



**GHENT UNIVERSITY – VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MARITIME SCIENCE**

### **Master Dissertation Regulation**

#### **1. Objectives of the master dissertation**

The master dissertation consists of a **written and oral** part (see infra chapter 3 + 5), with focus on a **maritime topic**, for example analyzing a port or maritime transport issue from an international, European, national or regional perspective. The master dissertation tends to obtain knowledge and understanding, either from a legal, policy, logistic, economic or technical point of view, or a combination of those different approaches.

The scientific character of the dissertation implies the **use of all relevant sources** concerning the chosen topic and the capacity to analyze and synthesize the problem at hand. The master dissertation aims to realize tangible progress with regard to the student's written abilities and research skills.

#### **2. Practical organization and instructions**

##### **2.1. Topic**

The topic of the master dissertation is chosen **in consultation between the student and the supervisor**. Students have to take the initiative to contact a potential supervisor by e-mail. The topic should be linked to the content of one of the courses of the MSc in Maritime Science (general course or optional course), taught by the supervisor. Students can suggest a topic to a supervisor of their choice or can contact one of the professors for possible topic suggestions.

##### **2.2. Supervisor**

The student is counseled and supervised by a supervisor, who is a member of the **teaching staff** of the MSc in Maritime Science. The MSc in Maritime Science aims for a proportional and reasonable distribution of master dissertations among the members of the teaching staff. If one of the professors has to deal with too many applications for master dissertations, he can decline the offer and suggest another supervisor.

### 2.3. Submission of the proposed topic and supervisor

Every student needs to fill out a **specific form** (provided through Minerva) and hand in a proposed topic for their master dissertation, signed and approved by their supervisor, at the **Faculty Student Administration** no later than **30 November** of the current academic year.

### 3. Contents of the master dissertation

The master dissertation is typewritten in **English** and contains approximately **25.000 words**, not including the title page, table of contents, bibliography and possible annexes.

It needs to be **well-structured** and consists of a **title page** (a template is provided through Minerva), a **table of contents** (with page numbers), an **introduction**, a **conclusion**, a **main part** in between (with as many chapters as considered necessary), a **bibliography** and possible **annexes**.

The master dissertation starts with an introduction that defines the topic and the research question(s), which aspects will be analyzed, a motivation for the topic selection and the methodology that will be followed. The main part of the dissertation is divided in different chapters and/or parts, and contains the analysis of your topic. The dissertation ends with conclusions: in this part the results from the analysis are brought together and this preferably contains a personal point of view or the evaluation of these conclusions (synthesis of your work). The dissertation should be **consistent as a whole**. This means that the content and the composition have to be logical.

The **citing of sources** is very important and a master dissertation should include all necessary references. Using texts of an author, the structure of a text of an author or his ideas without quotation is deemed **plagiarism**, which is prohibited by the Faculty of Law and will be sanctioned. Information from the internet is allowed and is useful, especially for recent developments, but this information will seldom be sufficient on its own. Students can use all sources of information but have to include the necessary references and write the text of the paper themselves.

All references must be consistent and have to correspond to the **most recent and acclaimed methods within the specific discipline**. Every source that is used throughout the work will also have to be mentioned in the **bibliography** at the end of the master dissertation, divided by source and within this alphabetically. Students may not refer to texts they didn't consult.

### 4. Submission of the master dissertation

The master dissertation is submitted **in electronic form** no later than **15 May**. **Printed copies** (recto verso; ecological paper; bonded without plastic) should only be submitted to the secretariat of the Maritime Institute **on request of the supervisor or assessor**. The student should check this in advance.

### 5. Public oral defense

The written part of the master dissertation is followed by an oral defense in presence of a **jury**, consisting of the supervisor and an assessor. The student prepares a **PowerPoint-presentation** to support his or her oral presentation of the dissertation. This can cover the

main research conclusions, a broader overview of the research or a focused approach on a particular interesting item of the research. For this the student has maximum **10 minutes**, immediately followed by approximately 10 minutes of **questions** from the jury members. After this, the jury members will deliberate and evaluate the written and oral part of the master dissertation as a whole, in the absence of the student.

## **6. Entry into force**

This master dissertation regulation enters into force at the start of the academic year 2020-2021.