

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION, DEFENSE AND PROCESSING OF MA DISSERTATION (THESIS) AT MA PROGRAM IN APPLIED AND INTERDISCIPLINARY HISTORY «USABLE PASTS»

Approved by Resolution
of Master Program's Academic Council on August 26, 2019

These Guidelines have been developed on the basis of the *Regulations for Term Papers and Theses Prepared by Students of the Bachelor's, Specialist and Master's Level at the National Research University Higher School of Economics* approved by the HSE Academic Council, minutes No.08 dated November 28, 2014.

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS ON THE MASTER THESIS

1.1. The MA dissertation, or thesis, is a compulsory part of the curriculum of Master Program in Applied and Interdisciplinary History and is the most important component of a research degree. In the MA program in Applied and Interdisciplinary History «Usable Pasts» students have to choose between two formats of MA Thesis:

- an academic MA Thesis in the form of research paper of publishable quality;
- an applied MA Thesis in the form of a project developed to a stage suitable for practical use by a museum, the media, a tourist firm, an NGO or another professional user.

1.2. According to the Program's curriculum thesis submission falls on Module 4 during the 2nd year of study. The submission and defense of the thesis have a combined value of 24 ECTS.

1.3. MA thesis should be a work of independent research reflecting one's ability:

- formulate a problem or research question,
- undertake and complete a piece of independent research and analysis,
- collect, analyze and interpret historical sources,
- adequately use the methodology or theoretical framework relevant to the research question and historical sources,
- demonstrate knowledge of the historiography and other analytical traditions relevant for the chosen subject,
- produce an academic text with appropriate structure and idiomatic use of language,
- discuss coherently the outcome of the research, its relevance for the public, possible implications and applications for non-academic spheres (where applicable).

1.4. An MA thesis accepted to the defense at the MA program in Applied and Interdisciplinary History «Usable Pasts» should be a piece of publishable quality.

2. SELECTION AND APPROVAL OF MASTER THESIS TOPIC

2.1. The supervisor of student's MA thesis may be either a HSE staff member (from any department) or an academic from outside of HSE (for example from the organization where student had the internship). In case student has an external supervisor HSE should appoint a curator from the HSE staff. The supervisors and curators should hold PhD or Candidate of Sciences or Doctor of Sciences degrees.

2.2. Student submit the Thesis Topic and Supervisor via LMS system not later than November 15-th of the 2d academic year.

2.3. Upon the approval of the chosen topic by the academic council of the Master's program, the program manager issues an order on the topic and supervisor for each student. The Academic Council may recommend that the student makes changes to the topic. The order is prepared by December 15 of the 2^d academic year.

2.4. The student may request a supervisor change no later than 2 months before the date of submission of the final draft of MA Thesis.

2.5. The student may request a subject of the Thesis change no later than 30 days the date of submission of the final draft of MA Thesis.

3. THESIS SUPERVISION AND SUBMISSION

3.1. The student and the supervisor agree on the time schedule for thesis completion.

According to HSE regulations the main elements are:

- Thesis Research proposal (equal to the term paper) which is prepared and defended by the student during the 1st academic year¹;
- Submission of a first version by April 3 of the 2nd academic year and feedback on it by the supervisor in 1 week after submission;
- Final text submission of the thesis to the supervisor and the external reviewer by May 22;
- “Turnitin” (or relevant English-language anti-plagiarism software) text check-up by May 24 and attached to the thesis;
- Feedback from the external reviewer and the thesis supervisor no later than 5 days before the thesis defense;
- Thesis defense on the second week of June of the 2nd academic year.

3.2. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the thesis meets the standards described in Clause 1.3, and the duty of the supervisor and department to ensure that the student takes the necessary steps to meet these requirements.

4. THESIS CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

4.1. General requirements

4.1.1. MA thesis is a structured, 60 000 to 120 000 characters-long (with spaces), It is preceded by writing the MA research proposal in the first year of MA studies.

4.1.2. The MA thesis submitted to the defense at the MA program in Applied and Interdisciplinary History “Usable Pasts“ should be written in English. Words and phrases in other languages, such as ‘videlicet’ or ‘raison d'état’ should be put in italics. Titles of the bibliography entries should appear in their original language, however, titles in Cyrillic should be transliterated according to the Library of Congress style in parentheses.

4.2. Thesis content

4.2.1. The thesis must include substantial original content produced by the student, including an obligatory and profound empirical part as core of the thesis.

¹ See: GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION, DEFENCE AND PROCESSING OF TERM PAPER (MA RESEARCH PROPOSAL) AT MA PROGRAM IN APPLIED AND INTERDISCIPLINARY HISTORY «USABLE PASTS» (approved by Resolution of Master Program's Academic Council on August 29, 2017).

4.2.2. The thesis must be of the highest scientific standards of ethics and research (adequately and accurately citing all relevant sources).

4.3. Thesis structure

4.3.1. Sections of the thesis should be ordered in the following way:

- Title page
- Abstract (between 300 and 500 words), including a statement of the problem, the methodology used, and the major findings
- Acknowledgements
- Table of contents with chapter headings, section headings and sub-headings
- List of Figures, Tables or Illustrations
- Tables of measures (where applicable)
- List of Abbreviations
- Body of the thesis
- Bibliography
- Appendices, e.g. formulae, maps, diagrams, interview (where applicable)²
- Glossary of special technical words or acronyms (where applicable)

4.3.2. MA Thesis should be submitted in one single file.

4.3.3. The thesis should be computer printed on white A4 paper in Times New Roman 12pt, 1.5 space intervals, either single-sided or double-sided. Single spacing should be used for block quotations, footnotes, and bibliography. Margins should be 2.5 cm on all sides. Paragraphs should be indented, or an empty line left between paragraphs. Pages should be numbered at the bottom in the centre using Arabic numerals starting with the first page of the first page of the introduction. Each chapter should start on a new page.

4.3.4. The title page should have the full title of the thesis, the student's name, the department and name of the university, the supervisor's name, the place of submission, and the year of submission.

4.3.5. The thesis should be structured into logical chapters with an introduction and a conclusion, which do not count as chapters.

4.3.6. The bibliographic citations are provided in the footnotes, supplemented by a final bibliography. The final bibliography must include all works cited in the footnotes throughout the text.

4.3.7. The quotation style is one and the same for both research proposals and MA theses submitted to the defense at the MA program in Applied and Interdisciplinary History «Usable Pasts». It is the same for the footnotes and the final bibliography and should be made according to Chicago style http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

5. GRADING, RE-EXAMINATION AND APPEAL

5.1. According to the HSE regulations, the final grade is awarded by the State Examination Committee which consists of no less than 3 members of HSE faculty and 3 external members, the members should include representatives of potential employees. A Head of the Committee should not be a member of HSE faculty. The Committee considers the grade by the thesis supervisor and the opinion by an external reviewer (who must not hold a position at HSE) but are not bounded by them. The Committee also considers the quality of the oral defense of the student.

² Applied theses may have numerous non-paper appendices – PC data, software, or audio-visual material.

5.2. The student must submit a hard copy and an electronic file of the completed thesis to the thesis supervisor, the external reviewer and the Master's program manager. The report from the "Turnitin" or other relevant anti-plagiarism software should be attached.

5.3. The thesis supervisor and the external reviewer assess the final version of the thesis on a ten-point scale and also give more detailed feedback according to a review template (Appendix 4).

5.4. The final grade will be given by the dissertation committee, which will base its decision on the supervisor's grade, the reviewer's grade and the grade for defending the thesis before the committee. Special attention will be paid to the following criteria:

- Adequacy of thesis topic and the contents of the research, both of which should lay clearly in the field of comparative sociology
- Fulfillment of goals and objectives of the research project
- Originality and novelty of the thesis
- Adherence to professional ethics and citation standards
- Level of student's personal contribution into the topic development
- Thesis formatting

5.5. In the case where the thesis is graded less than 4 on a ten-point scale the student will not get awarded ECTS points. The student is expected to resubmit the thesis in the next module. The student may resubmit the thesis only once.

5.6. The student may contest the grade for the thesis following the general appeal procedures. The student may file an appeal to the academic supervisor of the program within 3 working days upon receiving the grades with detailed grounds for appeal. The appeal committee will make a decision within 3 working days.

6. FORMATTING OF THE MA THESIS

Text format

1. Headings of sections

- Table of Contents, List of Abbreviations, Introduction, Conclusion, References, Appendices, and Annexes.
- Times New Roman 16, bold, aligned left, not numbered.
- Headings of chapters: Times New Roman 16, bold, aligned left, numbered (1, 2, etc.).

2. Headings of sub-chapters and sub-sub-chapters

- Times new Roman 14, bold, aligned left, numbered (1.1, 1.1.1, 1.2, etc.).

3. Paragraphs

- Each paragraph should be from 10 to 15 lines (on average). There should be no spacing between a paragraph and the following one.

4. Main text:

- Times new Roman 12, spaced 1.5

Block quotations

- Times New Roman 11, single-spaced, justified, each line indented left.

5. Footnotes

- Times New Roman 11, single-spaced, aligned left, no first line indentation.

6. Page numbers

- All the pages of the file should be counted and listed.

7. Margins

- Left – 3 cm, right – 1 cm.
- Bottom, top – 2 cm.

8. Bibliography

- Entries should be categorized and alphabetized.
- Times New Roman 12, aligned left, single-spaced with spacing between each entry and the next one.
- No first line indentation, no numbering, no bullet points.

9. Page numbering

- Page numbers start from the Table of Contents (page 2) and end with the Bibliography.
- Appear at the bottom of the page, centered.

10. Page break between sections

- Page break between sections, e.g. between the Table of Contents and the List of Abbreviations (if included), between the List of Abbreviations, list of tables, list of figures and Introduction, between the Introduction and the Main Body, between the Main body and the Conclusion, between the Conclusion and the Bibliography, between the Bibliography and the Appendixes or Annexes (if included).
- Page break at the end of each chapter (i.e. start each chapter on a new page) is required.

7. MASTER THESIS PAPER STORAGE

The Study Office of the Master's program stores copies of MA Thesis in the form of hard copies and electronic file

