

MA THESIS (a.k.a. *TRABAJO DE FIN DE MÁSTER*, OR TFM)

The 20-credit MA dissertation (a.k.a. “Trabajo de Fin de Máster”, or TFM) is a compulsory module in our MA programme. Each student must decide on the topic, and negotiate with a professor to be his or her supervisor.

This guide contains information on each of the available research lines, and the professors who are responsible for them (see the corresponding section below).

There is a form that will have to be filled in by the student, under the advice of the professor. This document, signed by the student and the professor, must be sent to the academic committee of the MA programme **before 23rd February 2020**.

You need to pass all your courses to be allowed to present your TFM

Students must prepare four printed copies of their MA dissertation: one for one their supervisor and one for each of the three members of the evaluation committee (unless they express preference for an electronic one), and an electronic copy for the academic committee. The printed copies must be deposited at the administrative office of the Departamento de Filologías Inglesa y Alemana; the electronic copy must be sent as a PDF document to the academic coordinator.

The MA dissertation must have an extension of 10,000 - 15,000 words (excluding notes and references). A word count must be included after the main body of the text, and before the bibliography. **MA theses that do not meet this requirement will be rejected.**

The public defence of the MA dissertation before the evaluation committee should consist of a 15-minute presentation, during which the student must provide a brief account of the methodology, objectives, and results obtained in the process of elaboration of his / her MA dissertation. This presentation should never consist of a mere summary of the contents of the dissertation. After this presentation, the members of the evaluation committee will comment on the dissertation, and they may also pose questions for the student about its methodology or contents.

The subject of your MA dissertation and the way it is approached should result in a reasonably original contribution to the field. The choice of subject, and the methodological approach to it, must be clearly and properly justified in the dissertation, and they must also be discussed during its public defence.

The MA dissertation must focus on a specific topic that must be dealt with a reasonable degree of depth and detail. It is therefore not a good idea to come up with subjects that are too generic. For example, titles such as “William Shakespeare’s Plays”, or “Methods for Teaching English as a Second Language” are too generic, and they are such wide-ranging topics that trying to deal with them in a 10,000 – 15,000-word essay would lead to an extremely shallow MA dissertation.

Your MA dissertation must also be properly and clearly structured. It should consist of an abstract, introduction, development of the central subject (e.g. methodology, analysis and discussion), conclusions and references (plus appendixes if necessary).

The ideas, and the analysis that you propose in your MA dissertation must be properly argued, founded upon empirical evidence first, and also supported with secondary bibliography.

Your conclusions should result from a close reading and / or analysis of your subject, primary texts, corpora, or any other empirical object that may constitute the focus of your research.

You are also expected to consult secondary literature, but your final analysis must result first and foremost from a close study and evaluation of the primary object of research, and never from a simple summary, or just a miscellany of critical opinions culled from secondary literature.

It is, however, very important to be aware of the state of the art in the field and the subject you are working with: this should always be your starting point. In this regard, the introduction to the MA dissertation should in many cases consist of a brief survey and a critical account of the current state of the field, and its relevance for the topic of research you are about to focus on.

See appendix 1 (in Spanish) for more specific rules concerning your MA Thesis

Plagiarism

We have a very strict policy against plagiarism. Those students who plagiarise in any of their essays or in their MA dissertation will be liable to a variety of disciplinary measures that range from a delay in the presentation of their MA dissertation to expulsion from the programme and the U. of Granada.