# Санкт-Петербургский филиал

**Федеральное государственное автономное образовательное учреждение высшего образования**

# «Национальный исследовательский университет Высшая школа экономики»

Факультет

Санкт-Петербургская школа социальных наук

# Методические рекомендации по подготовке курсовой работы

**студентов, обучающихся на образовательной программе магистратуры**

# «Сравнительная политика Евразии» по направлению 41.04.04 «Политология»

Согласованы

Менеджер ОП «Сравнительная политика Евразии»

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2024 г.

Утверждены

Академическим Советом ОП «Сравнительная политика Евразии»

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Санкт-Петербург – 2024

# Guidelines for Preparation and Defence of Term Papers Written by Students of the MA Programme “Comparative Politics of Eurasia”

**St. Petersburg School of Social Sciences**

**Higher School of Economics (St. Petersburg)**

# Approved by the Academic Council of the MA Programme “Comparative Politics of Eurasia” on

GENERAL PROVISIONS

These Guidelines for Preparation and Defence of MA Theses (hereinafter, the Guidelines) have been prepared in line with the Regulations on Practical Training of Students under Core Bachelor’s, Specialist and Master’s Programmes at HSE University (hereinafter, the Regulations), approved by the HSE University Academic Council (Minutes No. 6, dated June 17, 2021). As per the Regulations, these Guidelines shall be observed by the faculty and students of the “Comparative Politics of Eurasia” programme (hereinafter, the Programme), as well as all persons involved in preparation and defence of term papers (including the Programme Study Office staff, advisors, reviewers, etc.).

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TERM PAPERS

1. Term paper and MA thesis are two separate but interrelated forms of student research work. As a general rule, MA research projects should be carried out within two academic years. In the first year, students prepare their term paper, whereas in the second year, they complete the entire research project as an MA thesis. For a comprehensive overview, please read these Guidelines together with the Guidelines for Preparation and Defence of MA Theses.
2. Term paper should be written as an extended (detailed) research proposal comprising some of the core elements of future MA thesis: statement of a research OR policy/political problem, its timeliness and research relevance, literature review, research question, theoretical and methodological framework including hypotheses (if applicable for chosen methodology), research design (research strategy, methods of data collection and analysis, research ethics), list of references. Term paper may result from the student’s research work accomplished in the framework of a research group (as part of research projects, laboratory research, study groups, etc.). If this is the case, this should be clearly stated in the preface or in the introduction of Term paper.
3. Research focus of term paper should fall within the scope of the Programme.
4. Term paper is an independent research work and should be written individually.
5. Term paper should be written in English.

DEADLINES

1. Deadlines for completing the main stages of the topic selection and approval, as well as the preparation and defence of the Term paper, are specified in Annex 1.
2. Failure to complete a term paper by the fixed deadline constitutes an academic failure that can be remedied following the procedures established at the HSE.

SUPERVISION OF TERM PAPERS

1. Supervisor appointed by the decision of the Programme Academic Council should oversee the preparation of the student’s term paper.
2. Term paper supervisors are appointed from among the University’s faculty (academic and research staff).
3. Supervisor can be replaced or an additional advisor of the term paper can be appointed by the decision of the Programme Academic Council at the student’s request and upon approval by the current supervisor, the prospective supervisor/advisor and the Academic Supervisor of the Programme no later than six weeks before the deadline for submission of the final version of term paper.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TERM PAPERS: CONTENT AND WORD COUNT

1. Term paper should be compiled in the following order: front page, abstract, table of contents, introduction, main part, conclusion, list of references and related annexes (if applicable). No print version of term paper needs to be submitted.
2. Annex 2 contains a sample term paper front page.
3. The table of contents shall be automatically generated in Microsoft Word or any other word processor of student’s choice.
4. Detailed content of term paper:
   * introduction should include a brief description of a research problem, its timeliness and research relevance.
   * main part should include a literature review leading to formulation of research question(s), theoretical and methodological framework including hypotheses (if applicable for chosen methodology) and proposed MA thesis research design (research strategy, short description of data which is planned to be used for MA thesis, methods of data collection and analysis, research ethics).
   * list of references should include major academic publications (books, journal articles, working papers, etc.) as well as primary sources (legislative acts, newspaper articles, analytical reports, etc.) used for preparation of and quoted/cited in term paper.
   * annexes should be used if the author would like to include materials which can provide useful supporting information for MA thesis. Field notes, interview notes or transcripts (with anonymity standards respected), the author’s tables and calculations, diagrams, figures and other materials can be presented as annexes.
5. Word count of term paper: 6,000 up to 8,000 words (including all term paper elements mentioned above, except annexes).
6. Term paper should be written with due regard to the terminology accepted in the relevant field, as well as notations, applicable abbreviations and symbols. The author should stick to the academic writing style and focus the reader’s attention on the issue under consideration. Journalistic clichés, slang words, terms and expressions, which are typically not used in academic literature, as well as words with diminutive suffixes, should be avoided. Research papers should be free of excessive enthusiasm, as well as ideologically loaded expressions, political slogans, accusations and emotional evaluations.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FORMATTING OF TERM PAPERS

1. Term paper should be prepared electronically and typewritten using Times New Roman 12 font size (footnotes shall be provided using 10 font size), 1.5 spacing. Margins: left – 2.5 cm, right – 1 cm, upper and bottom – 2 cm. The front page should be prepared using the template form provided in these Guidelines (Annex 3). Abstract, up to 500 words, should follow the front page.
2. All pages should be consecutively numbered in the page header in the centre of the page, starting from the second page (the front page is left unnumbered). Page numbers should be provided for all elements of the Table of Contents (chapters, sections, etc.). The consecutive numbering should be used for all tables and figures. Tables and figures should be titled.
3. New chapters should begin on a new page; the same rule applies to other main parts of the paper (i.e. the introduction, the conclusion, the list of references, and annexes). Furthermore, chapters should be subdivided into sections which are numbered as follows – 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, …, 2.1, 2.2 etc. The word “Chapter” should not be inserted before the title, and a full stop sign should not be used. Arabic numbers should be used for chapter numbering; a dot should be placed after the figure with a space before the chapter title. Titles of all main parts of the paper and page numbering in the text should be reflected in the table of contents. Headings should be highlighted in semi-bold.
4. The text alignment throughout the paper should be justified, including footnotes. References to the sources cited should be provided as footnotes placed in page footer.
5. If there is a reference to personal names (of scholars, researchers, experts), their initials should precede the last name (i.e. V.M. Petrov, rather than Petrov V.M., as is customary for the list of references).
6. Each annex should start from a new page with the word “Annex” given in the upper right corner, above the title. The main body of the text should correlate with annexes via links (references). Annexes should retain continuous numbering of pages, originating from the main text.
7. If a student uses quotations, excerpts from documents, research monographs, reference books or statistical data in the paper with the aim of supporting their own ideas and conclusions, relevant references to the sources should be given. Chicago

Author-Date Style or Chicago Notes & Bibliography Style (The Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition) should be used. If the source is quoted verbatim, the author should provide the material ‘as it is’, with quotation marks and a full reference. References should also be provided if somebody’s opinion is paraphrased (even with a reference to the author’s name), or some lesser known information is provided, etc. No references are required for commonly known events and facts. If footnotes are used, continuous numbering should be applied to footnotes on all pages (starting from the first to the last footnote).

1. If the paper is based on a large body of academic and primary sources, the list of references can be subdivided into several parts, including: legislative acts and official documents; specialized literature, e.g., monographs, research articles, publications in periodicals, etc. All items included in the list are given in alphabetical order (by the author’s surname if applicable), with full details of the publication provided. If the author’s name is not available (in case the article was published in a collection of research papers or in a collective monograph), the item should be put on the list by the first letter in its title. The list of legislative documents should be compiled in chronological order based on the legal effect of the documents (international agreements are listed first and are to be followed by national laws, legislation of constituent bodies, and bylaws). If electronic sources are used, the student should indicate the title of the relevant material, the source, and the electronic address (URL) with the access date. The list of references should be comprised only of those sources, which the student has referred to in the text of term paper.

RULES FOR ASSESSMENT AND DEFENCE OF TERM PAPERS

1. Term paper is assessed in accordance with the criteria indicated in Annex 3.
2. Grades for term papers should be given after public defence.
3. Dates for the public defence should be approved by the Academic Supervisor of the Programme upon prior agreement by the Head of the Programme Office.
4. Term paper defence should be held not earlier than within 7 days after term paper submission deadline.
5. Examination committees should be set up by the decision of the Programme Academic Supervisor. An examination committee should include no less than three HSE faculty members (academic or research staff) with one of them acting as the chairperson The chairperson is appointed by the Programme Academic Supervisor.
6. Feedback from the student’s supervisor should be submitted to the Programme Office no later than 3 working days before the term paper defence. In case the supervisor’s feedback has not been provided, the Programme Office informs the chairperson of the examination committee, the Academic Supervisor of the Programme, as well as the Head of the student’s supervisor department, thereof, and disciplinary measures may be applied, if the feedback has not been submitted without a valid reason.
7. In order to maintain high quality of student term papers, the Programme Academic Supervisor initiates and coordinates the preparation of reviews on term papers written by first-year students. To this end, the Programme Academic Supervisor should appoint reviewers from among the HSE University faculty (academic and research staff members). Reviews for term papers shall be provided by the reviewer to the student and the examination committee no later than 3 working days before the defence. In case the review has not been provided, the Programme Office informs the chairperson of the examination committee, the Programme Academic Supervisor, as well as the Head of the reviewer’s department, thereof, and disciplinary measures may be applied, if the feedback has not been submitted without a valid reason.
8. Each term paper should be subject to anti-plagiarism checks by the Programme Office using appropriate software (e.g. TurnItIn) in accordance with the Regulations. Supervisors and reviewers should be notified of the outcome of such checks and should take them into account when preparing their feedback and reviews. If instances of plagiarism are uncovered in term paper, student may face disciplinary action in accordance with the Procedures for Applying Disciplinary Measures for the Violation of Academic Standards for Student Papers at HSE (Appendix 7 to HSE Internal Regulations).
9. Term paper defence includes the following elements:

* The student describes their research puzzle/research question, literature review, theoretical framework, hypothesis (if applicable), proposed methodology and methods of data collection and analysis;
* The student provides answers to the questions of the examination committee’s members to further clarify certain points and arguments that have been presented;
* The chairperson presents the feedback of the supervisor and the review;
* The student is given possibility to reply to critical comments mentioned in the review and in the supervisor’s feedback;
* The defence is concluded by a general discussion of the term paper and its presentation.

1. The final grade for term paper should be assigned by the examination committee with due regard to the opinions of the supervisor and the reviewer expressed in their feedback and review. However, the final grade is entirely determined by the defence committee based on the defence outcomes. If the supervisor sits on the examination committee, they should not be involved in assigning the grade by the committee.
2. If a student misses their term paper defence for a valid reason supported by documentary evidence, they will be allowed to defend their term paper either on another date originally scheduled within the current examination period or on a different date within the specifically designated retake period without being penalised (i.e. such cases are not counted as academic failure).
3. Failure to complete and/or defend term paper in the period fixed by the Programme without a valid reason constitutes an academic failure that can be remedied following

the procedures established by the Regulations. Students can defend their term paper during the retake period. These rules also apply to term papers that were not defended for reasons of plagiarism. In addition to constituting an academic failure, such cases also lead to administrative penalties.

# Annex 1

**TERM PAPER: TOPIC SELECTION, TOPIC APPROVAL, PREPARATION, SUBMISSION AND DEFENCE**

| **Stage of term paper preparation (with checkpoints)** | **Deadlines** | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Students submit a short research proposal to their supervisors. This document should contain a research question/puzzle, justification of its research relevance, proposed structure of term paper and first draft  of literature review. | November 1, 2024,  18:00 | | |
| The Programme Academic Council discusses proposed term paper topics and supervisors. The Academic Council may suggest modifications to proposed topics. To this end, the Programme Academic Supervisor requests potential term paper supervisors to liaise with students and adjust term paper topics. The Academic Council may introduce changes in formulation of term paper topics if deemed necessary. | November November 2024 | 6 | –  9, |
| Approval of the proposed topics by the Programme Academic Council. The Programme Academic Supervisors provides the Programme Office with the list of approved topics. | November  2024 | 25 |  |
| Students submit the approved topics and an academic supervisor via LMS. | November  December  2024, 18:00 | 26  1 | – |
| The Programme Office adds information about term paper topics and supervisors to students’ individual curricula. | December 2024, 18:00 |  | 13, |
| Supervisors provide students with assignments (terms of reference) for preparation of their term paper that include timetable and major requirements/benchmarks. | December 2024, 18:00 |  | 16, |
| Students submit the first draft of their term paper to their supervisors. This document should include all elements of the short research  proposal submitted previously, a full literature review and | January 20, 2025,  23:59 | | |

| preliminary reflections on theoretical and methodological framework of future MA thesis. |  | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Students defend the first draft of their term paper in committees comprised of their supervisor, research methods seminar instructor and other faculty member(s). | March 11-14, 2025 | | |
| Term paper topics can be revised and/or academic supervisor can be replaced. Respective requests are accepted by the Programme Office and should be approved by the student’s supervisor and the Programme Academic Supervisor. | April 18:00 | 14, | 2025, |
| Students submit the text of the term paper to the academic supervisor. If necessary, the academic supervisor gives their recommendations on the revision of the text. | May 16, 2025 | | |
| **Uploading the final version of term paper to the LMS (via the dedicated LMS module).** | **June 22:59** | **10,** | **2025,** |
| The Programme Office forwards term papers to reviewers who prepare their reviews. Academic supervisors prepare their feedback. | June 18.00 | 11, | 2025, |
| Academic supervisors and reviewers submit their feedback and reviews to the Programme Office. | June 23:59 | 17, | 2025, |
| The Programme Office shares term paper, review and supervisor feedback with members of examination committees and uploads them to LMS (for students) no later than 3 working days before term paper defence. | June 23:59 | 19, | 2025, |
| **Public defence of term papers.** | **June 23-25, 2025** | | |

# Annex 2

NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

HSE Saint-Petersburg School of Social Sciences

The author’s full name

# TERM PAPER TITLE

Term paper

in the field of study 41.04.04 ‘Political Science’

Student of Group No. XXXX (‘Comparative Politics of Eurasia’ degree programme)

Reviewer

Doctor of …. Sciences, Professor

Supervisor Doctor of …. Sciences, Professor

 

Initials and Last name

Initials and Last name

Advisor Doctor of …. Sciences, Professor



Initials and Last name

# St Petersburg

# 2025

# Annex 3

**National Research University Higher School of Economics**

# HSE St. Petersburg School of Social Sciences

MA Programme ‘Comparative Politics of Eurasia’

# Supervisor’s feedback/ review on term paper

1st year student: Full name Topic:

| No. | **Evaluation criteria** | | | | **Supervisor’s/ comments** | **reviewer’s** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | Explanation and substantiation of the research question/puzzle by the student. Student’s justification of the puzzle’s relevance to the state of the art in the field, and its connection to the academic debate OR to the existing political or policy problems in the countries under analysis. | | | |  | |
| 2. | Correspondence between the topic (title), research goal(s), research question(s)/puzzle, objectives, theoretical framework and proposed methodology. | | | |  | |
| 3. | Breadth and coverage of the literature review and its analytic depth: the number of papers reviewed; quality of conclusions; explication of the logic underlying the selection of academic sources. | | | |  | |
| 4. | Ability to use theoretical concepts for building theoretical and methodological research framework, as well as formulating the research expectations and/or hypotheses (if applicable). | | | |  | |
| 5. | Suitability methodology objectives. | of  for | proposed stated | research goals and |  | |

| 6. | The paper structure, logical reasoning, reliability and accuracy. |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 7. | Conformity with requirements for the formatting, quotation/citation rules, as well as bibliographical references and lists. |  |
| 8. | **Recommended grade for the term paper** |  |

Other comments:

Supervisor/ Reviewer

academic degree, academic title department/subdivision

(place of employment)

/signature/ Initials and Last name Date