

Final Examination of the Educational Science MA Program

Institute of Education, University of Szeged

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General Presentation of the Final Examination

The final examination is the process through which the knowledge and competences related to the MA degree in Educational Science are assessed.

The purpose of the final examination, according to Section 50 (4) of the Hungarian National Higher Education Act¹, is “to assess and evaluate the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to obtain the degree, during which examination the student must also demonstrate that they are able to apply the knowledge they have learned”.

Admission to the final examination requires the completion of 120 credits in the Educational Science MA program and the submission of a thesis.

The final examination must be taken after obtaining the pre-degree certificate (absolutorium) and submitting the thesis, in accordance with the relevant academic regulations of the University of Szeged.

The examination requirements have been developed on the basis of the Educational Science MA program description document, the Training and Learning Outcome Requirements, and the curriculum required to obtain the 120 credits of the program.

Requirements

- be familiar with the basic concepts and relationships defined by the main thematic areas of the program;
- be able to organize and synthesize their knowledge;
- apply theoretical knowledge in research, analytical, and evaluative tasks;
- interpret problems of educational science and the phenomena of schooling and education in a broader context;
- demonstrate independent thinking, problem awareness, identification of key issues, and situational analysis,
- use terminology accurately and appropriately;
- present knowledge, ideas, and opinions clearly, logically, and coherently in both oral and written form.

Members of the Examination Committee

The final examination committee consists of at least three members:

- a chair, who is a habilitated associate professor or a full professor of Educational Science;
- internal member(s): lecturer(s) participating in the training program;
- an external member: a professional who is not employed by the University of Szeged and, if possible, holds a doctoral degree in education.

¹ Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education [2011. évi CCIV. törvény a nemzeti felsőoktatásról], Section 50(4). <https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/2011-204-00-00.108#CI>

Structure of the Examination

The final examination consists of the thesis, the defense of the thesis, and an oral examination, as follows:

Component	Assessed competences	The student's task
Thesis	By applying their knowledge and through the level of development of their abilities, students are prepared to undertake research and/or applied tasks in education and schooling, to participate in the development, operation, and management of educational systems, to explore and analyze relevant information, to communicate results in national and international forums, and to further develop their competences through independent learning. Their professional attitudes enable them to work independently, create solutions, solve problems, and make decisions.	The student prepares an original and independent interpretation and complex analysis of an educational science problem within the specialization they have chosen, based on their own research work and in accordance with the expectations of scholarly work and publication. (The length of the main text is 80,000 characters.)
Thesis presentation and defense	Students are able to present educational results in national and international forums. They are capable of developing their existing abilities through independent learning and of acquiring new competences. In terms of professional attitudes and conduct, they demonstrate the ability and willingness to cooperate and integrate into a professional community, to critically evaluate and direct their own activity, to regulate and develop themselves, and to act purposefully in preserving and creating values.	A 15–20 minute presentation of the thesis and responses to the questions posed in advance by the reviewers and formulated on the spot by the committee.
Oral examination	During the program, students develop a deep and well-structured knowledge system in educational science, including research methodology, the psychology of education and instruction, theories of education and instruction, sociology of education, comparative education, and the historical and philosophical foundations of education. They are also prepared to perform roles corresponding to their qualification and to continue into doctoral studies in educational science. Their professional attitudes enable them to work independently, create, solve problems, and make decisions.	A systematic and synthesizing overview of one complex topic selected from a set of topics developed on the basis of the foundation and core curriculum of the Educational Science MA program. After 20 minutes of preparation, the oral response lasts 15–20 minutes. The detailed list of oral examination topics is available in a separate document.

Calculation of the Final Examination Grade

The final examination grade is calculated as the arithmetic mean of the following four component marks:

- the thesis mark awarded by Reviewer 1,
- the thesis mark awarded by Reviewer 2,
- the mark for the thesis presentation and defense in the final examination,
- the mark for the oral examination.

The final examination is considered successful if all component marks are at least a pass.

The Thesis in the Educational Science MA Program

Definition of the Task

In the Educational Science MA program, the thesis is an original and independent interpretation and complex analysis of an educational science problem related to the student's chosen specialization, based on the student's own research work and prepared in accordance with the expectations for academic work and publications. The main text of the thesis is approximately 80,000 characters long. The thesis topic is approved by the Institute based on the approved synopsis. The thesis work is supported by the supervisor within the framework of the thesis seminar and consultation process.

Thesis Presentation

The presentation of the thesis consists of a 15-20 minute presentation and responses to the questions posed in advance by the reviewers and formulated on the spot by the examination committee.

General Information

Students in the Educational Science MA program must write their thesis on a topic related to their chosen specialization. Therefore, generally formulated topic areas must be narrowed and specified in accordance with the specialization. Students may also approach lecturers with individual topic proposals beyond the recommended topics.

Members of academic staff may supervise a limited number of students from the BA and MA programs of the Institute of Education each academic year. This is intended to ensure that each student can have a supervisor from the Institute. Supervisors may refuse additional students beyond this limit.

The thesis topic must be approved by the Institute of Education on the basis of the accepted synopsis. Without the successful completion of the synopsis process, the thesis cannot be prepared.

The Thesis Committee is responsible for matters related to the thesis.

Schedule of Thesis Preparation

2nd semester

- Selection of the topic
- Invitation of the supervisor

3rd semester

- Registration for the thesis seminar I.
- Registration of the thesis topic and supervisor
- Preparation and submission of the synopsis for approval (with one opportunity for revision and resubmission if the first submission is unsuccessful)
- Completion of thesis-related tasks

4th semester

- Registration for the thesis seminar II. (prerequisite: accepted synopsis)
- Application for the final examination
- Completion of thesis-related tasks
- Submission of the thesis
- Presentation and defense of the thesis during the final examination

The list of thesis topics is provided separately.

Evaluation

The thesis is evaluated in writing in advance by two reviewers (the supervisor and an opponent) on a five-point scale, based on the following criteria:

- the relevance of the thesis topic, the professional value of the work, and its scientific accuracy,
- the thoroughness of the knowledge of the literature and the quality of its use,
- the appropriateness of the choice of sources, samples, and research methods,
- the quality of the analysis and the presentation of the results,
- the depth and thoroughness of the interpretation of the results and the validity of the conclusions,
- the structure, language, and aesthetic appearance of the thesis,
- the appropriateness of citations and references, and compliance with formal requirements,
- a thesis containing plagiarism is not acceptable.

The presentation and defense of the thesis are evaluated and marked by the final examination committee on a five-point scale based on the following criteria:

- structure of the presentation,
- effectiveness and accuracy of interpersonal communication,
- presentation aids,
- quality of argumentation.

The oral examination is assessed by the final examination committee on the basis of the following criteria:

- Content criteria: thorough subject knowledge; the understanding, systematization, and synthesis of knowledge
- Presentation criteria: clear structure, emphasis on key points, use of appropriate terminology, effectiveness, and efficiency of communication

The diploma grade is calculated as follows. The semester grade averages and the average of the final examination components are added up, then their average is calculated and added to this sum. If in the last semester the student only took course(s) worth 0 credits that are nonetheless a prerequisite of graduation, this last semester is not taken into account when calculating the diploma grade.

- extraordinary: 5.00
- excellent: 4.51–4.99
- good: 3.51–4.50
- satisfactory: 2.51–3.50
- pass: 2.00–2.50