

The Government of the Russian Federation
Federal State Autonomous Institution for Higher Professional Education
National Research University Higher School of Economics
St. Petersburg Branch
St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management

**GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION, DEFENSE AND PROCESSING OF MASTER
DISSERTATION
MASTER'S PROGRAMME "ARTS AND CULTURE MANAGEMENT"**

Area of Studies: 38.04.02 "Management"

Level: masters

Approved by the Academic Council of Master's programme "Arts and Culture Management"

Academic Supervisor: Trabskaya J. _____ " ____ " _____ 20__

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GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION, DEFENSE AND PROCESSING OF MASTER DISSERTATION AT MASTER'S PROGRAMME "MASTER IN ARTS AND CULTURE MANAGEMENT"	3
1. GENERAL PROVISIONS	3
2. DISSERTATION STRUCTURE, CONTENT AND FORMAT.....	4
3. DISSERTATIONS WRITTEN IN GROUPS.....	6
4. SELECTION AND APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION TOPICS.....	6
5. DISSERTATION SUPERVISION	7
6. DISSERTATION PREPARATION RESTRICTIONS.....	8
7. DISSERTATION SUBMISSION	8
8. DISSERTATION REVIEW AND DEFENSE	8
9. GRADING, RE-EXAMINATION AND APPEAL	9
10. DISSERTATION STORAGE.....	10
Appendix A. Template for a Title List.....	11
Appendix B. Template Request for Approval of Dissertation Topic and Supervisor	12
Appendix C. The Provisional Timing for the Selection and Approval of the Dissertation Topic.....	13
Appendix D. Supervisor's Review Template	14
Appendix E. Template Request for Change of Dissertation Topic.....	15
Appendix F. Template Request for Change of Dissertation Supervisor.....	16
Appendix G. Reviewer's Report Template	17
Appendix H. Assessment Criteria for the Oral Defense.....	18

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION, DEFENSE AND PROCESSING OF MASTER DISSERTATION AT MASTER'S PROGRAMME "MASTER IN ARTS AND CULTURE MANAGEMENT"

DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Academic Supervisor of a master's programme is the HSE academic staff member appointed by the Rector's directive and responsible for development, implementation and quality of the given degree programme.

Academic Council of a degree programme is the agency responsible for academic supervision of the given degree programme.

FSC – final state certification

Department/school is a structural unit of an HSE faculty or other subdivision delivering bachelor's, master's and specialist level programmes and employing faculty members.

Degree programme is a set of core educational characteristics (volume, scope, expected outcomes), administrative and teaching provisions and assessment methods presented as a curriculum, academic calendar, syllabuses for courses and other components, as well as assessment and teaching materials

HSE ES – educational standards for higher education set forth by HSE

Guidelines (for term paper/thesis preparation) are standards and recommendations for preparation and evaluation of term papers/theses.

Employer is a party to the educational process, an individual or a legal entity incentivized for student training on the given degree programme to subsequently hire its alumni.

Students are individuals studying on bachelors', specialist and master's level programmes.

University, HSE is the federal state autonomous educational institution for higher professional education National Research University Higher School of Economics.

Study Office is a curriculum support unit or programme coordinator responsible for administrative support of processes related to studying on the given degree programme¹.

Faculty is any University subdivision implementing bachelor's, master's and specialist level programmes (faculty, school, institute).

HE FSES – federal state educational standards of higher education

LMS (Learning Management System) is a platform for online support of the educational process at HSE.

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1. 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.03 dated February 26, 2016.

1.1. The master dissertation, or thesis, is a compulsory part of the curriculum is the most important component of a research degree.

1.1. Master dissertation is prepared and defended during the 2nd academic year.

¹ Emails of the heads of programme offices (programme coordinators) are stated on programme webpages on the HSE corporate portal (website).

1.2. According to the Program's curriculum dissertation submission falls in Quarter 4 during the 2nd year of study. According to the HSE regulations master dissertation is reviewed by an external reviewer. Master dissertations are defended at the Defense Board.

1.3. The dissertation is completed in English or Russian. It could be prepared individually or in small groups (up to 2 students).

2. DISSERTATION STRUCTURE, CONTENT AND FORMAT

2.1. The master dissertation is a structured paper. The dissertation may be completed in one of the following formats:

2.1.1. **Research-based (monography)** - the dissertation 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 (if any), and the testing of theoretical models. The dissertation is focused on achieving various types of objectives.

2.1.2. **Research-based (scientific paper)** – the paper should be target to the particular scientific journal and developed according to the requirements of the journal. Dissertation developed in form of scientific paper should include cover letter with indication of target journal title, a link to its official website and journal requirements. The journal should not be included in the blacklist determined by the HSE University. The paper should be submitted to the journal 30 days before the defence.

2.1.3. **Project-based** - developing a solution to a practical problem based on a comprehensive analysis of this problem. Project-based paper contains the analysis of a problematic situation, developing a set of tools that can be used to solve the challenges in this situation and making recommendations for how to use these tools to solve these challenges. With this format, the dissertation is required to have practical significance. This format may be used only if the project the dissertation is based on is proposed by someone from business, non-profit organisations or experts of the field and is approved by both the student's academic supervisor of the programme.

2.2. The master dissertation (monography or project-based) should be, as a rule, 60 000 to 80 000 characters in length (including spaces) for an individual dissertation and 80 000 to 120 000 characters for a group dissertation. The length of master dissertation in scientific paper format should be based on target journal requirements. It should demonstrate the student's ability to conduct research, individually, or in small groups (up to two students). The letter includes student's ability to:

- formulate a problem or research question,
- undertake and complete a piece of independent research and analysis,
- collect, analyze and interpret data,
- adequately use the methodology or theoretical framework relevant to the research question and the body of academic research in the chosen field,
- produce an academic text with appropriate structure and idiomatic use of language,

- discuss coherently the outcome of the research, its relevance for the practical implications.

2.3. The structure of the dissertation's content must include the following main sections:

Monography or scientific paper

- **title page** with student name(s), title of the research project, and name of research supervisor (the template is provided in Appendix A)
- **abstract** of the paper and the list of **key words** (up to 6 words or phrases). As a rule, the abstract has a length between 150 and 300 words and contains several parts: purpose, design/methodology/approach, findings, originality/value, practical value;
- **introduction** containing the research goal and objectives, arguments for the relevance of the research, a brief description of its distinctive features, the structure of the paper;
- **literature review**;
- **methodology**;
- provisional methods of **data sampling and analyses**;
- **results** and their **discussion**;
- **conclusion**: the contribution of the paper to the theory and its possible practical implications; limitations of the study and the ways of their overcoming in the future research;
- **references** (in GOST (ГОСТ), Harvard, APA style or style, which was specified in the author's guideline of the journal).
- appendices (if necessary).

Project format

- **title page** with student name(s), title of the project, and name of research supervisor (the template is provided in Appendix A)
- **abstract** of the paper and the list of key words (up to 6 words or phrases). As a rule, the abstract has a length between 150 and 300 words;
- **introduction** containing the research goal and objectives, arguments for the relevance of the research, a brief description of its practical significance, the structure of the paper;
- **literature review**;
- **analysis of the problem**;
- **tools for solving the problem**;
- **results** and their **discussion**;
- **recommendation** proposed by the student(s);
- **conclusion**: practical implications of the term paper results; limitations of the study and the ways of their overcoming in the future research;
- **references** (in GOST (ГОСТ), Harvard or APA style).
- appendices (if necessary).

2.4. As a rule, the text of the dissertation is structured according to the sections detailed in 2.3 above. Each part should have an appropriate heading. All headings should use initial capitals only.

2.5. The dissertation should be computer printed on white A4 paper in Times New Roman 12pt, 1.5 space intervals, single-sided. Single spacing should be used for footnotes and references.

Margins should be 2.5 cm on all sides. Paragraphs should be indented. Pages should be numbered at the bottom in the center using Arabic numerals starting with the first page of the introduction.

Format your paper, using bold and italics as appropriate. Do not use any formatted styles other than bullets or numbers where required for lists. The text may contain appropriate figures and tables.

2.6. Figures should be numbered consecutively throughout the paper and not numbered according to the section in which they appear. Figure captions should appear below the figure.

2.7. Tables should be set as “Autofit to contents” and centered on the page. If your table runs over two pages, please ensure that headings are also carried over. Do not allow rows to split across pages.

2.8. Use footnotes if necessary (Times New Roman 11 pt), endnotes are not permitted.

3. DISSERTATIONS WRITTEN IN GROUPS

3.1. A dissertation may be developed by a group of students (two students). In this case, it is assumed that the dissertation solves more significant problems than an individual paper. For example, multiple hypotheses can be tested, several models developed, the larger dataset collected. It is important to remember about the internal logic of the whole research if several students implement a dissertation together.

3.2. If a dissertation is written by a group, its length can exceed the upper limit. As a rule, its length is between 80,000 and 120,000 characters, including spaces.

3.3. The contribution of each member of the group should be clearly stated in the introduction to the dissertation. If students are working together at all the sections and tasks of the dissertation and their contribution cannot be evaluated separately, it also should be stated in the introduction.

4. SELECTION AND APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION TOPICS

4.1. The lecturers develop a provisional list of dissertation topics or research areas to be subsequently finalized by Academic Supervisor and Academic Council of the Programme. Potential employers can also propose topics and research areas. Academic Council also can consider topics that are proposed by students. The Programme Academic Supervisor can exclude proposed topics from the list if they are not relevant to the level or area of the degree programme.

4.2. The lecturers and employers whose topics were excluded by the Academic Council may discuss the reasons for such exclusion with the Academic Supervisor within three business days from receiving the notification. Following such discussions, the Academic Supervisor may return some topics on the list.

4.3. The faculty places the provisional topics in the LMS directory. Students also may place their proposals in the LMS directory. The study office coordinates these activities and makes the list of dissertation topics available for Academic Supervisor. Topics of dissertation can be proposed to students via e-mail.

4.4. Students may choose any member of the faculty of the Programme as their dissertation supervisor, subject to this member’s consent. The choice of dissertation supervisor should be approved by Academic Supervisor of the Programme.

4.5. Dissertation topics are assigned to students upon their personal requests addressed to the Academic Supervisor of the Programme. Requests must be signed by the respective dissertation supervisors, Academic Supervisor and submitted to the Study Office.

Dissertation topics must be stated in the request. A template request for approval of the dissertation topic is provided in Appendix C.

If a dissertation is completed in group, all students that form a group should sign the request, thus confirming their intention to work in group.

4.6. Requests signed by the respective supervisors must be submitted to the Programme Office no later than November 20 of the current academic year.

4.7. The Programme Academic Supervisors and Council approves topics and supervisors to the corresponding students within five business days.

4.8. The Study Office must notify students and their supervisors if their dissertation topic was declined within one business day from such decision.

4.9. Students may submit a new request for a dissertation topic to the Study Office. The Academic Supervisor must approve the final list of topics no later than November 25. The list of supervisors must be approved by Academic Supervisor.

4.10. The students should submit a printed and filled in Dissertation Topic and Supervisor application form (Appendix B) to the Study Office by November 25 (the 2nd academic year). The form should indicate the dissertation's title and be signed by the supervisor.

4.11. Upon the approval of the chosen topic by the Academic Supervisor of the Master's program, the program manager issues an order on the topic for each student. The order is prepared no later than December 15 of the current academic year. The information on timing is presented in Appendix C.

5. DISSERTATION SUPERVISION

5.1. Dissertation supervisors appointed by the order are responsible for direct supervision of dissertation preparation.

5.2. Dissertation supervisors have the following duties:

- Advise students on shaping the final topic of their dissertation, drafting dissertation outline, preparation schedule, and selecting academic literature and resources;
- Help students choose appropriate research methodology;
- Monitor the progress of dissertation preparation against the established outline and schedule;
- Notify the Programme Academic Supervisor and Study Office if students are behind the schedule;
- Provide students with informed recommendations on the content of their dissertations;

5.3. Dissertation supervisors are entitled to

- Select a suitable mode of interaction with students, in particular, agree on the dissertation preparation schedule and the frequency of face-to-face meetings or other communications;
- Request that students prepare and present a brief summary of the received recommendations and further steps in dissertation preparation after each face-to-face meeting;
- Request that students pay close attention to the received recommendations and come to meetings well-prepared;
- Take into account compliance with the preparation schedule when grading student dissertations.

5.4. Supervisors assess quality of dissertation against fixed requirements. They must fill in a special form (see Appendix D) where they put their review for the dissertation.

5.5. Supervisors must draw up an official memorandum to notify the Programme Academic Supervisor and the Dean of plagiarism and/or any other violations of the academic code of ethics committed by students.

5.6. Requests to change the dissertation topic (Appendix E), signed by the supervisor, and requests to change the dissertation supervisor (Appendix F), signed by both supervisors and addressed to the Programme Academic Supervisor, may be submitted to the Study Office no later than 3 month before the date of submission of the final draft of the dissertation.

6. DISSERTATION PREPARATION RESTRICTIONS

6.1. Students must comply with the dissertation preparation schedule developed and finalized together with their supervisors.

6.2. Dissertations are subject to external review. The reviewers are assigned by the Academic Council no later than 45 days before the date of submission of the final draft of the dissertation. The reviewer is giving a grade according to the HSE system of grading.

6.3. Failure to complete a dissertation by the fixed deadline constitutes academic failure that can only be remedied through the formal procedures established at HSE.

7. DISSERTATION SUBMISSION

7.1. Students must upload a .doc, .docx or .pdf file with the final text of their dissertation through their personal profiles in the LMS no later than 14 days before the officially scheduled day of defense. “Антиплагиат” or “Turnitin” (or relevant English/Russian-language anti-plagiarism software, approved by Study Office) text check-up is attached to the dissertation.

7.2. Submission deadlines for dissertations that are subject to defense cannot be extended. Failure to complete a dissertation by the fixed deadline (as per Clause 6.1) constitutes academic failure.

7.3. Students must submit a draft of their dissertation to their supervisors ten days before the upload date.

8. DISSERTATION REVIEW AND DEFENSE

8.1. Dissertation defense takes place each academic year during the period June 1-10.

8.2. Defense dates and Board composition are set by the Programme Academic Supervisor and approved by the HSE rector. Board composition is approved by Academic council.

8.3. Defense is held in the presence of the Defense Board of at least three Programme members, and at least three external members representing employers. The Chair is an external member.

8.4. The Study Office must provide the Board with at least one paper copy of each student’s dissertation and of the review written by the supervisor. The Board is provided with

the version that had been uploaded through the student account in the LMS. The copy of the external review is also given to the Board.

8.5. The defense is a public event open to faculty members of other faculties of HSE and the representatives of other universities or potential employers. The Study Office must publish defense dates on the programme website at least 30 days in advance.

8.6. The defense is organized in a following way: student(s)' presentation of the research results (up to 20 minutes); answers at the Board's questions (up to 10 minutes), comments on external reviewer's notes and final remarks (up to 5 minutes); in total the defense lasts up to 35 minutes.

If a dissertation is completed by a group of students, the time for their presentation can be extended (up to 40 minutes), as also the time for the discussion (up to 20 minutes).

8.7. Results of a dissertation defense are reflected in the Board minutes. Chair of the Board is responsible for the Board's operation and minutes' preparation.

8.8. If students miss their dissertation defense for a valid reason supported by documentary evidence, they will be allowed to defend their dissertation on a different date within the specially designated period (not later than 6 months since the appointed date of the defense).

8.9. Missing defense without a valid reason supported by documentary evidence is counted as academic failure.

8.10. Students whose supervisor or reviewer gave their dissertation a fail grade are allowed to proceed to the defense.

8.11. Each dissertation must go through the Turnitin (Anti-plagiarism) system pursuant to the *Procedures for Using Antiplagiat System for Collection and Checks of Academic Papers at HSE*. Dissertation supervisors will be notified of the outcome of such checks and must take them into account when grading the dissertations. Dissertation supervisors grade the version that was uploaded through the student account in the LMS.

8.12. If plagiarism is discovered in a dissertation, it is handled in accordance with the *Procedures for Applying Disciplinary Measures for the Violation of Academic Standards for Student Papers at HSE*.

9. GRADING, RE-EXAMINATION AND APPEAL

9.1. The supervisor makes the conclusion on the overall quality of the dissertation and its eligibility for the defense and the master's degree. The supervisor also gives detailed feedback according to the approved form (Appendix D).

9.2. The dissertation's reviewer assesses the dissertation on a ten-point scale. In the review, the dissertation is assessed according the list of criteria that is provided in the approved form (Appendix G).

9.3. The oral defense is assessed according the list of criteria provided in Appendix H.

9.4. If a dissertation is performed by a group of students, the grades within the group can differ. If students state clearly their contribution to the dissertation, all three grades may differ, if the authorship is unseparated, the grade for the defense may differ depending on the students' presentation and their answers at the questions from the Board.

9.5. The student may contest the grades for the defense following the general appeal procedures. The student may file an appeal to the appeal committee within 3 working days

upon receiving the grades with detailed grounds for appeal. The will make a decision within 3 working days.

10. DISSERTATION STORAGE

The Study Office stores copies of dissertations for 2 years (either in the form of hard copies or electronic files)

Appendix A. **Template for a Title List**

The Government of the Russian Federation

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St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management

AUTHOR'S NAME(S)²

DISSERTATION TITLE

Master's dissertation

Area of studies 38.04.02 "Management"

Master Programme "Arts and Culture Management"

Research Supervisor
academic degree, position, department

Name

Saint Petersburg - 2020

² Full name

Appendix B. Template Request for Approval of Dissertation Topic and Supervisor

TO:
Academic Supervisor of the
Master's Programme
"Arts and Culture Management"
Professor J. Trabskaya
(full name)

FROM:

(full name(s))

Year ____ student, group No. ____

Request

I (we) hereby request to approve the following topic of my dissertation:

(title in Russian)

(title in English)

for Year _____, and to
appoint _____

(full name, academic degree, position, subdivision)

as my dissertation supervisor.

(Student's signature)

“ ____ ” _____ 202_

(Supervisor's signature)

“ ____ ” _____ 202_

Appendix C. The Provisional Timing for the Selection and Approval of the Dissertation Topic

No	Stage	Responsible entities	Period
1.	Collection of topic proposals	Departments, research centres and Programme Office	October, 10
2.	Approval of topics by the Academic Council and Academic Supervisor	Academic Supervisor, Academic Council and Programme Office	October, 14
3.	Informing the initiators on approved and declined topics	Programme Office	One working day upon receiving the Academic Council's decision
4.	Topic changing and finalizing	Departments, Academic Supervisor, Academic Council and Programme Office	Three working days upon information distribution.
5.	Information on topics published in LMS	Programme Office	Before October, 25
6.	Collection of topic proposals from potential employers and students	Departments and Programme Office	Before November, 20
7.	Approval of initiated topics by Academic Supervisor and Academic Council	Academic Supervisor, Academic Council and Programme Office	Before November, 20
8.	Selection of topics by students	Programme Office	Before November, 20
9.	Issuing of the order	Director, Dean, Academic Director, Programme Office	Before December, 15
10.	Supervision change	Director, Dean, Academic Director and Programme Office	Not later than 2 month before the final version submission
11.	Topic change	Director, Dean, Academic Director and Programme Office	Not later than 1 month before the final version submission

Appendix D. Supervisor's Review Template

**Federal State Autonomous Institution for Higher Education
National Research University Higher School of Economics**

St. Petersburg Branch

St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management

Supervisor Review of the Dissertation

prepared by

(student's full name)

student of Master's Programme "Arts and Culture Management", group _____
Dissertation topic:

#	Evaluation criteria	Detailed feedback
1.	The quality of the justification of the relevance of the research question	
2.	The quality of the literature review	
4.	The contribution to the existing knowledge and/or practice	
5.	The correspondence between the research process and the research question	
6.	The relevance of collected data	
7.	The completeness of the description of the results	
8.	The quality and completeness of the conclusions	
9.	The quality of the layout	

Final conclusion

The dissertation of... meets/does not meet the requirements of the Programme, thus the author can be given the master's degree in the area of studies 38.04.02 "Management".

Dissertation Supervisor

(signature) (full name, academic degree, position, subdivision)

“ ” _____ 202_

Appendix E. Template Request for Change of Dissertation Topic

TO:
Academic Supervisor of the
Master’s Programme
“Arts and Culture Management”
Professor J. Trabskaya
(full name)

FROM:

(full name)

Year ____ student, group No. ____

Request

I hereby request to change the topic of my dissertation from

(title in Russian)

(title in English)

to

(title in Russian)

(title in English)

(Student’s signature)

“ ____ ” _____ 202_

(Supervisor’s signature)

“ ____ ” _____ 202_

Appendix F. Template Request for Change of Dissertation Supervisor

TO:
Academic Supervisor of the
Master's Programme
"Arts and Culture Management"
Professor J. Trabskaya
(full name)

FROM:

(full name)

Year ____ student, group No. ____

Request

I hereby request to change the supervisor of my dissertation

(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)
" ____ " _____ 202_

(Supervisor's signature)
" ____ " _____ 202_

(New supervisor's signature)
" ____ " _____ 202_

Appendix G. Reviewer's Report Template

Federal State Autonomous Institution for Higher Education
National Research University Higher School of Economics

St. Petersburg Branch

St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management

Referee's Review of the Dissertation

prepared by _____,
(*student's full name*)

student of Master's Programme "Arts and Culture Management", group _____
Dissertation topic:

Criteria	Comments	Grade
Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis		
Structure and logic of the text flow		
Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives		
Quality of data collection and description		
Quality of the research to set objectives.		
Practical value of the research		
Quality of thesis layout		

Each item above is evaluated on the 10-grade scale: 0-3 – failed, 4-5 – satisfactory, 6-7 – good, 8-10 – excellent.

Additional comments:

Final conclusion and grade

Master dissertation of meets the requirements of the Master in the Programme, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves a "...” grade, thus the author can be given the master's degree in the area of studies 38.04.02 "Management".

Date

Signature

Job position

Stamp

Appendix H. Assessment Criteria for the Oral Defense

<i>i</i>	Component	<i>Ki</i>	LO	Criteria
1	Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis	0.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is able to reveal and formulate topical problems in arts and culture management ▪ Formulates aims, objectives, research problem ▪ Can justify the choice of the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis; ▪ originality of the topic and the extent to which it was covered; ▪ alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.
2	Literature review	0.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is able to find relevant literature ▪ Can make a critical review of the body of academic papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of references ▪ Relevance of references ▪ Quality of critical review
3	Quality of data collection and description	0.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is able to collect data ▪ Makes the search of data ▪ Creates and validates samples ▪ Justifies methods of data collection ▪ Processes the data according to the research objectives 	Quality of selecting research tools and methods; data validity adequacy; adequacy of used data for chosen research tools and methods.
4	Quality of the methodology	0.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is able to pose hypotheses, can choose methods and approaches, ▪ Is able to identify practical problems ▪ Uses appropriate and relevant methods of analysis, modeling and data empirical testing ▪ Makes appropriate conclusions and discusses them Proposes valuable solutions for practical problems 	Independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives; the extent to which the student contributed to selecting and justifying the research model, developing methodology/approach to set objectives developing valuable solution of practical problems review from a company(organisation) for which the project is developed
6	Report and presentation of results	0.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reports clearly ▪ Presents results of the research in an appropriate manner ▪ Discusses the results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The quality of the presentation and layout ▪ The coverage of main issues ▪ The structure of the presentation
7	Answers on the questions	0.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gives clear and profound answers ▪ Argues the main positions of the dissertation ▪ Comments the referee's remarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clearness and profoundness of answers ▪ Full coverage of all critical remarks