

## A Manual on the Research Part of Thesis for the MA in Psychology Programme

<b>Requirements for content</b>	
<b>The purpose of the thesis</b>	The research part of the thesis is a scientific piece of work, that should follow the general requirements of a scientific research and publication. Furthermore, this paper should be completed individually, under the directions of a supervisor, and should contribute to prior research in the given field of science. Its purpose is to demonstrate the student's proficiency and creativity within the relevant field, to research more extensively the chosen topic, and to show that they are able to carry out a scientific research and publication while maintaining high professional standards.
<b>Types and topics</b>	The thesis is based on an empirical research in a qualitative or quantitative approach (experiment, questionnaire, observation, case study, etc.). The thesis can be a meta-analysis, based on a systematic literature review. The student discusses the topic of their thesis with the supervisor while basing it on the announced thesis topics.
<b>Required structure of the thesis</b>	
Title page (Cover of the binding)	See formal requirements and binding (Appendix 1)
Inner title page	The name of the institute, the faculty, and the programme should be on the top of the inner title page, and the title of the thesis should be under that. The name of the student should be on the left side of the lower third of the page, the supervisor's name and position should be on the right side of the same. The year should be at the bottom of the page and centred in the middle (See appendix 1).
Declaration of originality	The page after the inner title page should contain a declaration of originality, which states that the thesis is the student's own intellectual property. The declaration's content and form are as according to requirement and should be signed by the student. The declaration can be downloaded from the E-learning. The research part of the thesis is the student's independent work in which they should observe the rules for references and reference lists. If the author of the thesis is suspected of plagiarism, a legal disciplinary action can be brought against them.
Proof of consultation, supervisor's statement	The next page should contain a confirmation form (uniform format), which contains the proof of consultation as well as the supervisor's consent for thesis submission.
Index/Table of contents, page numbering	The research part of the thesis should contain the table of contents as well as a list of the figures and tables. The page numbering is continuous. Please insert the version number of SPSS if applicable.
Structure, chapters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Introduction</i>: an introduction to the relevant field of science, and a short, comprehensive description of the goal of the research and the researcher's motivation.</li> </ol>

	<p>Introduction should contain: <i>Theoretical introduction</i>: presenting the researched topic, a summary, and an evaluation of the relevant theories and research, conceptualizing the relations to be examined.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <i>Objectives, Hypotheses</i>: theoretically based statements which can be verified or falsified via empirical testing which clarify the studied phenomenon and relations.</li> <li>3. <i>Method</i>: the steps of the research, more specifically presentation of the participants, the applied methodological tools, and the process of collecting empirical data. The number of cases (the database) should be appropriate for testing the hypotheses with the chosen method. Data processing is based on the statistical strategy which is summarised in the statistical analysis subchapter.</li> <li>4. <i>Results</i>: presenting the empirical data as per the method used. The presentation should start with a descriptive analysis (i.e., characteristics of tested persons, distribution of measured variables) and end with a statistical (or completed by the implementation of another method) testing of the hypothesis.</li> <li>5. <i>Discussion, conclusions</i>: interpretation of the results, which addresses their relations to previous research, the questions answered by the study and the new problems it poses as well as an evaluation of the completed research including its strengths and weaknesses (limitations) and future research directions.</li> </ol>
Notes, references	All statements in the text which are not from the author should be referenced to their sources. In the text, the author only needs to refer to the source work (name and year of publishing), whose exact data should be given in the reference list.
Reference list	The references and the reference list should be used according to the publication requirements of APA 6 ( <a href="http://www.apastyle.org">www.apastyle.org</a> ), there is a detailed guide to this in the appendix and also on the E-learning. In the reference list there should be only works which are referenced to in the text of the study.
<b>Preparation and submission</b>	
<b>Choosing and submitting a topic</b>	<p>The topic submission form contains the topic of the thesis in the form of a title and the outline of the thesis which should be a paragraph of coherent text (up to a maximum of 250 words). It should also list the 3-5 most important literature references. The topic submission form (submitted by the student) should also contain the supervisor's statement that they will undertake the supervision as well as an approval of the educational structural unit responsible for the programme or of its representative.</p> <p>Deadline for thesis title submission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- if the final examination is in the spring semester: 15th May</li> <li>- if the final examination is in the autumn semester: 15th October</li> </ul>
<b>Supervisor</b>	A supervisor can be a teacher and/or a researcher from the university or an expert who is not an employee of the university (with the

	equivalent specialization in the field). The supervisor can guide the preparation of the thesis by work in groups or by individual tutoring. The supervisor should inform the student who would like to work with them about the limits and conditions of the cooperation at the time of topic submission.
<b>Consultation</b>	The preparation of the research part of the thesis should be supported by regular consultation (at least once per month) with the supervisor. The student can only submit their thesis for evaluation with the written permission of the supervisor.
<b>Submission</b>	<p>The students should submit the research part of their thesis to the Educational Office in two printed copies – hard-bound or spiral binding copy – and also electronically in PDF form as specified by the Educational Board before the exam session of their final examination.</p> <p>Deadline for thesis submission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in the autumn semester: 20th November.</li> <li>- in the spring semester: 20th April</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation</b>	
Evaluator, the evaluation process	<p>The research part of the thesis is evaluated by the supervisor and a specified second reviewer in writing, the two evaluators may consult about the evaluation and the grade. The grade for the research part of the thesis is the mathematical average of these evaluations rounded to the nearest integer.</p> <p>There are, however, two special cases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If the average grade of the two evaluations is fail (<i>average=1-1.50 – this is the case when both evaluations are fail or one evaluation is a fail and the other one is a pass</i>), the defence of the research part of the thesis cannot be processed. The student should prepare a new research part after the approval procedure based on the Section 82 of the Academic Regulations for Students (HKR) with the condition that its specified time limitation is not applicable. In case of a repeated thesis the student may apply at the earliest for the upcoming final examination period. Modification of a thesis at least with grade pass (<i>the average of the thesis is at least 2</i>) is not possible.</li> <li>2. If one evaluation is fail (1) and the other one is at least satisfactory (3) of the research part, the supervisor responsible for the specialization completed by the student should to choose a third evaluator. If the third evaluator evaluates the research part as fail as well which means that there are two evaluations with grade fail, the grade will be fail for the research part. In this case the defence of the research part cannot be processed. The student should prepare a new research part of the thesis based on the conditions written in point 1. Mutatis mutandis the student cannot participate on the oral defence. The final evaluation of the research part is the average of the evaluations given by further invited evaluators.</li> </ol>

	<p>The Research Part of the Thesis is a mandatory course to be completed in order to receive an absolution. The course is completed by submitting the Research Part itself. The evaluation of the Research Part of the Thesis course is based on the average of the grades given by the supervisor and the reviewer of the research part.</p> <p>The evaluation reviews have to be attached to the thesis. Besides the evaluation each of the reviewers formulates two topics which the candidate will receive together with the evaluation so that they can prepare themselves on the 4 topics. One of these topics will be chosen by the final examination committee and the student will be asked to elaborate on it at the exam. The evaluation can be collected at the relevant department at least two weeks before the date of the final exam.</p> <p>The final evaluation of the Thesis at the Defence is the average of the grades given by the supervisors for both the applied and the research parts and of the Defence of the two parts. The Defence grade is based on the presentation and the answers given for the supervisors' questions at the final examination.</p>
Points of evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- justification of the chosen topic and the purpose of the thesis;</li> <li>- presenting the literature of previous research in the relevant field, the standard of analysis- interpretation-application;</li> <li>- the researched question being novel and well-grounded, the precise statement of the hypothesis(es);</li> <li>- the choice of relevant research methods and statistical procedure(s) for testing the hypothesis and the clear presentation of their application;</li> <li>- presenting the results in a way which is clear and well-grounded from a statistical- methodological and professional point of view;</li> <li>- placing the student's own results within the research on the topic, self-reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of the research, future research directions.</li> </ul>
Oral defense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a summary of the researched question which focuses on the essentials, presenting how the thesis contributes to earlier research in the field;</li> <li>- self-reflection in connection with the completed work while taking into account the evaluations of the thesis (the supervisor's and the second reviewer's), presenting the advantages and weak points of the thesis;</li> <li>- a part of the final exam besides the defence is also the elaboration on one of the topics which has been given by the reviewers.</li> </ul> <p>If the grade of the defence is fail, students cannot elaborate and answer the topic and the presentations can be retaken during the next final exam session. Should this happen, students have the right for further consultation with their supervisor.</p>
<b>Formal requirements</b>	
<b>Length</b>	The length of the research part of the thesis should be at least 5,000 and up to a maximum of 8,000 words without abstract, reference

	list, figures, tables and appendices. The form and the content of the research part of the thesis need to follow the publication standards of scientific publications ( <a href="http://www.apastyle.org">www.apastyle.org</a> ). Length limits may be varied only in special cases (e.g. preparation of meta-analysis) with the written authorization of the responsible for specialization. It can be either in single-sided or duplex printing.
<b>Font, size, line spacing</b>	Times New Roman, 12pt, 1.5 spacing (distance between the lines)
<b>Margins</b>	2.5 cm margin, all sides.
<b>Language</b>	The research part of the thesis can be written in Hungarian (or in any other language if the supervisor gives their permission).
<b>Binding</b>	<p>The research part of the thesis should be uploaded in the Neptun in PDF format in a form specified by the Educational Board Committee.</p> <p>The cover should contain the name of the university, faculty and programme at the top. Underneath should be written “Thesis”, then an “Research part” subtitle. On the left side of the lower third of the page should be the name of the student. At the bottom of the page, in the middle should be the year. (Appendix 1)</p>
<b>Electronic format</b>	The thesis should be submitted on an electronic storage device in PDF form in a format defined by the Educational Committee.

## **Psychology MA research part of the thesis. Detailed requirements, manual on how to prepare the research part of your thesis**

### **About the theoretical introduction in detail**

It is important to complete the topic-related theoretical summary with the presentation of the question studied by the researcher and with the conceptualization of the researched phenomenon. The goal is to show proper in-depth knowledge of the referenced literature based on the theoretical research as carried on in the relevant field, which evaluates earlier results and helps forming own professional position, as well as to present the theoretical support for the validity of the researched topic. Your own topic as presented in the paper is the focus of the literature summary, so the related literature should be presented in the light of this. Usually, the theoretical introduction should gradually be narrowed down from the more general theoretical starting points and concept clarifications to the researched phenomenon.

### **About the hypotheses in detail**

The hypothesis contains the researcher's idea about the variables of the researched question, about their relationship to one another, contributes to the more profound understanding of the examined phenomenon. The hypothesis may stem from practical experience or from the critical evaluation of theoretical topics. The result of a professionally formulated hypothesis: its explanatory power, its formulation as a clear, unambiguous, compact opinion, the possibility of verification (possibility of falsifying), the methodological possibility of realization. The hypotheses may depend on one another, and can even be organized in a hierarchical order.

### **About the method in detail**

The description of the method is the detailed documentation of how the research plan was carried out, which should serve as a “user's guide” not only for reproducing the research or for its further development, but also for critical analysis of the results. In order to keep the description easy to follow, it is recommended to divide it into the following subchapters: *Participants in the experiment/research*; *Measurement tools* (scales, setup, stimulus material); *Procedure*. Besides these typical subchapters, any other subchapters may be added.

#### ***Participants in the experiment/research***

This subchapter contains the definitions and characterizations of the population of the research, of the unit of research/observation (average age, age range, sexes' proportion and anything else which is important in view of the specific research). It describes the manner of choosing the sample as well as the criteria. It is recommended to get data from a number of participants for the research paper which corresponds to the minimum requirements of the examined hypotheses and the applied statistical procedures, as well as to the specific circumstances of the chosen empirical method (even working together with other students, teachers, researchers). If the recorded sample's size is not sufficient for checking the formulated hypotheses, the hypotheses' testing will lose partially from its value.

### ***Measurement tools (scales, setups, stimulus materials)***

This subchapter contains the detailed description of the applied measurement tools, setups, stimulus materials. In case that a measurement tool (e.g. test, attitude scale), which is not related to the specific setup is used, the literature references related to how it was created have to be indicated in order for the reader to be able to obtain the same test or scale. If the setup which was used is in the commercial trade, the name of the manufacturer and the model's type number must be given (e.g. computer programmes). In the case of stimulus materials, it is recommended to give their parameters (e.g. the parameters of the projected film parts or of the music serving as a stimulus material).

The tests and the surveys whose source can be stated (e.g., it is linked to copyright) do not have to be included in the appendices, referencing the source is sufficient. Only tests and surveys whose source is unknown must be presented in the appendix. If the tool was created especially for the research, then a detailed description must be given or in the case of a complicated tool it is recommended to attach a drawing or a photo. It is also recommended to include the stimulus material (pl. pictures) in the appendix.

### ***Procedure***

This subchapter contains the instructions given to the participants and/or the stimulus conditions and the way in which the registered reactions and data were recorded. An easy-to follow and to-the-point description of how the experiment/research was conducted. In the case of a survey this is where you have to present the reliability and validity of the method applied.

In case of a qualitative research (e.g. study of a focus group, in-depth interview) when presenting in detail the course of the procedure, the method of obtaining the data must be thoroughly described (what projective techniques, visual stimuli, narrative analysis techniques, symbols, fantasy pictures etc. the researcher worked with). If possible, they should be included in the appendix.

### ***Statistical methods***

Here, you should present the method of data analysis of each hypothesis (in the case of computer data processing the name and version number of the used statistical programme, statistical tests). If the data processing is not trivial (e.g., content analysis; computing new variables from the measured data), you must describe that too. You do not have to describe the formula of the statistical test or the null hypothesis, but you must justify the choice of the particular test. Do not give personal data of the participants or raw data!

### **About presenting the results in detail**

You should start the presentation of the results of the statistical processing with the descriptive statistics (e.g., average, standard deviation), and after that continue with the statistical tests for verifying your hypotheses. Beside the results described in the text (e.g., “thus the field dependent group showed slower orientation in the environment than the field-independent group.”) or depicted on a chart or in a table, you should also indicate the value, the degree of freedom, and the significance level used as criterion in the statistical test for verifying the hypotheses (e.g.  $t=2.2$ ; degree of freedom 42;  $p < 0.05$  or:  $t(42) = 2.2$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). You do not need to elaborate on effects which are not significant – in this case it is sufficient to list, for example, which variables showed no statistically significant difference between the groups. You do not

have to justify the choice of statistical tests here as well. You do not have to include the original statistical outputs (e.g. SPSS correlational tables) either in the text or the appendix.

You should depict quantifiable data on a chart or present it as a table. In this case, the chart's/table's title should show what data is depicted on/in it. The charts and the tables should be numbered in the order of their appearance (they should be referred to in the text according to this) and if there are too many, then it is a good idea to summarize them in a table or an index after the paper's index of content.

This chapter of the paper serves exclusively for presenting, describing the data and the results partially in numerical, partially in text format. Their interpretation should be in the *Discussion, Conclusions* chapter.

### **About the discussion and conclusions in detail**

The goal of the discussion is to interpret and evaluate the results in such a way that the primary emphasis falls on the relationship between the presumption of the study and the results of the study. It is recommended to start with a summary of the results, which is followed by their interpretation and their integration in the theoretical-approach frame of the earlier research as referenced to in the theoretical introduction.

Here, you should also discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the study. Only those specific errors should be discussed which significantly influence results. The negative results should be accepted and interpreted as negative results; you should avoid the methodological mistake of explaining them as conclusions, except in case this is justified.

### **About the in-text references and the reference list in detail (based on the rules of the APA 6)**

In the case of in-text references you have to indicate either the year of publishing in brackets after the surname of the author, or the surname of the author or the year of publishing in brackets, separated by a comma as well as the page number(s). If there was more than one paper published in the same year by the same author(s), they should be distinguished by writing an a,b,c after the year both in the text and in the reference list. The coordination of the in-text references and the reference list is worth special attention. All references which appear in the text should be found in the reference list, which on the other hand should not contain any other references.

In the case of co-authors when referring to their work within the text, you should write the surname of all the authors (e.g. Sekuler and Blake, 2000), but in case you refer to a paper of more than two authors more than once, it is sufficient to refer only to the first author by name (e.g. Atkinson et al., 1995) at the second reference. Naturally, in the reference list all of the authors' names should be listed in the same order as they appear on the paper.

In case that the in-text reference is related to more than one source works at the same time, it is recommended to list the referenced papers or books based on the year of publishing or the surname of the first author and separate them with a semicolon [e.g. "Numerous excellent summaries have been published on this topic (Norman and Nielsen, 1912; Loósz and Katona, 1904; Kovács, 1917)."]

If you summarize more than one of the works of the same author, the years of publishing should be given separated by a comma: "According to some researchers (Malter, 1987, 1989, 1996)..."

In case of using a direct reference, the use of quotation marks is compulsory and in the text, beside the surname of the referenced author and the year of publishing of the work, you should give the



page number of the quoted text. For example: “The sucking rate of six-month old infants increase if the sounds which come after one another can be found as two separate phonemes in any two languages...” (Atkinson et al., 1995, p. 261).

In case of a reference from a secondary source (if the writer of the paper has not read the article, book etc., to which they refer, but has read a reference by another author) within the text, after the data of the reference you have to write in brackets in which work of which author the reference can be found (as cited in X, year). For example: “According to Liberman’s (1982, as cited in Moore, 1997) theory...” In this case, the most elegant solution is to write both works’ data in the reference list accurately, as separate items, and to indicate in brackets after the referenced work in whose work the reference can be found. E.g.:

Liberman, A. M. (1982). On finding that speech is special. *American Psychologist*, 37, 148–167.  
(as cited in Moore, 1997)

Moore, B. C. J. (1997). *An Introduction to the Psychology of Hearing*. Academic Press, San Diego.  
It is also acceptable to give only the work which appears as a source work for the secondary source reference (in the example above Moore’s book) in the reference list.

The form of the reference from a secondary source may differ from the ones above, if the exact reference cannot be found. In this case you can write „n.d.” (no date) after the author’s name in the brackets: “Liberman’s (n.d., as cited in Moore, 1997) theory ...”. In this case, you should only include the reference’s source in the reference list (in the example above Moore’s book).

You should give all of the bibliographical data very accurately in the reference list. The source works in the reference list should be listed in a precise alphabetical order according to the name of the first author. If more than one work by the same author can be found on the reference list, then they should be listed in chronological order. If you used as in-text references more than one works by the same author which were also published in the same year, then you should use an a, b, c etc. after the year of publication and list them in alphabetical order according to this.

In a Hungarian reference there is no comma after the surname of the author. If the reference is in any other language, there should be a comma after the surname. Academic degrees (e.g. Dr., PhD) should not appear in the in-text references or in the reference list.

The location of the written works should be written in *Italics*: a “location” can be a book or a journal. In a case of a lecture you do not need to give a place.

One reference should be one paragraph and the paragraph’s type should be “hanging”.

• **In the case of journals:**

The surname and the first letter(s) of the author(s) (year of publication). The title of the article. *The title of the journal, volume(number)*, the pages of the referenced article from-to. e.g.,:

Compton, W.C., Smith, M.L., Cornish, K.A. and Qualls, D.L. (1996) Factor Structure of Mental Health Measures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(2), 406–413.

• **In the case of books:**

The surname and the first letter(s) of the author(s) (year of publication). *The title of the book*. Publisher: Place of publication. e.g.,

Endler, N. S., Magnusson, D. (1976a) *Interactional psychology and personality*. Washington: Hemisphere.

• **In the case of a collection of works:**

von Bertalanffy, L. (1952) Theoretical models in biology and psychology. In Krech, D., Klein, G. S. (eds) *Theoretical models and personality theory*. 155–170. Duke University Press, Durnham.

• **In the case of on-line references:**

*On-line journals*

The surname and the first letter(s) of the author(s) (year of publication). The title of the article.

*The title of the journal, volume(number)*, retrieved: date month year. full URL or DOI.

*Online documents*

The surname and the first letter(s) of the author(s) (year of publication). The title of the article. full URL or DOI. (retrieved: date month year).

Mead, G. H. (1913) The Social Self. URL: <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Mead/socialself.htm>  
(retrieved: 9th March 2008)

• **In the case of conference or university lectures:**

The surname and the first letter(s) of the author(s) (year of holding the lecture). The title of the lecture. The precise name of the conference or event, its place, date (date month year).

Kállai J. (2010) Társas kapcsolatok kognitív idegtudományi alapmechanizmusai. Lecture at the 19th State Science Congress of the Hungarian Psychological Association. Pécs, 27th-29th May 2010.

Bányai É. (2010) Affective Psychology. Lecture from the BA in Psychology programme. Eötvös Loránd University. autumn semester 2010.

**Title page and Inner title page of the research part of the thesis**

**EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY  
INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**THESIS  
RESEARCH PART**

**<Surname First name>**

**<year>**

**EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY  
INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**<Title of the research part of the thesis>**

**<Surname First name>**

**Supervisor:**

**<Surname First name>**

**<position>**

**Budapest, <year>**