METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE FINAL STATE EXAMINATION IN THE FOLLOW-UP MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM ART IN CONTEXT

Initial specification

- The Final State Examination is governed by Section 53 of Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education and on Amendments and Supplements to Other Acts, as amended, and Articles 11 and 12 of the Study and Examination Regulations of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague of 25 September 2024.

- Studies in the AVU Master's degree program are officially completed on the date of passing the last part of the Final State Examination.

•The Final State Examination consists of:

- Examination in art history
- Thesis and its defense

STATE EXAMINATION IN ART HISTORY

1. Registration for the Final State Examination in art history

- The Final State Examination in art history is taken by students of the three-year follow-up master's program, usually in their final year of study. The regular date is determined by the timetable of the relevant academic year, normally twice in an academic year.

Students apply via the portal of the STAG study information system (IS/STAG) under the My Study/Enrollment tab for the dates set in the timetable.

- The Final State Examination cannot be replaced by the recognition of a similar examination from another institution.

2. Examination Commission

The Final State Examination in Art History is conducted in the form of a comprehensive examination and is taken before an examination commission of at least three members. The chairperson and the members of the examination commission are appointed by the Vice-Rector for Student Affairs on the proposal of the Head of the Department of Theory and History of Art from among professors, associate professors, experts and specialists approved by the Art Council of the Academy of Fine Arts.

3. Examination criteria

The purpose of the exam is to verify knowledge of art history and contemporary theory introduced in theoretical classes at AVU and building upon student's previous education. It should show knowledge in a chosen area or art history and contemporary theory relevant to the student's own studio

practice. This specialist area should be situated in a wider context, with specific attention to the contemporary and historical art of Central and Eastern Europe.

Students should develop a specific research question and argument under one of the following topics. The essay must focus on the history and theory of modern and contemporary art and include contextualization within the Czech Republic or Central and Eastern Europe more broadly.

Students should draw on notes from completed subjects, using recommended literature listed in the exam topics, as well as other independently searched sources. Students will be guided through the process with seminars and individual consultations from tutors in the Department of Theory and History of Art.

The exam is conducted in English.

The State Final Exam consists of two parts – a written work and an oral presentation.

The written essay is prepared on an agreed topic chosen from a list supplied by the Department of Theory and History of Art. The essay must analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources in order to clearly argue a personal position on the chosen topic. The essay's argument should be specific and relevant to the student's own interests and practice as well as the contemporary and historical context of the Czech Republic and Eastern and Central Europe. Students should make use of literature from the exam reading list and independently sourced material.

The written thesis/essay is prepared in advance and uploaded to the school's STAG information system two months before the examination.

Topics to choose from:

performance practices

educational practices

collaborative practices

art and ecology

art and dissent

art and activism

art and writing

art and public space

art and music

queer art

The text contains:

- Title page
- A six-line annotation summarizing the content of the paper

- Introduction to the topic: rationale for the choice of topic (why it is important), research question (what questions the paper will address), context of the problem (preview of existing literature)

- Main part: research of sources (based on the student's ability to classify, categorize and interpret the information), critical evaluation and formulation of own knowledge (student's attitude towards the topic)

- Conclusion: overview of the results and answers to the questions posed in the introduction of the thesis

- List of literature and other sources used

- The text has a length of 10 standard pages (1 standard page = 1800 characters including spaces without appendices), or 2500 words. The text includes footnotes in the body of the paper.

4. Classification

- A record of the Final State Examination will be drawn up and signed by the chairperson or another member of the Commission by proxy, and by all members of the Commission present. The Final State Examination shall be graded on a scale:

  - excellent (1)
  - very good (2)
  - good (3)
  - satisfactory (4)
  - insufficient (5).

- The result of the Final State Examination is recorded in the IS/STAG.

- If an enrolled student fails to appear for the Final State Examination on the specified date and does not apologize in writing to the Secretary or Registrar of the Department of Theory and History of Art within five working days of that date, stating the reason, the student shall be graded 5 "insufficient".

5. Final State Examination on an alternative date and its repetition

The student must take the Final State Examination in accordance with the curriculum of the study program in question, no later than April of the final year of study. This condition also applies in the case of alternative and make-up dates. The student is obliged to complete the remedial term no later than one year after the first failed term. Without successfully passing the Final State Examination, the student is not admitted to the thesis defense.

THESIS AND ITS DEFENSE

1. Final thesis

- The final thesis is the thesis and its defense in the form of a commission examination, which takes place in the final year of study. The diploma thesis consists of two parts - practical (usually a set of art works, a project) and written defense (usually a theoretical analysis of the diploma thesis, an accompanying report).

- The assignment and the scope of the thesis are developed in agreement with the supervising teacher and the candidate. The assignment includes the topic, scoping, the technologies used, a draft financial statement, a timetable and references. Thesis assignments are submitted by candidates through IS/STAG by the deadline specified in the schedule for that academic year. The assignment must include, but is not limited to, the title of the thesis in English, principles for the development of the thesis, and references. The thesis assignment in IS/STAG is approved by the supervising teacher.

• The thesis topic is individual and is formulated in discussion between the thesis supervisor and the student, taking into account the student's previous development and personal disposition of talent. The diploma students must formulate the concept of their project, carry out the preparatory work and independently implement the thesis. The theoretical part of the thesis is the defense text, in which the student characterizes their work, articulates their background and chosen working methods, and demonstrates the ability to situate their creative project in the contemporary and historical context of art history and to reflect the critical reactions of the opponents.

2. Preparation and submission of the theoretical part of the thesis

- The written part of the thesis consists of a defense, responding to objections or critical comments of the thesis supervisor and the opponent.

- None of these components should be missing from the written part:

  - **Topic** – description of the topic, justification for its choice, general scope and uniqueness of the chosen topic.

  - **Process** – at what stages the work proceeded, what decisions emerged - or even surprises - or what possible directions of development were abandoned, if it built on the school's own previous results, how consultations and other impulses influenced the process.

  - **Resources** – technologies, techniques, materials, approaches, but also thought constructions, considerations, strategies used.

  - **Context** – related and inspiring works, historical and contemporary theoretical context, how the work appears in terms of discipline or genre, different approaches to a similar theme. It is desirable that the candidate refers to the literature or other texts related to the topic in the text (the KTDU/VVP supervisor or consultant can help with the choice). A list of references used is included at the end of the text.

  - **Reflection** – demonstrate the ability to look critically and analytically at one's own work, highlighting aspects that have been brought to a desirable shape over the course of a year's effort, or that show the prospect of further development.

- The written part of the thesis is an official document subject to archiving and publication, and a high standard of language and typography is expected. A sample introductory page can be found in Appendix 1, of this document.

- The candidate is required to submit the written part of the thesis by the deadline specified in the timetable for the relevant academic year. The theoretical part of the thesis is submitted both in printed form (with the date and the student's handwritten signature) and electronically via IS/STAG.
- In case of non-compliance with the specified requirements and deadlines, the student cannot be admitted to the thesis defense and is graded 5 "insufficient".

3. Opponent of the thesis

- The opponent of the thesis is appointed by the Vice-Rector for Student Affairs on the basis of a proposal of the advising professor only from theoreticians and artists outside the Academy of Fine Arts. The opponent must be appointed within the deadlines set by the schedule of the academic year.

- The opponent is usually a respected theorist or artist in the field. A list of approved opponents is available on the School's website and from the Department of Theory and History of Art (KTDU). A proposal to expand the list of opponents to include an additional suitable person may be submitted by the candidate on the Request for Approval of an Opponent Outside the List form, providing the full name of the opponent(s), including titles and contact information: cell phone and email. They will have this request endorsed by the supervising professor and submit it to the KTDU Secretary by the prescribed deadline.

- The diploma candidate reports the name of the selected opponent to the study department via IS/STAG in the My studies/Student applications tab by the deadline set in the timetable. The application includes the full name of the opponent including titles and contacts: mobile phone and email. The opponent(s) will be approved in IS/STAG by the thesis supervisor and subsequently by the Vice-Rector for Student Affairs.

- The opponent meets with the thesis supervisor over the thesis in progress. On this basis, and after familiarizing themselves with the text of the theoretical part, the opponent prepares an opponent's report and delivers it to the study department within the time limit given in the timetable.

4. Assessment of the thesis

- The candidate is obliged to deliver the theoretical part of the thesis to the supervisor and the opponent in sufficient time. The candidate is obliged to arrange the inspection of the practical part of the thesis with the supervisor in due time.

- The thesis supervisor or the opponent will prepare a written report on the thesis. The supervisor will submit the thesis report via IS/STAG and will also complete the classification. The opponent will submit the thesis report electronically with their signature to the study department within the deadlines set in the academic year schedule.

- The written opinions must explicitly state whether or not the supervisor or opponent recommends the thesis for defense and the proposed classification of the thesis.

- If both the thesis supervisor and the opponent do not recommend the thesis for defense, the student cannot be admitted to the thesis defense. A candidate who has not been admitted to the thesis defense or who has not defended the thesis shall be classified by the examination committee for the defense of the thesis with a grade 5 “insufficient”.

- The candidate has the right to get acquainted with the opponent’s opinion and the evaluation of the thesis supervisor at least three working days before the thesis defense. The publication of the evaluations and informing the graduate student is ensured by the Study Department.

5. Examination commission for the thesis defense

- The thesis defense shall take place before an examination commission of at least five members. The chairperson and the members of the commission are appointed by the Rector from among professors, associate professors, and experts approved by the AVU Arts Council.

- The chairperson directs the work of the commission and the course of the defense.

- The commission decides by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the vote of the chairperson is decisive.

- The vote of the commission is not public.

- The chairperson of the commission will not admit the candidate to the defense if the commission does not have the opinion of the thesis supervisor or the opinion of the opponent. If the graduate is not admitted to the defense for these reasons, the candidate’s absence is considered excused, and the candidate has the right to an alternative defense date.

- A defense for which the candidate fails to appear without a proper excuse is graded 5 “insufficient”.

6. Course of the thesis defense

1. 45 minutes are allocated for the thesis defense with the following sequence:

- the chairperson introduces the candidate to the thesis committee

- the candidate presents their thesis defense (presentation limit 15 minutes)

- the thesis supervisor (or a member of the commission designated by the chairperson) presents the thesis report to the commission

- the opponent (or a member of the commission designated by the chairperson) presents the opinion to the commission

- a debate in which the candidate comments on the opinions, comments and questions of the members of the examination board

- discussion
- private evaluation by the commission. The opponents take part in the examination commission's deliberations in a supervisory capacity; if physically present, they become part of the commission.
- In addition to the practical and written parts of the thesis, candidates are advised to present a portfolio with documentation of their work to date at the defense.
- Candidates whose thesis is produced in a time-based medium (video projection, audio) will report the duration of the thesis to the Study Department in time for the defense schedule to be adjusted if necessary. If they fail to do so, they will be given standard time for the defense.
- Thesis defenses are held in the school buildings, in the individual studios of the candidates. Any requests for specific installation spaces outside the studio (hallways, auditorium, classrooms, garden, gallery) or in spaces outside the Academy of Fine Arts are to be reported by the graduate student to the Study Department via a universal application, indicating the location of the selected installation spaces and the reason for the request. Consideration of the request is entirely at the discretion of the Pro-rector for Student Affairs.

7. Classification

1. After the Final State Examination, a record is to be made and signed by the chairperson or another member of the commission, or by proxy, and all members of the commission present. The Final State Examination shall be graded on this scale:

- excellent (1)
- very good (2)
- good (3)
- insufficient (4).

  insufficient (5)

8. Defense of the thesis at an alternative date or its repetition

- In justified cases, the student may request a postponement of the diploma thesis defense at least two months before the Final State Examination. In this case, the student must justify the request, attach documents proving the reasons stated in the request and submit the thesis in progress to the Pro-rector for Student Affairs, who will decide on the matter no later than one month before the Final State Examination.
- If the student has not passed the Final State Examination, in particular because they have not defended their thesis, they have the right to retake the Final State Examination at a single make-up date to be determined by the Rector within one year of the date of the failed defense. If the student fails to pass the Final State Examination even within the remedial period, their studies will be terminated in accordance with Section 56(1)(b) of the Act. Section 68 of the Act applies to the decision to terminate studies. The person has the right to obtain a certificate of partial completion of the master's degree program.

In Prague on 25.09.2024

MgA. Jana Bernartová, Ph.D.

pro-rector for student affairs

Sample title page of the theoretical part of the thesis *appendix no. 1*

Academy of Fine Arts in Prague

degree program Art in Context

THESIS

TITLE

Written by: candidate's first and last name

Thesis supervisor: first and last name of advising professor

Thesis opponent: first and last name of opponent

Academic year 20xx/20xx