

**Санкт-Петербургский филиал  
Федеральное государственное автономное образовательное учреждение  
высшего образования "Национальный исследовательский университет  
"Высшая школа экономики"**

Факультет  
Санкт-Петербургская школа социальных наук и востоковедения

**Правила подготовки  
выпускной квалификационной работы  
студентов, обучающихся на образовательной программе магистратуры  
по направлению 58.04.01 «Востоковедение и африканистика»**

Согласована менеджером ОП «Государство, общество и экономическое развитие  
в современной Азии»  
10 октября 2018 г.

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Утверждена Академическим советом образовательной программы  
«12» октября 2018 г., № протокола \_\_\_\_\_

Академический руководитель ОП «Государство, общество и экономическое  
развитие в современной Азии»

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Утверждены советом факультета Санкт-Петербургская школа социальных наук  
и востоковедения НИУ ВШЭ, протокол № 01/2018-2019 от 30 октября 2018 года

Санкт-Петербург – 2018

**GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION, DEFENSE AND PROCESSING OF MA DISSERTATION (THESIS) AT MA PROGRAM IN STATE, SOCIETY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MODERN ASIA**

Approved by Resolution  
of Master Program's Academic Council on October 12, 2018

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 State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia and is the most important component of a research degree. In the MA program State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia students have to prepare MA Thesis in the form of research paper of publishable quality.
- 1.2. According to the Program's curriculum thesis submission falls on Module 4 during the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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:
  - identify a problem and research question,
  - design and successfully complete independent research project,
  - demonstrate knowledge of the relevant literature and ability to identify a conceptual framework for the research,
  - adequately apply research methods and techniques relevant to the research question and empirical data,
  - produce an academic language text with appropriate structure,
  - present and discuss the research outcomes, their relevance for the advancement in the scholarship, and possible implications for non-academic spheres (where applicable).
- 1.4. An MA thesis accepted to the defense at the MA program State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia 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. One supervisor may supervise up to five term papers per academic year.
- 2.2. The student must be the only one author of the thesis.
- 2.3. The student should attend a consultation with the program director during the Module 1 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of study, discussing possible research topics and thesis supervisors. Master thesis topics must be submitted by student to study office by November, 25.
- 2.4. Both the student and the supervisor should sign the application form. The student can provide a scanned copy of the form to the MA program manager in case the student is participating in the student mobility at the time the form is to be submitted.
- 2.5. 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<sup>nd</sup> academic year.

2.6. The student may file a claim for topic or supervisor change (Appendix 1 and 2) no later than thirty days before 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 which is prepared by the student during the 1st module of the 2nd academic year<sup>1</sup>;
- Submission of a first draft by April 6 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> academic year and feedback on it by the supervisor in 2 weeks after submission;
- Final text submission of the thesis to the supervisor and the external reviewer by May 14;
- Anti-plagiarism text check- up by May 15 and attached to the thesis; or Antiplagiat system if the paper is written in the Russian language
- Feedback from the external reviewer and the thesis supervisor no later than 5 days before the thesis defense;
- Thesis defense in the first half of June of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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. In case a thesis fails to meet the requirements, it may be returned to the author for revision and resubmission, or a failing grade can be awarded.

### **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 State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia should be written in Russian or 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.

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
- Table of contents with chapter headings, section headings and sub-headings
- List of Figures, Tables or Illustrations
- List of Abbreviations (where applicable)
- Body of the thesis
- Bibliography
- Appendices, e.g. formulae, maps, diagrams, interviews, etc. (where applicable)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION, DEFENCE AND PROCESSING OF TERM PAPER (MA RESEARCH PROPOSAL) AT MA PROGRAM State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia (approved by Resolution of Master Program's Academic Council on October 18, 2018).

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

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 center 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 quotation style is one and the same unique for both research proposals and MA theses submitted to the defense at the MA program State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia

4.3.7. 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. The quotation style is one and the same for the footnotes and the final bibliography and should be made according to Chicago style  
[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

## 5. The format of the master's thesis

The format of the master's thesis must correspond to the requirements given in this document.

The master's thesis must be written in research format.

**Research format** – the thesis should be based on empirical research that attempts to obtain new knowledge about the structure, properties or empirical regularities of the object of the research. Relevant types of analysis include treatment effects, the testing of hypotheses and the testing of theoretical models.

The master's thesis in the research format should consist of the following parts:

- *Abstract*
- *Introduction*
- *Literature review*
- *Research design and methodology*
- *Results and findings*
- *Conclusion and discussion*
- *References*
- *Appendices, if relevant*

The **Abstract** is a short description of the objective and main results of the master's thesis. For individual project proposals, the abstract should be between 200-250 words. The abstract should be placed after the table of contents but before the introduction to the main text of the master's thesis.

The **Introduction** should contain a discussion of the following:

- the relevance of the research problem or research question.
- the extent to which prior studies have analysed the topic of the thesis, and what is new about the analyses in the thesis – i.e., how the thesis differs from prior research on the topic of the thesis

- the objectives and tasks of the thesis, how these objectives will be achieved and how these tasks will be performed
- whom the results of the thesis could be relevant for
- the structure of the thesis
- the methods that will be used
- the object and subject of the research – theses in a project-analytical format
- the practical significance (project-analytical format) or scientific contribution (research format) of the thesis

After the Introduction, the focus, content and practical significance or scientific contribution of the thesis relative to prior studies should be clear.

The *structure of the thesis* should contain an outline of all of the sections in the document, indicate the number of pages in the thesis (without appendices) and specify the number of sources cited in the document.

The main part of the master's thesis should contain a description of the state of the topic that the thesis focuses on – i.e., what is known about this topic, and what is not known. In general, the main part consists of two or three sections.

For both types of formats of the master's thesis (research format or project-analytical format), the main part of the thesis should have a theoretical foundation.

In the **Theoretical foundation**, students should demonstrate the ability to do the following:

- to summarise and analyse in a critical manner theory relevant for the issue the thesis focuses on;
- to identify the most important theoretical issues relevant for the topic of the thesis;
- to use theory to develop a foundation for the empirical analyses in the thesis

In most cases, the master's thesis focuses on a narrow research question. Hence, the overview of prior literature is based only on the relevant research question, not on the entire theme in general. Students should not discuss prior research that has only an indirect relationship to the research question.

The literature review should be based on only the most relevant and fundamental prior research. In the literature review, references to textbooks are not allowed. The literature review should not consist of only a list of previous studies and the primary conclusions of these studies. In the literature review, students are required to organise prior studies in a systematic way, to identify similarities and differences in these studies and justify the relevance of each prior study for the thesis. When different prior studies come to different conclusions, students should summarise these different conclusions and discuss which conclusion they agree with, using logical arguments and reasoning.

Examples of issues that should be discussed in this section include the following:

- What articles are important to highlight, and how have these articles contributed to the development of the issue the thesis focuses on?
- What issues do prior studies disagree on?
- How is it possible to develop further the research question – i.e., what issues have not been solved in full in prior research?

The theoretical foundation is the basis for the future development of the thesis – it facilitates the choice of methodology and the specific research question that the thesis will focus on.

The structure and content of the sections that follow the theoretical foundation depend on whether the thesis is in a research format or a project-analytical format:

#### **Research format**

Theses written in a research format should include the following parts:

*Statement of the research question* – in this section, students specify the research question the thesis will focus on, the objective of the thesis and the methods that will be used and the tasks that will be solved to achieve this objective.

Examples of issues that should be discussed in this section include the following:

- What is necessary to achieve the objectives or to solve the tasks of the thesis?
- Are the proposed methods sufficient to analyse the stated research question?

This section should contain the following:

- the specification and development of the hypotheses;
- the justification of the methods used in the research
- A discussion of the relationship between this section and the theoretical foundation

*Research methods* – the section where students develop the methodology used in the thesis.

This section should contain the following:

- a description of the objectives of the thesis and the research design used to achieve these objectives (the main stages and the sequence of these stages);
- a description of the data collected in each stage of the research process
- a description of the tools used in the thesis (these tools should be included in an attachment to the thesis – for example, as a Do-file from Stata)
- a description of the process used to collect data, data sources, the sample and the representativeness of the sample
- a description of the methods and procedures used to analyse data and of the statistical software used to analyse data

For theses based on hypothesis testing, in the beginning of the methodology section, students should justify and develop their hypotheses and specify the relationship between these hypotheses and the theoretical foundation of the thesis.

The objective of this section is to justify why the data and methods used in the thesis can be used to analyse the research question. Examples of issues that should be discussed in this section:

- How will the methods from the prior point be used?
- What data will be used, and why?
- How will data be gathered and analysed?

In this section, it is necessary to present a convincing argument that the data and methods are relevant for the research question and to discuss the limitations of the methods and data that are used.

*Description of the results* – the section where students present the results of their empirical analyses and interpret these results. Examples of issues that should be discussed in this section include the following:

- What are the primary results of the research?
- How could these results be interpreted?
- How are these results similar to and different than the results of prior studies?

This section should contain an objective description of these results. This section should not contain a critical analysis or a discussion of conclusions that could be drawn based on these results. Based on the results of this section, it should be clear which hypotheses are confirmed, which hypotheses are rejected, which hypotheses are statistically significant. In addition, based on the results of this section, the quality of the model should be clear. To make the results easier to interpret, it is recommended to present the results using tables, graphs, diagrams, etc.

All of the source files, including files with algorithms and code, that the results are based on should be included as an attachment – either in paper or in electronic form.

Each section of the master's thesis should conclude with conclusions that are based on logical reasoning and that lead to the next part of the thesis.

The final section is the **Conclusion**. In this section, students are required to summarise the

theoretical and empirical parts of the thesis and to discuss potential directions for future research.

The conclusion could contain the following:

- A more subjective discussion and critical analysis (relative to the discussion in the section Description of the results) of the results the empirical analyses
- The contribution of the results – e.g., to the creation of new knowledge, to helping organisations operate in a more-effective manner
- The primary limitations of the thesis, and how these limitations could be overcome in future research
- Whether using different assumptions, methodologies, etc. could lead to different results
- How the topic of this research could be further developed in future research

The total number of conclusions can differ between theses but should be between at least 3 to 5. With more than 5 conclusions, it could be useful to impose additional structure on these conclusions – for example, by placing conclusions into groups. The conclusions should contain an evaluation of the correspondence of the results with the stated goals, tasks and problem of the thesis.

The conclusion should not be a summary of the prior sections of the research.

After the conclusion, the thesis should include a **Reference list**. Each reference included in the reference list should be cited in the text. The reference list should consist of at least 25 references, including monographs, scientific articles (normative acts are not regarded as either a monograph or a scientific article). No textbook references are recommended.

The **Appendices** are included after the reference list. The objective of including material in the appendices is to avoid including in the text calculations, data, etc. that contain information that is relevant but not essential for the main research problem of the thesis. Each appendix should begin on a new page, have its own heading and be included in the table of contents for the thesis.

## **6. Defense, grading, re-defense and appeal**

6.1. In the dates provided by the Study Office, the student must download the version of Master thesis in the LMS program. During 3 days the manager of the Study Office check the percentage of original text in the master's thesis through the antiplagiarism-check program and provide the results of checking in the student's profile in LMS. The student must print the results of bachelor/master thesis check (with QR code on it). The percentage of original text in the master's thesis, should not be less than 80%. Work with signs of plagiarism will be examined at a meeting of the State Examination Commission. If plagiarism is confirmed, the thesis will receive an evaluation of 'Unsatisfactory', regardless of which section of the thesis the plagiarism appears in. 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.

6.2. 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.

6.3. Review of the supervisor (Appendix 3). After receiving the final version of the master's thesis, the supervisor prepares a written report of the thesis. This report contains an assessment of the overall quality of the thesis, the positive aspects of the thesis and the negative aspects of the thesis that the supervisor provided comments on but that the student did not fix. The report contains also a discussion of to what extent the student complied with the plan of preparation for the master's thesis, the frequency of consultations, the diligence of the student in working on the thesis, the degree of the student's independence in working on the thesis, the creative approach of the student and the extent of the thesis's compliance with the requirements for the master's thesis.

In this report, the supervisor also recommends an evaluation on the thesis on a scale from 1-10. For master's theses completed in groups, this evaluation should be the same for each group member.

The recommended length of the report is 2-3 pages of written text.

The receipt of a negative review from the supervisor does not imply that the master's thesis may not be defended in the thesis defence.

Supervisor downloads its review through the LMS system and the external reviewer write it according to the review template (Appendix 4) and provide in the printed version to the Study Office.

6.4. The reviews of supervisor and external reviewer should contain an assessment of the relevance of the theme, the presence of the author's own point of view, the ability to use appropriate methods for the collection and development of information, the degree to which the conclusions and recommendations are based on the analyses in the thesis, the credibility of the results and the practical significance of the thesis. The reviews should comment on both the positive and negative aspects of the thesis; in particular the negative aspects should be related to the logic and literacy of the exposition of the material and factual mistakes. In the conclusion, reviewers should specify their point of view about the quality of the thesis and evaluate the thesis on a scale from 1-10.

Students have the right to read the review no later than three calendar days before the defence of the master's thesis. In addition to the written copy, the report may be sent via email if requested by the student.

If the student does not submit the master's thesis, with the supervisor's report, by the deadline defined in the rules of the preparation of the master's thesis, the manager of the study programme will within three calendar days transfer to the responsible secretary of the State Attestation Committee an act, signed by the academic director of the study programme, about the student's lack of submission of the master's thesis.

Students who do not submit by the defined deadline the final version of the master's thesis and the supervisor's report will not be allowed to defend their thesis. Students who are not allowed to defend their master's thesis are removed from the list of students in the university and will not receive their diploma, in accordance with the local regulations of the NRU HSE.

6.6. The defence of the master's thesis will be held at the time established by the meeting of the State Examination Committee for the study programme "State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia". It is recommended that in addition to the members of the examination committee, the student's supervisor, consultants and reviewer are present for the defence.

The rules and procedures for the defence of the master's thesis are defined in the Rules for the final state attestation of graduates of the state university Higher School of Economics. The evaluation of the final state attestation may be deemed invalid by the chairperson of the State Examination Committee if the rules or procedures for the defence of the master's thesis are violated.

The defence begins with a presentation by the student on the theme of the master's thesis. For individual master's theses, the length of this presentation should not be longer than 15 minutes. During this presentation, students are required to use multimedia tools – e.g., PowerPoint slides. Students are not allowed to read text from notecards or from the computer. Students are permitted to use graphs, tables, etc. or other material to illustrate relevant aspects of the thesis.

After the completion of the presentation, the members of the State Examination Commission will ask the student questions that have a direct connection or a close relationship with the theme of the thesis. When responding, students have the right to use their thesis.

The report from the supervisor and the review from the reviewer must be present during the defence.

After the discussion, students are required to give concluding remarks. In these remarks, students should respond to the comments of the reviewer.

After the student's concluding remarks, the defence of the master's thesis is over.

6.5. According to the HSE regulations, the final grade is made up by

1) the grade of the thesis supervisor



2) the grade by an external reviewer (who must be a professor, but must not hold a position at HSE)

3) the grade for oral defense of the thesis before the dissertation committee.

The grade of the supervisor and external reviewer are taken into account, however the final decision on the grade is made by the committee.

6.7. Evaluation criteria are given in Appendix 5.

The defence of the master's thesis is evaluated on a five-point and ten-point scale. The evaluation is entered into the protocol of the meeting of the commission that includes the chairperson and members of the State Examination Commission (SEC).

If a student receives the evaluation 'Unsatisfactory' for the defence of the master's thesis, the repeat defence will be conducted in accordance with the Rules for the final state attestation of graduates of the state university Higher School of Economics.

If a student is not present at the defence because of a valid reason, the defence will be conducted in accordance with the Rules for the final state attestation of graduates of the state university Higher School of Economics.

Based on the results of the defence of the master's thesis, the SEC will make a decision about whether to grant the student the degree in the programme "State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia" and about the issuance of a document for higher education.

In addition to evaluating the master's thesis, the SEC will make a decision about recommending for participation in competitions for scientific work and for publication in academic journals.

6.8. Appeals for the master's thesis. In accordance with point 49 of Order 636 of the Ministry of Education and Science, 'On the confirmation of the regulations for conducting the state's final attestation in educational programmes of higher education – master's programmes, specialist programmes and master's programmes,' from June 29, 2015, students who do not pass the state's final attestation have the right to submit personally, no later than the following working day after the state's final attestation, a written petition for an appeal in connection with issues related to the procedure of conducting the state's final attestation and (or) disagreement with the results of the state exam.

The composition of the appeals committee is approved by the director of the NRU HSE Saint Petersburg. The appeals committee consists of no less than five faculty members from the NRU HSE St. Petersburg who are not a member of the SEC. The secretary of the SEC is required to send to the appeals committee the protocol from the meeting of the SEC, the conclusion of the chairperson of the SEC regarding the observation of procedural issues during the state's final attestation and the master's thesis itself, the report from the supervisor, and the review.

The appeal will be considered not later than 2 working days from the day when the student submits a petition for an appeal. The decision of the appeals committee is given to the student within three working days from the day of the meeting of the appeals committee. The student is required to acknowledge with a handwritten signature receipt of the decision of the appeals committee.

When making a decision on the student's appeal, the appeals committee is governed by Order 636 of the Ministry of Education and Science, 'On the confirmation of the regulations for conducting the state's final attestation in educational programmes of higher education – master's programmes, specialist programmes and master's programmes'. The decision of the appeals committee is taken by a simple majority vote and is formalised by the protocol. In the case of a tie, the chairperson of the appeals committee has the deciding vote.

The decision of the appeals committee is given no later than the next working day to the SEC. The decision of the appeals committee is the basis for annulling the earlier decision of the state attestation examination and applying a new decision. The decision of the appeals committee is final and may not be reviewed. The repeated state attestation examination must be carried out in the presence of at least one of the members of the appeals committee no later than 7 days from the positive decision of the appeals committee, but no later than July 15.

Appeals of the results of repeated state attestation exam are not allowed.

## **7. MA thesis storage**

Master's theses that have passed the procedure of the defence are transferred in paper format to the study office. The study office transfers these theses to the university's archive for storage. The theses remain in storage for 5 years. After 5 years, the theses are destroyed.

The publication of the abstract and complete text of the master's thesis on the university's website is carried out in accordance with the local normative acts of the NRU HSE.

## **8. Formatting of the MA thesis**

### *Technical requirements*

The master's thesis should be printed on standard sheets of paper using the format A4. The four sides of the pages should have the following margins: left margin – 35 mm; right margin – not less than 10 mm; upper and lower margins – not less than 20 mm. Each page should have approximately 2,000 characters.

Line spacing:

- Main text – 1.5
- Reference list – 1.5
- Tables, figures and graphs – 1
- Footnotes – 1

Font – Times New Roman. Other fonts are not allowed.

Font size:

- Main text – 12
- Reference list – 12
- Shorter tables, figures, graphs and equations – 12
- Larger tables – not less than 10
- Footnotes – 10

Font colour – black. Drawings and graphs may be presented only in black and white.

Alignment:

- Main text, reference list, footnotes, abstract and keywords – by width
- Headings – centred

Each new section should begin on a new page. This same rule applies to the other main parts of the thesis (introduction, conclusion, reference list, appendices, etc.). Paragraphs should be indented at 1.25 cm. The main text should be aligned by width. A subsection may be started on the current page if at least five lines of text (not including the name of the subsection) from this subsection would be on the current page.

Pages should be numbered starting from the title page, but the page number should be shown starting only from the second page – i.e., on the title page, the page number should not be shown. Page numbers should be shown on bottom of each page, either in the centre or on the right, with no period.

The master's thesis begins with the title page. The title page provides information about the academic institution where the work was completed; the title of the thesis; the type of thesis; the last name, initials and group of the student; the last name, initials and academic degree and position of the scientific supervisor; and the city where and year in the work was conducted (see appendix 6).

The second page of the thesis contains the abstract. The third page contains the table of contents. The table of contents includes the name and the number of the first page of each part of the master's thesis, except for the title page. 'Page' or an equivalent designation is not included in front of the number.

To highlight certain terms or formulas, the use of either bold or italics is permitted. Underlined text (example) is not allowed. Moreover, only one of either bold or italics may be used at a time – the use of bold and italics (*example*) in one term is not allowed.

### *Structured elements of the thesis*

The headings of the structured elements of the thesis (Table of contents, Abstract, Introduction, Conclusion, Reference list) are placed in the middle of the line without a period at the end. All letters are in lowercase, except for the first letter of the first word. Bold font and italics should not be used.

The headings of paragraphs should be indented, with a period at the end. The first letter should be capitalised. Bold font and italics should not be used. If the heading consists of two sentences, these two sentences should be divided with a period.

It is recommended to start sections on a new page. It is recommended to place one ordinary line between the lines of headings, and in front of the text – three ordinary lines. The space between headings of the sections and sub-sections – two ordinary lines. Between the text and the start of the next subsection – three ordinary lines.

It is recommended to number sections and sub-sections with Arabic numbers. Sections should contain consecutive numbering within the text, except the appendices. The number of subsections includes the number of the section and the number of the subsection, divided by a period – for example, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc. A period should not be placed after the number of the subsection. Headings for the third level and below should not be used.

### *The formatting of references*

All references should be prepared in APA 6th style; in <https://www.apastyle.org/learn/index> there is a section with frequent questions on references.

### *The formatting of tables*

As a rule, material with numbers is formatted as a table. Depending on its size, a table generally is placed under the text where it is first referenced. If the size of the table exceeds the amount of space on the bottom of the page, the table may be placed on the following page. In this case, the remaining space on the bottom of the page should be filled with text.

Each table should contain a heading that reflects its content. The heading of the table should be placed above the table, should be centred and should be written with lowercase letters, except for the first letter. A period should not be placed after the end of the heading.

If the table includes information from literary material, a reference to this material should be included in the table.

Tables should contain consecutive numbering throughout the text of the master's thesis. A period should not be placed after the number of the table. The sign '#' or '№' should not be placed in front of the number of the table.

In tables, a smaller font size may be used than in the main text. Bold font and cursive may not be used in the headings of the tables or graphs or in the tables themselves. The heading of graphs and the lines of tables should begin with a capital letter. The table should indicate the unit of measurement for the numbers given in the table. The absence of a given number should be indicated with a dash. Parts of a graph or table that do not have to be filled out are marked with an 'x'.

The width of the table should correspond to the width of the main text. If the width of the table exceeds the width of the main text, the table should either be placed in landscape format or included in an appendix.

The heading of the table and all lines of the table should be included on the same page.

### *The formatting of illustrations*

As illustrations, the thesis may include drawings, diagrams, figures, etc. All illustrations are indicated with the word 'Figure'. Illustrations can be done on a computer either in black and white or in colour.

Depending on its size, an illustration may be placed in the text after the paragraph that first refers to the illustration or on the next page – or, if necessary, in the appendix. The illustration should be centred.

All illustrations should be named, with the name given under the illustration. The word 'Figure', with a capital letter, should be placed before the number, followed by a space and the number of the figure.

Figures should contain consecutive numbering throughout the text. The number should be followed by a period, a space and the name of the drawing in lowercase letters, except for the first letter. A period is not placed after the name of the figure.

Figures and tables are numbered independently of each other.

If the illustration includes information from literary material, a reference to this material should be included in the illustration.

### *Formulas*

If necessary, the master's thesis may contain formulas.

Formulas are placed either on a separate line, centred, or within the text. It is recommended to place in the text short, simple formulas. These formulas should not be numbered. More important formulas, or formulas that are longer are more complex (e.g., formulas that involve differentiation, integration, etc.), should be placed on a separate line, centred and numbered.

Formulas should be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis. A period is not placed after the number of the formulas. The number is written in Arabic numbering, in parentheses, to the right of the formula.

The meaning of symbols, coefficients, etc. in a given formula should be given in the text below the formula, if these symbols, coefficients, etc. have not been explained earlier in the text. Each symbol should be shown on a separate line, in the same sequence as in the formula.

Two lines should be placed between the end of the list of symbols, coefficients, etc. and the main text.

### *Appendix*

The appendix is the final part of the master's thesis. The appendix contains supplemental material that is helpful in understanding the main text. The appendix may contain many different types of content – e.g., extracts from reports, copies from documents, individual parts of instructions, etc. The appendix can include text tables, graphs, etc. The appendix is included after the reference list.

Each appendix should begin with a new page, with 'Appendix' indicated in the upper-right corner of the page. 'Appendix' should be followed by the number of the appendix, in Arabic numbering. Each appendix should contain a heading that describes the content of the appendix. The title of the appendix should be in lowercase letters, except for the first letter of the first word of the appendix, and should be placed on a separate line.

The appendices should contain consecutive page numbers, continuing from the page numbers in the main text and reference list. Appendices should be ordered based on the order of each appendix in the text – e.g., the appendix referred to first in the text is Appendix 1; the appendix referred to second is Appendix 2; etc.

If the appendix contains multiple connected structural elements (e.g., multiple tables, multiple illustrations), these elements should be numbered (e.g., Table 1, Table 2, etc.). Each structural element should contain its own heading and name.



*Appendix 1*  
**Template Request for Change of Master Thesis Topic**

TO:

Academic Supervisor of the Master Program  
State, Society and Economic Development in  
Modern Asia

**Liudmila S. Veselova**

FROM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(full name)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Year \_\_\_\_ student, group No. \_\_\_\_

Request

I hereby request to change the topic of my master thesis from

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

to

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Student's signature)*

“ \_\_\_\_ ” \_\_\_\_\_ 201

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Supervisor's signature)*

“ \_\_\_\_ ” \_\_\_\_\_ 201

*Appendix 2*  
**Template Request for Change of Master Thesis Supervisor**

TO:

Academic Supervisor of the Master Program  
State, Society and Economic Development in  
Modern Asia

**Liudmila S. Veselova**

FROM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(full name)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Year \_\_\_\_ student, group No. \_\_\_\_

Request

I hereby request to change the supervisor of my master thesis

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(title in English)

from \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(full name, academic degree, position, subdivision of the current supervisor)*

\_\_\_\_\_

to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(full name, academic degree, position, subdivision of the new supervisor)*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Student's signature)*

“ \_\_\_\_ ” \_\_\_\_\_ 201\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Supervisor's signature)*

“ \_\_\_\_ ” \_\_\_\_\_ 201\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(New supervisor's signature)*

“ \_\_\_\_ ” \_\_\_\_\_ 201\_

**Federal State Educational Institution of Higher Education  
'National Research University Higher School of Economics'  
Saint Petersburg School of Social Sciences and Area Studies  
and Area Studies**

**Report of the supervisor on the master's thesis**

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Last name, first name, middle name

Of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the educational programme "State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia"

On the theme: ' \_\_\_\_\_ '

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Scientific advisor

Scientific degree, position,

Faculty/department

(Place of work) \_\_\_\_\_ /signature/ \_\_\_\_\_ Initials Last name

Date



*Example of the formulation of the review by the reviewer*

Federal state educational institution of higher education National Research University 'Higher School of Economics'

**Saint Petersburg School of Social Sciences and Area Studies****Review**

of the master's thesis

Student \_\_\_\_\_,

Last name, First name, Middle name

2<sup>nd</sup> year, educational programme "Business and Politics in Modern Asia" \_\_\_\_\_  
on the theme: ' \_\_\_\_\_,

*Please characterise:*

- **The general characteristics of the thesis:** the presence of a research question; the clarity of the formulation of the problem and hypotheses of the research; the correspondence of the research question to the topic of the thesis; the discussion of the topic, the completeness of the presentation of the material on the topic; the logic of the thesis and its correspondence to the tasks of the research
- **The methodology and methods:** the appropriateness and justification of the methods; the correspondence between the methods of the thesis, the research question and the tasks of the thesis
- **The theoretical and empirical foundation of the thesis:** the thoroughness of the discussion of relevant theory; the quality of the discussion about the condition of the research question; the use of appropriate data sources.
- **Conclusions:** to what extent the conclusions and recommendations are justified based on the empirical results; the credibility of the results
- **Formatting:** the thesis's correspondence to academic standards in style and use of terminology
- **Strong points and weak points of the thesis**
- **Whether the thesis should be admitted to defence**
- **Recommended evaluation on a five-point and ten-point scale**

Reviewer

Scientific degree, position,

Place of work \_\_\_\_\_ /Signature/ \_\_\_\_\_ Initials Last name

## Appendix 5

### Assessment criteria for master's thesis

	25%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	25%
Assessment criteria <sup>3</sup>	1. Purpose, planning and problems of the thesis - choice, specification and justification of topic - definition and usage of concepts - presentation of problems and hypotheses - scientific significance, novelty value and innovativeness of the thesis	2. Familiarization with literature - knowledge of the subject area and critical use of sources	3. Research methods - choice of research approach - data collection - suitability and use of methods	4. Research results - presentation - use of tables and figures	5. Discussion and conclusions - evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the research - research ethics	6. Structure and coherence of the thesis. Linguistic form and final polishing of the text	7. Student's learning process: studying and working methods, self-direction

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<sup>3</sup> The requirements provided for the lower levels also apply to the higher levels

<p>Sufficient 4</p>	<p>The purpose of the study is unclear or the topic has been insufficiently specified. The justifications for topic choice are insufficient. The research problems or hypotheses have been insufficiently defined.</p>	<p>The literature is limited, secondary or only partly relevant. Limited use of scientific publications. Familiarization with the literature is insufficient or superficial, and source synthesis<sup>2</sup> is missing. Definition of concepts is insufficient or their use inconsistent.</p>	<p>The suitability of the research frame and methods in relation to the purpose of the study is weak. The methods have been described inaccurately. Their use is insufficient and inconsistent. *The chosen method is not wholly suitable for the purpose of the study, and the choice of method is insufficiently justified.</p>	<p>The way of presenting results is limited, and relevant results are not distinguished from irrelevant. Presentation is somewhat unclear and unorganized. There are technical limitations in e.g. tables and figures. The interpretation of results is narrow, superficial, and only answers some of the research problems.</p>	<p>Discussion and conclusions are narrow and superficial. The research problems are not exactly answered. Discussion is not in line with the results. Comparison of the results to previous research data is insufficient. Critical evaluation of the study is missing or superficial.</p>	<p>The content of the study is mainly unorganized. The text is illogical, contains lots of colloquial expressions, and is hard to read. The finishing of the work is insufficient.</p>	<p>To some extent the student lacks initiative in his/her own work.</p>
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<p>Satisfactor y 5</p>	<p>The purpose of the study is clear, but the justifications for topic choice are superficial and partly illogical. The research problems or hypotheses are intelligible.</p>	<p>The sources have been chosen in line with the topic, and some scientific publications have also been used as source materials. Critical use of sources and source synthesis<sup>2</sup> are partly insufficient. The essential concepts have been defined</p>	<p>The methods used are basic, and the volume of data is limited in relation to the purpose of the study. The description of methods is intelligible. Ethical principles have been presented superficially. *The choice of research method and research frame is mechanistic and the justifications superficial.</p>	<p>The results provide solutions to research problems, but their presentation is narrow and partly unclear and formulaic. *In a qualitative study, it is difficult to follow the relationship between interpretations and authentic material.</p>	<p>Discussion is superficial but mainly in line with the results. The results have been discussed, to some extent, in relation to previous literature. The study makes an effort to critically evaluate the results.</p>	<p>The structure of the work is illogical in places and contains partly unfinished text.</p>	<p>The student is active but not able to sufficiently utilize the supervision provided for him/her.</p>
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<p>Good 6-7</p>	<p>The purpose and problems of the study are clear and justified. The topic has been successfully specified. The study is primarily a thesis, and does not significantly contribute to the field.</p>	<p>The source material is relevant to the topic, fresh, and the majority of the sources are scientific publications. The work demonstrates some source criticism and source synthesis<sup>4</sup>. The background theory sufficiently justifies the purpose and problems of the study. The use of concepts is fluent and consistent.</p>	<p>Suitable basic methods have been chosen for the research problems, and they have been used duly. A sufficient amount of research material has been used in relation to the research task. The research process has been implemented faultlessly. Ethical issues have been considered sufficiently.</p>	<p>The results have been presented clearly but conventionally. Tables and figures are faultless and support the interpretation. *data has been comprehensively analysed. The results have been presented in an organized way and on the basis of authentic material.</p>	<p>The discussion and conclusions are anchored to the main results. Discussion may still contain some incomplete and unorganized parts. The results are presented in relation to earlier literature and theoretical viewpoints, but argumentation is mainly declaratory.</p>	<p>The structure is clear and consistent, and the research process is easy to follow. The text is written with an appropriate academic style and register.</p>	<p>The student has been active and committed to his/her work.</p>
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<sup>4</sup> Source synthesis refers to the critical evaluation of the sources used in the work, and comparing, concluding and interpreting the data in them.

<p>Very good 8</p>	<p>The research topic is significant for the discipline. The research task and problems are clear and carefully justified.</p>	<p>The source material is based on scientific and original publications and is appropriate to the theme of the research task. The use of sources demonstrates familiarity with the studied phenomenon. The background theory has a strong, logical connection to the research task and problems, as well as to the method choice and methodological solutions.</p>	<p>The reliability of the method has been evaluated on the basis of previous studies. The research methods are challenging and have been used successfully. Ethical issues have been carefully examined.</p>	<p>The results have been presented in an organized manner, faultlessly and illustratively. The essential results can be found easily. Figures and tables support the interpretation of results particularly well. *data has been carefully analysed and the synthesis is convincing. The interpretation of results is credible and easily traceable to authentic material.</p>	<p>Discussion is a harmonious, well-justified entity, in which the main results are clearly highlighted. The results are presented in relation to previous studies in a versatile manner. The strengths and weaknesses of the work have been evaluated in a critical way that develops the author's own work.</p>	<p>The structure is clear and logical, and the research process is easy to follow. The text is written with a fluent academic style and register and is easy to read.</p>	<p>The work process has been self-directed and fluent.</p>
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<p>Excellent 9-10</p>	<p>The study is interesting and significant for the discipline. The topic is exceptionally challenging. The work contributes significantly to the field.</p>	<p>The literature is essentially related to the theme of the research task and problems, and it consists of high-level scientific and original publications. Literature is also evaluated and analysed with regard to the degree of reliability in the studies and the observations made in them<sup>5</sup>.</p>	<p>The research methods are reliable and have been evaluated by the student. The methods are demanding and have been successfully mastered in the work.</p>	<p>The results have been presented in an interesting, clear and organized way. The text and figures/tables constitute a harmonious entity, which allows a more profound interpretation.</p>	<p>Discussion, as well as the entire work, reflects scientific thought and a critical insight into the matter. The strengths and weaknesses of the study have been discussed from the perspective of scientific criteria.</p>	<p>Language in the study is of a high quality.</p>	<p>The student has demonstrated initiative in his/her work, and the process represents a critical and personal view of developing one's own scientific working.</p>
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### Assessment criteria for presentation evaluation

Category	Scoring Criteria	Total Points	Score
Organization (1.5 points)	The type of presentation is appropriate for the topic and audience	0.5	
	Information is presented in a logical sequence.	0.5	
	Presentation appropriately cites requisite number of references	0.5	
Content (4.5 points)	Introduction is attention-getting, lays out the problem well, and establishes a framework for the rest of the presentation.	0.5	
	Technical terms are well-defined in language appropriate for the target audience.	0.5	
	Presentation contains accurate information	1	
	Material included is relevant to the overall message/purpose	1	
	Appropriate amount of material is prepared, and points made reflect well their relative importance.	1	
	There is an obvious conclusion summarizing the presentation.	0.5	
Presentation (4 points)	Speaker maintains good eye contact with the audience and is appropriately animated (e.g., gestures, moving around, etc.).	0.5	
	Speaker uses a clear, audible voice	0.5	
	Delivery is poised, controlled, and smooth.	0.5	
	Good language skills and pronunciation are used.	0.5	
	Visual aids are well prepared, informative, effective, and not distracting.	0.5	
	Length of presentation is within the assigned time limits.	0.5	
	Information was well communicated.	1	
<b>Score</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>10</b>	



FEDERAL STATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY  
HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

**Saint Petersburg School of Social Sciences and Area Studies**

Last name First name Middle name of the author

**NAME OF THE TOPIC OF THE MASTER'S THESIS**

Master's thesis

In the field 58.04.01 Asian and African Studies

Educational programme "State, Society and Economic Development in Modern Asia"

Reviewer  
Position, degree  
Initials Last name

Supervisor  
Position, degree  
Initials Last name

Consultant  
Position, degree  
Initials last name