure that any image or video included in the thesis is being used in accordance with copyright laws (See for example the categories listed in Creative Commons)! If tables, graphs or images are included in the thesis, these must be numbered in numerical order with their sources provided in a separate reference list at the end of the thesis.

Citation is uniformly determined by APA (American Psychological Association) requirements. The most common forms of citation can be found below:

In-text citation:

“Most recently Székely (2021) argues that...”

“In more recent years pedagogical evaluations have undergone significant changes (Csapó, 2019; Oswald, 2022)”

In the case of two authors the names are separated by an ampersand (&): (Székely & Hajnal, 2014)

In the case of three authors there is only a comma separating the names of the first two authors while an ampersand (&) comes between the second and third author's name: (Csapó, Telegdy & Molnár, 2019)

¹ American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*. Washington: APA – See www.apastyle.org

If there are more than three authors only the first author's name is included in the citation, followed by the abbreviation of "et al.": (Székely et al., 2018).

When providing multiple citations, each citation is separated by a semi-colon: (Agárdy, 2008; Széles, 2012; Szemerei, 2014)

In the case of quotations that are directly quoted, the citation also includes the page number:

"In human history there has never been a more complete revolution than what has occurred since the mid-nineteenth century in the area of visual perception and the recording of visual material." (Mitchell, 2001. 62.)

In the case that information regarding the author cannot be found (such as commonly occurs in the case of official reports), it is necessary to provide the name of the organisation: (UNESCO, 2017)

If the date of publication cannot be given, the abbreviation of "n.d." must be used: (Department of Education, n.d.)

Other than printed texts, it is also possible to use pictures, videos, podcasts, etc., if they are necessary and closely connected to analysing the topic. In the text, it is also necessary to provide the author and year: (Inkei, 2022)

When using Internet sources, it is necessary to make sure that the picture or video can be legally used! (see for example the categories of Creative Commons)

The Reference List is a compilation of the citations; to provide a uniform appearance, it is a good idea to use the function of "Citations list" in Word for Windows.

In the case of books, the order follows that of author's last name, first initial of first name, year, title (in italics), publisher:

Blackmore, S. (2000): *The Meme Machine*. Oxford University Press.

If there are multiple authors, we list each; in the case of edited volumes the abbreviation of "ed." must be provided. The ampersand (&) is used instead of "and."

Mandl, H., De Corte, E., Bennett, N. & Friedrich, H. F. (Eds.) (1990). *Learning and instruction. European research in an international context*. Pergamon Press.

In the case of chapters in volumes, the author(s) name is followed by the year and the title of the chapter/study. After this comes "In" and the name of the volume editor, followed by (Ed.), the title of the volume and the first and last page of the chapter/study:

Buckingham, D. (2008). Introducing Identity. In Buckingham, D. (Ed.): *Youth, Identity, and Digital Media* (pp. 1–24) MIT Press.

In the case of texts published in periodicals, the author(s), publication year, the title, the

title of the journal (italicized), followed by the year and the first and final page of the study must be included:

Chae, J. (2017). Virtual makeover: Selfie-taking and social media use increase selfie-editing frequency through social comparison. *Computers in Human Behavior* 16(2), 370-376.

Where possible, please make sure to provide the DOI identification number:

Charalampos A. (2020). News authentication and tampered images: evaluating the photo-truth impact through image verification algorithms. *Heliyon* 6(12).

[News authentication and tampered images: evaluating the photo-truth impact through image verification algorithms - ScienceDirect](#)

In the case of sources available on the Internet, beyond providing the name of the author and the title, it is also necessary to give the URL for the file name, i.e., the line beginning with http:// in the search engine and then the date for downloading in parentheses:

Nevill, H. J., Schmidt, A., Kutas, M. (1983). Altered visual-evoked potentials in congenitally deaf adults. [\[PDF\] Altered visual-evoked potentials in congenitally deaf adults. | Semantic Scholar](#) (12 January, 2023)

Items in the Reference List are ordered alphabetically, by the author's last name or the first letter of the institution.

Using the "References" function found in Word makes it much easier to assemble the Reference List according to the requirements and in a way that is automatic and can be formed.

FIGURES:

If the thesis contains figures and/or pictures, these must be numbered within the text and summarized in a separate list at the end of the thesis. We also recommend using the function for this in Word.

In the case of using pictures and figures, it is necessary to keep in mind the legality of copyright. Every picture and figure must be provided with a description that, other than the number, also contains the title of the picture and its source. Example: "Figure 1 The distribution of schools by settlement type based on the 2019 national assessment. Source: Lendvai (2020, 18)."

USAGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WHEN PREPARING THE THESIS:

In addition to traditional sources, the student may use various applications that contain intelligent algorithms, but extreme caution must be exercised when using these. Whenever such an application is used, it must be indicated in the thesis (for example: "The author used the (...) application to prepare the diagram"). The modification of images or diagrams using intelligent methods must also be indicated. It is also the student's responsibility to verify materials generated by intelligent algorithms and ensure their reliability in every case. Regarding texts, during the research work for the thesis, the student may use intelligent algorithms (e.g., for note-

taking, preparing outlines or summaries, or exploring literary sources), but text generated by these algorithms may not be directly included in the thesis.

The supervisor and the thesis reviewer have the right to check the text of the thesis and reject texts generated by artificial intelligence.

Authenticity of the thesis and plagiarism:

It is a basic requirement that the thesis be the author's own, original work. Plagiarism is defined as utilizing the intellectual property of others in a way that contradicts the contents laid out in ARS, Section 74/B., Paragraph 1. The author accepts that plagiarism consists of (1) including a quotation without usage of quotation marks or referencing; (2) paraphrasing content or a quotation without citing the source; (3) displaying another individual's published thoughts as if they were the thesis author's.

It is essential that quotation marks be used when repeating someone else's thoughts in a word-for-word manner. Other than the author's name and the source's date of publication, the page number of where the exact quotation can be found must also be provided. If the author and publication date has been given, neglecting to reference the page number is not viewed as a case of plagiarism, but this lack is seen as an anomaly in citation and can reduce the value of the thesis itself.

When not using others' thoughts word-for-word – such as when paraphrasing, summarizing the content – it is sufficient to provide the author's name and the work's date of publication; page numbers are not necessary.

Paragraphs 74/A, 74/B and 74/C in the ARS discuss the issue of copyright infringement in work done by students, including a thesis. If a student does not observe the rules regarding the legal usage of an extraneous work, “the thesis must be denied a grade” (ARS, Section 74/C, Paragraph 1).

“The thesis must include an original copy of a statement signed by the student in which he or she declares that the thesis represents his or her independent, intellectual work and thereby complies with the Sections 74/A–74/C listed in the Regulations....” (ARS, Section 76, Paragraph 6)

According to Section 79, Paragraph 7 found in the ARS, any work that has been awarded the main or first prize at the National Conference of Students' Scholarly Circles (OTDK) or any other academic competition can be accepted by the educational organization responsible for the given program and given the highest grade (without any need for evaluation) if the work fulfills the content and stylistic requirements for a thesis.

The form needed for having an OTDK project /ARS Section 79, Paragraph 7/ or a TDK project /ARS, Section 492, Paragraph 3/ accepted as a thesis can be found on the website for the Registrar's Office in the tab marked *Students/Documents*. If the project is to be accepted as a thesis, this form must also be included with the thesis.

THESIS EVALUATION AND DEFENSE

The thesis will be assessed by one or more experts who have been selected for the task by the Chairperson of the Department responsible for the thesis topic. Within thirty days following submission, the Department will send one copy of the *preliminary expert evaluation* to the student: during the spring semester, this document should be sent no later than 20 May. In the case of winter final examinations for all programs, this deadline is 10 January.

The point sheet included below provides the framework for thesis evaluations:

EVALUATION OF THE THESIS	
Name of Student: Neptun code, program, full-time/part-time training:	
Thesis title:	
Name of opponent, post: Opponent's department/place of employment:	
1. Selection of topic and title (points of interest, novelty; relevance, motivation for topic selection) <i>max. 5 points</i>	
2. Extent to which topic was developed Review of research literature (breadth, relevance, quality) Selection of methods, professional application, amount, quality and organization of collected material Analysis, interpretation (selection of analytical aspects, depth, quality, accuracy, clarity of analysis, interpretation of results) <i>max. 20 points</i>	
3. Execution of stylistic, formal elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linguistic formulation (spelling, punctuation, grammar, style) - Structure (harmony between structure and content; proportionate articulation and marking of subtopics, etc.) <i>max. 5 points</i> - Bibliographical requirements (conformity of citation and bibliography) - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendices (harmonious connection to topic, amount, quality) <i>max. 5 points</i>	
Usage of anti-plagiarism software (Turnitin) was applied and the thesis fulfills/does not fulfill the requirements.	

0 - 14 points	fail	(1)
15 - 19 points	pass	(2)
20 - 24 points	satisfactory	(3)
25 - 29 points	good	(4)
30 - 35 points	excellent	(5)

The suggested mark/grade for the thesis based on total points*:

.....(number)... ..(written)

..... Signature of Opponent,
Budapest,.....(month).....(day).....(year)

Defending the thesis is a part of the *final examination*. The student **must defend his or her thesis before a committee**.

The student's tasks at his or her thesis defense are,

- to introduce a condensed presentation of the thesis,
- to reflect upon the opponent's statements,
- to respond to questions posed by the expert leading the committee while convincing the committee of the level of preparedness and erudition in the thesis topic.

Factors for evaluating the defense:

- the level of professionalism and meticulousness exhibited in developing the topic;
- the degree of familiarity with the topic and its research literature;
- the professional level and originality of topic presentation; handling of debated questions, attention to linguistic standards.

ELTE ARS Section 81, Paragraph 8 and Section 82, Paragraph 1 are valid in the case of a thesis given a fail mark. In this case, the student must write a new thesis and cannot participate in the given final exam during the relevant exam period.

Appendices

Number 1

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I, the undersigned,

Name: _____

Place of birth, date: _____

Program: _____

NEPTUN code: _____

in complete knowledge that any infringement on my part will result in criminal or disciplinary measures being taken against me, do solemnly declare and certify by my signature that my thesis entitled:

is **the product of my own intellectual work.**

I state that I am familiar with the valid chapter in ELTE's ARS entitled, "Plagiarism" (Sections 74/A, 74/B, 74/C) and conformed to the rules regarding the usage and citation of other scholars' work while writing my thesis.

I am fully aware that, in the case of a thesis or other degree work, the following errors are considered elements of plagiarism:

- quotations made word-for-word, without benefit of quotations marks and citation;
- content matter used without benefit of citation;
- using others' published, intellectual work as if my own work

I am fully aware that I will face disciplinary and/or criminal legal consequences should my thesis not comply with the aforementioned requirements regarding the quotation and citation of sources. My thesis will furthermore be declared unworthy of appraisal in accordance with ELTE regulations.

Budapest, _____(month) _____(day) _____(year)

Student's signature

Appendices

Number 2

Application for the Acceptance of an OTDK Project as a Thesis

Dear Deputy Dean of Education:

I, the undersigned, _____, (Neptun code: _____) as a Preschool, BA/primary teacher, BA/infant and early childhood caregiver, BA/single-cycle Art and Visual Culture program, MA/Teacher of Art and Visual Culture student at ELTE's Faculty of Primary and Preschool Education request that my project work submitted to the National Conference of Students' Scholarly Circles (OTDK) be accepted as a thesis.

My request is based upon the fact that I participated in the National Conference of Students' Scholarly Circles (OTDK) on _____(month), _____ (day), _____(year) with my work entitled, _____ and was awarded first place.

Budapest, _____(month)_____ (day)_____ (year)

Student's signature

Appendices

As the adviser for this OTDK project, I hereby support the student's request. In accordance with Section 79, Paragraph 7 in the ARS, the project must fulfill all content and formal requirements stipulated for theses. After verifying that the aforementioned rules have been observed, I certify that the requirements have been met.

Name of adviser: _____

Signature of adviser: _____

Budapest, _____(month)_____ (day)_____ (year)

As the Deputy Dean of Education at the Faculty of Preschool and Primary Education, I hereby accept the student's application and declare that the submitted OTDK project is recognized as a thesis in accordance with Section 79, Paragraph 7 and worthy of the grade/mark of excellent (5).

Signature of the Deputy Dean of Education at ELTE TÓK:

Budapest, _____(month)_____ (day)_____ (year)

Appendices

Number 3

Application for the Acceptance of a TDK Project as a Thesis

Dear Program Leader of the Faculty TDK:

I, the undersigned, _____, (Neptun code: _____) as a Preschool, BA/primary teacher, BA/infant and early childhood caregiver, BA/single-cycle Art and Visual Culture program, MA/Teacher of Art and Visual Culture student at ELTE's Faculty of Primary and Preschool Education request that my project work submitted to the Faculty Conference of Students' Scholarly Circles (TDK) be accepted as a thesis.

My request is based upon the fact that I participated in the Faculty Conference of Students' Scholarly Circles (TDK) on _____(month), _____ (day), _____(year) with my work entitled, _____ and received a minimum of 45 points for its written evaluation.

Budapest, _____(month)_____ (day)_____ (year)

Student's signature

Appendices

As the adviser for this TDK project, I hereby support the student's request. In accordance with Section 79, Paragraph 7 in the ARS, the project must fulfill all content and formal requirements stipulated for theses. After verifying that the aforementioned rules have been observed, I certify that the requirements have been met.

Name of adviser: _____

Signature of adviser: _____

Budapest, _____(month)_____ (day)_____ (year)

As the Program Leader of the Faculty TDK, I hereby accept the student's application and declare that the submitted OTDK project is recognized as a thesis in accordance with Section 79, Paragraph 7 and worthy of the grade/mark of excellent (5).

Name of the Program Leader of the Faculty TDK: _____

Signature of the Program Leader of the Faculty TDK: _____

Budapest, _____(month)_____ (day)_____ (year)

Appendices

Number 4

Declaration and Documentation on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

I, the undersigned, (Neptun code:) in full awareness of my criminal and disciplinary responsibility, declare that in the course of preparing my thesis entitled

.....

..... I used artificial intelligence (AI) applications in the following manner.

I did not use AI applications in the preparation of my work:

I used AI applications in the course of my work, in compliance with the Faculty and university regulations, as detailed below:

Name of application:

Purpose:

Method of usage:

Method of critical verification:

Name of application:

Purpose:

Method of usage:

Method of critical verification:

I further declare that while using AI applications I fully complied with all data protection requirements.

Budapest,

Date

.....

Signature

Appendices

Number 5

REQUEST FOR CONFIDENTIALITY OF THESIS

According to Section 80 of Eötvös Loránd University Academic Regulations for Students, I, the undersigned,

(name, Neptun code)

am requesting my thesis, written in this degree programme:

with this title:

to be handled confidentially by Eötvös Loránd University Faculty of Primary and Pre-School Education in order to protect the service or business secrets contained therein.

Budapest, _____

Signature