

BA Thesis Guidelines (2016/17)

Japanstudies Program, Leiden University

MAIN CRITERIA AND SCOPE OF THE BA THESIS

The BA thesis is the culminating project of your degree, which should reflect the skills and knowledge you are expected to obtain as part of the program, as outlined in the program regulations (the *onderwijs- en examen regelingen*). This means that your thesis should reflect:

Good knowledge of Japanese language, and the ability to read, analyse, and integrate Japanese sources.

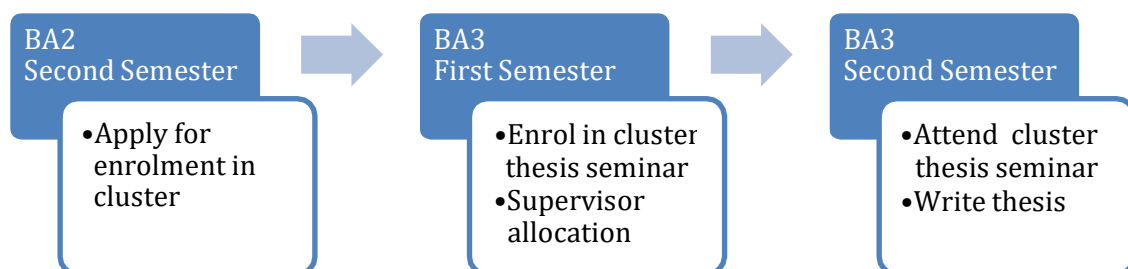
Good knowledge of central historical, social, and political developments in Japan, a good grasp of the relevant secondary and primary literature on the topic, and the ability to apply this knowledge to the specific subject under investigation.

Foundational knowledge in the discipline within which the thesis is written, the ability to define a research question within this field, the ability to find relevant secondary and primary literature and to critically analyse this literature, the ability to sort and clearly present knowledge in the form of a BA thesis.

Basic academic skills, including research skills, that is, the ability to find and select appropriate academic literature for the thesis and offer a well-argued assessment of this literature, the ability to present a well-sustained argument and conclusion, the ability to give constructive feedback to peers, and integrate comments from peers and the advisor into writing in progress.

For details regarding program goals and basic academic skills, see the *onderwijs- en examen regelingen*: <http://www.hum.leidenuniv.nl/studenten/reglementen/>

THE ENROLMENT AND WRITING PROCESS



FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

Length:

The length of the thesis should be approximately 8,500 words long, with 7,000 as the lower limit and 10,000 words as the upper limit, including appendices and bibliography. A BA thesis which is substantially longer or shorter may be penalised by the examiners.

Use of Japanese language:

The thesis should make substantial use of at least one and ideally more Japanese language sources which should be discussed explicitly in the text.

Form:

The thesis should be submitted in a digital form via Blackboard (see below under submission).

The front page should state the following:

Name of Program (Japanstudies Program, Leiden University)
The title of the thesis
Your full name
Your student number
The name of the degree (BA in Japanese Studies)
Name of the Supervisor
Word count

The thesis should make use of an appropriate citation style, as explained in the student study guide. <http://www.hum.leidenuniv.nl/japans/advies-begeleiding/richtlijnen-paper.html>

Date of submission:

The deadline for the first full draft program-wide is **25 April 2017**. The draft should be substantial. You should submit your draft to your supervisor.

The very final deadline for the submission of the thesis is 1 June 2017, 23:59, on Blackboard ([PERM]BA - Eindwerkstuk Japanstudies)

Students who miss the April deadline may still submit for the June 1 deadline, but will not receive comments from their supervisors before their final assessment. Students who submit their final version after June 1 will receive their assessment in September, and will therefore not graduate by September.

ASSESSMENT

The BA thesis is assessed according to the following criteria, with credit given to the extent that:

the research question is well-defined and contextualised;
an argument is specified, coherently presented and supported by evidence;
alternative arguments are analysed;
the approach is critical, not descriptive;
sources and arguments have been integrated effectively in a coherent text
a relevant methodology is employed;
relevant sources have been consulted including at least one Japanese source;
knowledge of relevant literature, issues and debates is demonstrated; and
the style and presentation is clear and careful, and appropriate academic conventions have been observed.

A chart showing the grade descriptors for the award of marks for the thesis and the standard marksheet for theses is attached to this booklet as Appendix II.

APPENDIX I: REFERENCES IN THESES

References are scholarly acknowledgements of work referred to or quoted. Please note that proper citation of sources is an elementary but critical mark of the presentation of academic work. There are several different conventions and it does not matter which one you adopt provided that you cite sources properly, giving all the necessary information, and keep consistently to the same convention. The 'Harvard' system is one of the simplest and is outlined below.

You may, however, use other methods such as:

footnotes, appearing at the bottom of each page and indicating the author, title, publisher/journal, year of publication and page numbers; or
endnotes, providing the same information but at coming the end of the text.

You will need to rely on an established style manual for guidance as to the proper forms of references placed in footnotes or endnotes. **Whatever system you adopt, it is important to employ it consistently.** If you opt for footnotes or endnotes, be sure that the notes themselves correspond correctly to the footnote/endnote numbers in the text.

Whatever system you opt for, the thesis should contain *a full bibliography listing all the sources you have consulted.*

More information on how to cite:

Please consult also the Student Guide (<http://www.hum.leidenuniv.nl/japans/advies-begeleiding/richtlijnen-paper.html>) for details. Our library also has copies of the Chicago Manual of Style, which provides precise guidelines on how to format references and bibliographies. The manual is also available online at the university at www.chicagomanualofstyle.org, and a quick guide to referencing from the guide can be accessed off campus at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

APPENDIX II: BA THESIS GRADE DESCRIPTORS

Mark	Description
Excellent 8-10	<p>the research question is clearly defined and contextualized; a clearly identifiable argument is specified crisply; it is coherently presented and supported by evidence; alternative arguments are analyzed and synthesized the approach is critical, not descriptive, but description is used appropriately; a relevant methodology is explicitly identified and employed; an impressive range of relevant sources have been consulted (in Dutch/English and Japanese); an impressive range of knowledge of relevant literature, issues and debates is demonstrated (in Dutch/English and Japanese); the student independently researched, identified, read and analyzed materials for the thesis the style and presentation, in terms of argument, use of material, and conventions is clear, careful, and professional; appropriate academic conventions have been observed accurately.</p>
Good 7-7.9	<p>the research question is reasonably defined, and contextualized; an argument is specified, coherently presented and supported by evidence; alternative arguments are referred to and integrated into the text; the approach is mostly critical, but with elements of description; a relevant methodology is implied and employed; most relevant sources have been consulted (in Dutch/English and some Japanese); knowledge of relevant literature, issues and debates is demonstrated (in Dutch/English and some Japanese); the student researched, identified, read and analyzed materials for the thesis with some guidance the style and presentation of the argument is clear and careful, and appropriate academic conventions have largely been observed in presenting the materials and data.</p>
Pass 6.0-6.9	<p>the research question is vaguely defined; an argument is identifiable, but may not be coherently presented or fully supported by evidence; alternative arguments are mentioned but not integrated; the approach is largely descriptive, not analytical or critical; there is little evidence of methodological awareness; some relevant sources have been consulted (mostly in Dutch/English), but some sources have been ignored; some knowledge of relevant literature (mostly in Dutch/English), issues and debates is demonstrated, but this knowledge is either flawed or incomplete student required significant assistance in selecting and examining materials the style and presentation of the argument and material, as well as layout lacks clarity or professionalism. Appropriate academic conventions have been only partially observed.</p>
5.1-5.9	The faculty does not issue grades in this area
Fail 0-5.0	<p>the research question is poorly defined, unclear, or absent the argument is incoherently presented and unsupported; alternative arguments are not acknowledged; the approach descriptive no relevant methodology is employed; sources have been consulted but their relevance is unclear; important sources have not been discussed; limited knowledge of relevant literature, issues and debates is demonstrated; limited ability work independently, select and assess materials the style and presentation of the argument, materials, and the layout does not follow appropriate academic conventions.</p>