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National Research University Higher School of Economics
St. Petersburg Branch
St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management

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

Area of Studies: 38.04.02 "Management"

Level: masters

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GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION, DEFENSE AND PROCESSING OF MASTER DISSERTATION AT MASTER'S PROGRAMME "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. If there is no Academic Council, its duties may be assumed by the Academic Supervisor of the degree programme.

FSC – final state certification

SEB – State Examination Board

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.

Programme 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 *Annex 8. Procedure for Writing Theses and Term Papers for Degree Students at HSE University to the Regulations on Practical Training of Students under Core Bachelor's, Specialist and Master's Programmes at HSE University* approved by the HSE Academic Council, minutes No.6 dated June 17, 2021.

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

- 1.1. The master final graduation papers, or dissertation, or thesis, is a compulsory part of the curriculum and the most important component of a research degree.
 - 1.1. Master dissertation is prepared and defended during the 2nd academic year.
 - 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. 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 target a particular scientific journal and be developed according to the requirements of the journal. Dissertation developed in the form of a scientific paper should include a cover letter with the 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 prior to the submission of the thesis. A confirmation of the submission should be attached to the thesis.
 - 2.1.1. **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 a business firm, a non-profit organisation or an expert in the relevant field and is approved by the academic supervisor of the programme.
- 2.2. The master dissertation (monography or project-based) should be from 12 000 to 17 000 words in length for an individual dissertation and from 15 000 to 20 000 words for a group dissertation (including the reference list, but excluding appendices). The length of master dissertation in a scientific paper format should be based on target journal requirements. The master dissertation should demonstrate the student's ability to conduct research, including the 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 must include the following 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 Annex 3);
- **abstract** of the paper and the list of **key words** (3-6 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**;
- 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 guidelines 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 Annex 3);
- **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 dissertation 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 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 the 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 the 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. STAGES OF THESES PREPARATION

No.	Stage of Preparation	Parties Responsible for Respective Stages of Theses Preparation	Deadlines
1	Submitting proposals on the thesis topics via HSE University’s virtual learning environment (VLIS)	DP’s teaching staff, with the support of administrative staff	September 1 up to October 10 of the ongoing academic year
2	Approving the proposed topics of theses by the degree programme’s administration	DP’s academic supervisor in conjunction with the DP’s Academic Committee	Technical test: within 72 hours after submitting an application for approval; To be checked for the meeting of set criteria by academic supervisors of the degree programme: up to 96 hours after the submission of the application for approval
3	Selection of topics of theses by students Proposing topics upon students’ initiative	Students / DP academic supervisor	October 28 up to November 3 of the ongoing academic year
4	Selection topics of theses from among submitted proposals	DP’s lecturers and researchers, with the support of administrative staff at departments and faculty project managers	November 4-14 of the ongoing academic year

5	Second round for selection of topics of theses; or putting forward topics by those students whose previous applications have been rejected	Students / DP academic supervisors / Faculty members and researchers, with the support of administrative staff of schools/departments, research subdivisions, and the faculty's project managers	November 14-25 of the ongoing academic year
6	Checking that students have received topics for their theses, as validated by their academic supervisors	Programme office	November 25 until December 15 of the ongoing academic year
7	Approval of topics of theses in the students' IC; Issue of a directive to assign respective topics and thesis supervisors to students	Programme office	Before December 15 of the ongoing academic year

4. DISSERTATIONS WRITTEN IN GROUPS

4.1. 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, a larger dataset collected. It is important to remember about the internal logic of the whole research if several students implement a dissertation together.

4.2. If a dissertation is written by a group, its length can exceed the upper limit. As a rule, its length is from 15 000 to 20 000 words.

4.3. 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.

5. SELECTION AND APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION TOPICS

5.1. The lecturers develop a provisional list of dissertation topics or research areas to be subsequently approved by Academic Supervisor and Academic Council of the Master Programme. Potential employers can also propose topics and research areas. Academic Supervisor and Academic Council also can consider topics that are proposed by students.

5.2. 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.

5.3. The lecturers and employers whose topics were excluded by the Academic Council and Academic Supervisor 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.

5.4. From October 28 of the ongoing academic year, students may choose topics of theses via the University's virtual learning environment (VLIS).

5.5. Students can familiarize themselves with proposed topics and submit applications for chosen topics from October 28 until November 3 of the ongoing academic year.

5.6. Students should consult their future thesis supervisor (hereafter the "supervisor") in order to make a decision in regards to selecting or finalizing a topic for their thesis.

5.7. At this time, students can also file an application with a proposal for their own topic for their thesis. This proposal shall be subject to approval of a student's degree programme academic supervisor.

5.8. After reviewing a topic of a thesis, as proposed by a student, his/her DP academic supervisor can either accept or reject the proposal or revise it jointly with the student.

5.9. In the period from November 4 to November 14 of the ongoing academic year, supervisors shall select applications submitted by students, which can be either accepted or declined.

5.10. If none of a student's applications with proposed topics for a thesis have been approved, he/she has the right to choose another topic again from November 14 until November 25 of the ongoing academic year.

5.11. Finalized lists of theses topics, as selected by students, as well as appointed supervisors, shall be prepared by the DP programme office from November 25 until December 15 of the ongoing academic year.

5.12. By December 15 of the ongoing academic year, the topics of students' theses shall be included in their individual curricula (IC), and, thus, respective obligations on the part of students to write theses on said topics will arise.

5.13. Topics of theses, appointed supervisors and deadlines for the submission of final versions of theses by students shall be fixed in a respective directive before December 15 of the ongoing academic year. The directive shall be drafted by the programme office of the respective degree programme as per a sample kept in the Catalogue of HSE University's templates for directives with respect to student affairs and signed by the Deputy Director of HSE – St. Petersburg.

5.14. Any changes with respect to the topic of a thesis must be made no later than 1 (one) calendar month before the deadlines for the submission of the final version of a thesis date on the basis of an application addressed to the Programme Academic Supervisor (Annex 5).

5.15. Any changes with respect to the supervisor of a thesis must be made no later than 2 (two) calendar months before the deadlines for the submission of the final version of a thesis date on the basis of an application addressed to the Programme Academic Supervisor (Annex 6).

5.16. Applications for revising or specifying a paper's title can be submitted via VLIS. An application must be subject to approval of the academic supervisor of the student's DP, and thereafter the revised topic of a student's thesis shall be set as per the directive issued by the Deputy Director of HSE – St. Petersburg.

5.17. If a topic for a thesis has not been chosen by a student in due time, this shall be regarded as a failed assignment. The student must remove such academic failure as per the established procedure and within the deadlines provided in the Regulations for Interim and Ongoing Assessments of Students at HSE University.

6. PREPARING THESES

6.1. After a thesis topic and supervisor are approved in a student's IC, he/she shall work on a draft thesis. At this stage, students must formulate a provisional hypothesis/main idea for their papers, pinpoint the problem that their thesis will be focused upon, and outline a structure of the thesis. A draft thesis can be prepared by a student as part of the research seminar and individual consultations with the thesis supervisor.

6.2. A draft thesis, which is submitted by a student to their supervisor, shall be a mandatory deadline in his/her work on a given thesis. The draft thesis is evaluated by the supervisor of the thesis on the basis of 'approve/do not approve.' Students may resubmit thesis drafts to the student's supervisor; however, a draft thesis must be approved no later than December 25 of the current academic year. If the thesis is not approved by this date, the supervisor of the thesis is required to notify the study office of the degree programme through LMS or corporate email.

6.3. The submission of the first version of the thesis shall be the next mandatory deadline. The thesis' first version will be submitted to the supervisor for review no later than March 30 of the current academic year. If necessary, after this date, the student may correct the text. If the first version of the master's thesis is not submitted before this date, the student's supervisor is required to notify the study office of the degree programme through LMS or corporate email.

6.4. As the next mandatory deadline of thesis preparation, the final version of a thesis shall be submitted to the supervisor as a non-scanned e-copy of the paper, which should be uploaded online via a special module in VLIS, with an indication of whether or not algorithms of automated content generation were utilized in the preparation process. If such algorithms were used, students must include a section titled "Description of Used Generative Model" in the thesis text. This section should encompass a description of the objectives for using the generative model, the name of the generative model, link to the website on the Internet (or a description of another source of the model), and a description of its application method.

6.5. A template form for a thesis' cover page is provided in Annex 3 hereto.

6.6. Within 7 (seven) calendar days after receiving the final version of a thesis, a respective thesis supervisor shall provide their feedback to the student's programme office. Feedback must contain a recommended grade for the student's thesis on a 10-point grading scale. When utilizing the VLIS, the thesis supervisor shall upload the feedback in the special module with the recommended grade provided thereto. A template form for feedback can be found in Annex 1 hereto.

6.7. After uploading a final version of a thesis to the special module in VLIS, the paper shall be automatically checked for plagiarism via the Antiplagiat system. If proven facts of plagiarism are uncovered in the thesis, disciplinary sanction can be applied to the relevant student pursuant to the Procedure for Taking Disciplinary Actions for Violations of Academic Standards in Student Papers at HSE University (Annex 7 to HSE University Internal Regulations).

6.8. Thesis review shall be a mandatory part in the thesis composition process. A reviewer shall be appointed from among faculty members or researchers at the University. Representatives of another academic institution or a staff member of another professional organization operating in the industry/field in line with the given thesis topic can also act as a reviewer.

6.9. A directive with respect to a reviewer's appointment shall be signed by the Deputy Director of HSE – St. Petersburg as per the recommendation of the DP's academic supervisor at least a month before the appointed date for the thesis defence. The student's full

name, the thesis topic and the reviewer’s details (full name, academic degree, academic title, place of employment and the position) must be provided in the directive.

6.10. If a reviewer is appointed from among the University’s staff, the thesis shall be made available to him/her for review via VLIS immediately after the approval of the directive on his/her appointment and the thesis final version’s upload by the student to the latter’s personal account.

6.11. If a reviewer is not an HSE University staff member and, or for any other reason he/she cannot get access to a student’s thesis via VLIS at HSE University, the relevant programme office shall forward him/her the student’s thesis from the latter’s corporate e-mail within 3 (three) calendar days after the text has been downloaded to VLIS.

6.12. Reviewers are obliged to conduct an in-depth analysis of the main provisions of theses submitted for peer-review in terms of the presentation of an author’s own point of view / solutions to the given project’s goals, their ability to use research methods / project work, valid grounds for conclusions and recommendations / appropriateness of the means used to achieve the results, the reliability and validity of the obtained results and solutions, along with their novelty and practical significance. Reviewers may also assess competencies acquired by a thesis author as provided for by the University’s educational standards.

6.13. The recommended grade for a student’s thesis on a 10-point scale must be provided in the review. If the University’s VLIS is utilized, the peer-review shall be uploaded by the reviewer to the special module with the recommended grade provided. If a review is provided without using the VLIS, the reviewer shall then submit a review on the student’s thesis in writing to the programme manager to the latter’s corporate e-mail at least 6 (six) calendar days before the thesis defence date. The template form for reviewer feedback is provided in Annex 2 hereto.

6.14. The programme office shall upload a scanned copy of the peer-review to a respective electronic module via VLIS with the recommended grade specified. After downloading the text in the VLIS, the review shall be made available for a student’s viewing.

6.15. Students must familiarize themselves with respective reviews and prepare their comments on the subject of a reviewer’s notes.

6.16. The text of the thesis, the Supervisor’s feedback and the peer-review(s) shall be submitted to the State Examination Board (hereafter the “SEB”) at least 2 (two) calendar days prior to the thesis defence.

6.17. The thesis defence process (i.e., procedures for thesis defence) shall be governed by the Regulations on Final State Certification of Students of Bachelor’s, Specialist and Master’s Programmes at HSE University.

6.18. A provisional list of the stages for thesis preparation shall be as follows:

No.	Stage of Preparation	Parties Responsible for Respective Stages of Theses Preparation	Deadlines
1.	Preparing the draft thesis, assessment by the supervisor	student/ supervisor	Deadlines are set in the internship programme, pursuant to the schedule of the thesis composition

2.	Resubmitting the draft thesis (if not approved by the supervisor earlier)	student/ supervisor/DP academic supervisors	Before December 25 of the ongoing academic year
3.	Presenting the first version of the thesis	student/ supervisor/DP academic supervisors	Before March 30 of the ongoing academic year
4.	Presenting the final version of the thesis	student/ supervisor/DP academic supervisors	By the date set in the internship programme, pursuant to the schedule of the thesis preparation
5.	Uploading the thesis to the Antiplagiat system	student (automatically when uploading the final version of the thesis)	By the date specified in internship programme, pursuant to the timetable for thesis preparation
6.	Supervisor's feedback with respect to the thesis	supervisor/ programme office	Within 1 (one) calendar week after receiving the final version of the thesis
7.	Thesis review: Appointing the reviewer as per the faculty dean's directive upon recommendation of the academic supervisor	programme office / faculty dean / DP academic supervisor / reviewer	A directive shall be signed by the faculty dean at least 1 (one) month before the scheduled date of the thesis defence
8.	Thesis review: Submitting the thesis to the reviewer	programme office/ reviewer	The programme office makes sure that the final thesis versions are received by all reviewers within 3 (three) calendar days after their uploading
9.	Thesis peer-review: Uploading the received feedback to the online module for review by the students	reviewer / programme office / students	At least 6 (six) calendar days before the theses defence date
12.	Submitting a thesis to SEB along with the supervisor's and reviewer's feedback	programme office / SEB	Within 2 (two) calendar days before the theses defence date
13.	Thesis defence	student/ supervisor / academic supervisor/ faculty dean	Deadlines are set in the curriculum and the FSC schedule pursuant to the Regulations on Final State Certification of Students of Bachelor's, Specialist and Master's Programmes at HSE University, but prior to June 30 of the ongoing academic year.

7. DISSERTATION SUPERVISION

7.1. A supervisor appointed following the faculty dean's directive shall be directly responsible for thesis supervision.

7.2. Thesis supervisors shall be appointed from among the University's staff, or staff employed by HSE University under conditions of secondary employment, who hold Doctor of Sciences, the Candidates of Sciences degrees, or a PhD degree.

7.3. If it is necessary to provide assistance in the form of consultations, thesis consultants can be appointed from among the University's staff or employees of any third-party organizations whose professional activities and/or scientific interests correlate with the given thesis focus. Consultants shall give recommendations during thesis preparation, and they shall be responsible for providing consultations to the student.

7.4. Directives that include students who write theses under co-supervision of persons not employed by HSE University shall designate said persons as external thesis co-supervisors.

7.5. Two consultants can be engaged if a paper is written at the intersection of the two different fields of study.

7.6. Consultants must:

7.6.1. provide advice to students with respect to their selection of research methods / project implementation, as well as selecting bibliographical sources and materials;

7.6.2. give recommendations with respect to contents of the student's thesis.

7.7. A decision about the appointment of (a) consultant(s) shall be made by the DP academic supervisor (as per the recommendation of the supervisor and upon approval of the faculty dean) on the basis of the student's request approved by the Supervisor.

7.8. A supervisor's replacement, as well as the appointment of thesis consultants and co-supervisors, shall be enacted by the directive of the Deputy Director of HSE-St. Petersburg upon the recommendation of the DP's academic supervisor.

7.9. The course and quality of work on the thesis preparation for the defence shall be supervised by the thesis supervisor and/or co-supervisor, as well as the DP programme office, with respect to any matters relating to the deadlines for the submission of all necessary documents by students and meeting the established deadlines of thesis preparation.

7.10. A thesis supervisor can be replaced no later than 2 (two) months before the thesis defence.

7.11. A thesis supervisor must draw up an official memorandum to notify the Programme Academic Supervisor and the Dean of plagiarism, the undisclosed use of generative models in the thesis text and/or any other violations of the academic code of ethics committed by students.

7.12. Supervisors shall be responsible for thesis supervision, including:

7.12.1. providing consultations to students with respect to formulating the final version of the thesis topic, preparing the schedule of work, a draft thesis, and the first version of the thesis, as well as choosing bibliographical sources and materials;

7.12.2. providing assistance with respect to the selection of research methods / project implementation;

- 7.12.3.determining provisional stages of work on the thesis jointly with the student;
 - 7.12.4.exercising systematic control in the course of thesis composition with respect to the plan and the work timetable;
 - 7.12.5.informing the respective DP programme office should a student fail to follow the timetable for thesis preparation;
 - 7.12.6.giving students advice with respect to the thesis contents;
 - 7.12.7.evaluating the quality of thesis preparation as per established requirements (i.e. as feedback);
 - 7.12.8.approving details of the thesis prepared by the student for publication on HSE University's website (portal) or other online resources.
- 7.13. The supervisor has the right to:
- 7.13.1.select a mode of interaction, which would be suitable both for the Supervisor and the student, coordinate the schedule of the thesis preparation and establish intervals for personal meetings and other contacts;
 - 7.13.2.based on each meeting's results, request that the student prepare and submit a short summary of received recommendations for approval, along with further steps for thesis preparation;
 - 7.13.3.make sure that the student follows the recommendations and comes well-prepared to meetings;
 - 7.13.4.assign a grade for the thesis with due regard to the student's compliance with the deadlines for submitting a draft and the final version of their thesis, as well as the completion of the respective stages of the thesis preparation as per the plan approved by the supervisor;
 - 7.13.5.take part in the SEB meeting at the thesis defence.

8. DISSERTATION PREPARATION RESTRICTIONS

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

8.2. Dissertations are subject to external review. The reviewers are assigned by the Academic Council no later than 45 days before the defence. The reviewer is giving a grade according to the HSE system of grading.

8.3. Students who fail to complete a dissertation by the fixed deadline and are not admitted to the defense process are to be dismissed from the university owing to failure to carry out their obligations to master the respective degree programme with due diligence, as well as complete the relevant curriculum.

9. DISSERTATION SUBMISSION

9.1. Publications of theses made available to the public on HSE University's website (portal) shall be regulated by the respective DP internship programme, pursuant to the current legislation and the University's internal bylaws.

9.2. When uploading the final thesis file, the student (group of students) indicates in a special form whether or not they agree that the full version of the thesis will be published on

the HSE University website. Any refusal to publish a thesis must be accompanied by an explanation of the relevant reasons.

9.3. 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. After uploading, the paper shall be automatically checked for plagiarism via the Antiplagiat system.

9.4. Submission deadlines for dissertations that are subject to defense cannot be extended.

9.5. If the student (group of students) used generative models in writing the text of the thesis, then the student (group of students) must complete the section titled "Description of Generative Models Applied" in the form for uploading.

9.6. The student (group of students) also affirms, in a separate section of the form, that they have been duly informed that any violation of the citation and referencing rules or the lack of any indication of the use of generative models if such have been applied will be deemed as a violation of academic standards in accordance with the Student Internal Regulations at HSE University.

10. DISSERTATION REVIEW AND DEFENSE

10.1. Dissertation defense takes place each academic year during the period June 1-15 in the presence of the Dissertation Board.

10.2. Defense dates and Board composition are set by the Programme Academic Supervisor and approved by the HSE Vice Rector.

10.3. The defence of the master's thesis is governed by the Regulations on Final State Certification of Students in Bachelor's, Specialist and Master's Degree Programmes at HSE.

10.4. 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.

10.5. The defense is organized in the following way: student's presentation of the research (**up to 20 minutes**); answers to 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 30 minutes**), as also the time for the discussion (**up to 20 minutes**); in total the group defense lasts **up to 50 minutes**.

10.6. 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.

10.7. 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).

10.8. If students miss their dissertation defense without a valid reason or receive an unsatisfactory grade shall be dismissed from the university owing to failure to carry out their obligations to master the respective degree programme with due diligence, as well as complete the relevant curriculum. Students whose supervisor or reviewer gave their dissertation a fail grade are allowed to proceed to the defense.

10.9. Each dissertation must go through the 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 review the version that was uploaded through the student account in the LMS.

10.10. 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*. Work with signs of plagiarism will be examined at a meeting of the Dissertation Board. If plagiarism is confirmed, the thesis will receive an evaluation of 'Unsatisfactory', regardless of which section of the thesis the plagiarism appears in. Plagiarism can be identified by supervisor, academic director, members of Dissertation Board and other lecturers of master programme.

11. GRADING, RE-EXAMINATION AND APPEAL

11.1. The Dissertation Board provides the final grade for the Dissertation. The final grade of the Dissertation Board is given based on the thesis text, the presentation at the defense and students' answers to the questions of the Board. The assessment criteria are provided in Annex 4. The Board shall also consider supervisor's and external reviewer's feedbacks.

11.2. 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 (Annex 1).

11.3. The dissertation's reviewer assesses the dissertation on a ten-point scale. In the review, the dissertation is assessed according to the list of criteria that is provided in the approved form (Annex 2).

11.4. 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 grades may differ, if the authorship is unseparated, the grade for the defense may differ depending on the students' presentation and their answers to the questions of the Board.

11.5. The student may individually file an appeal to the appeal committee within 1 working day after receiving the grade, with detailed grounds for appeal. The appeal is submitted by the student to the secretary of the Dissertation Board in person or via the corporate email address.

12. DISSERTATION STORAGE

The Study Office stores copies of dissertations for 5 years (either in the form of hard copies or electronic files).

Annex 1. Template Form of the Supervisor's Feedback on a Thesis

**National Research University Higher School of Economics
St. Petersburg Branch
St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management**

Supervisor's feedback on the thesis, written by

student _____,
(student's full name)

2nd year of study, master's degree level,
area of studies 38.04.02 "Management",
degree programme "Arts and Culture Management",
faculty St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management,
on the topic: " _____"

No.	Assessment Criteria	Comments	Supervisor's Grade
1	The quality of the justification of the relevance of the research question		
2	The quality of the literature review		
3	The contribution to the existing knowledge and/or practice		
4	The quality of the methodology and argumentation of research design		
5	The correspondence between the methodology 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		
	Recommended grade for the thesis		

Comments on grades:

Supervisor

academic degree, academic title,

department/subdivision _____ /signature/ _____ initials and last name

(place of employment)

date

Annex 2. Template Form of the Reviewer's Feedback on a Thesis

**National Research University Higher School of Economics
St. Petersburg Branch
St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management**

Review with respect to
the Master's thesis, prepared by

Student _____ ,
(student's full name)

2nd year of study, degree programme "Arts and Culture Management",
faculty St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management,
on the topic: " _____"

No.	Criteria	Comments	Grade
1	Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis		
2	Structure and logic of the text flow		
3	Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives		
4	Quality of data collection and methodology		
5	Significance and quality of results		
6	Practical value of the research		
7	Quality of thesis layout		

Each item above is evaluated on a 10-point 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 degree 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".

Reviewer

academic degree, academic title,

department/subdivision _____ /signature/ _____ initials and last name
(place of employment)

Date

Annex 3. Template for Thesis Cover Page

**NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS
ST. PETERSBURG BRANCH
ST. PETERSBURG SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT**

author's full name²

THESIS TOPIC

Final Graduation Paper – MASTER'S THESIS, written
in the field 38.04.02 "Management"
degree programme "Arts and Culture Management"

Reviewer

Doctor of _____ Sciences, Professor

initials and last name

Supervisor

Doctor of _____ Sciences, Professor

initials and last name

Consultant (if applicable)

Doctor of _____ Sciences, Professor

initials and last name

St. Petersburg, 2025

² All authors must be specified if a thesis was prepared by a group of authors.

Annex 4. Assessment Criteria for Master's Thesis Evaluation

<i>i</i>	Criterion	Description
1	Topic choice, research aim and research question(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ justification of the topic choice and research motivation ▪ accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis ▪ originality of the topic and the extent to which it is covered ▪ alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and research question(s)
2	Literature review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ number, relevance and quality of references ▪ critical approach to literature review ▪ appropriate theoretical base for the research is formed
3	Methodology, data collection and description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ quality of selecting research tools and methods, their choice is well argued ▪ data is appropriate for chosen research tools and methods
4	Results, discussion and conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ research results are significant and contribute to theory and/or practice ▪ independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives is demonstrated ▪ the main findings are novel and are discussed with respect to existing literature ▪ limitations of the research are addressed ▪ there is a clear conclusion summarizing the research
5	Presentation and answers to the questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ logical delivery of information ▪ delivery is poised, controlled, and smooth ▪ length of presentation is within the assigned time limits ▪ visual aids are well prepared, informative, effective, and not distracting ▪ answers to all questions are clear and profound

Annex 5. Template Request for Change of Dissertation Topic

TO:
Academic Supervisor of the Master's
Programme "Arts and Culture Management"
Elena M. Zelenskaya

FROM:

(full name)

Group No. _____

Request

I hereby request to change the topic of my dissertation from

“ _____ ”

(topic in English)

“ _____ ”

(topic in Russian)

to“ _____ ”

(topic in English)

“ _____ ”

(topic in Russian)

(Student's signature)
“ ” _____ 20_

(Supervisor's signature)
“ ” _____ 20_

Annex 7. Template Request for Change of Thesis Supervisor

TO:
Academic Supervisor of the Master's
Programme "Arts and Culture Management"
Elena M. Zelenskaya

FROM:

(full name)

Group No. _____

Request

I hereby request to change the supervisor of my dissertation

“ _____
_____ ” (topic in English)

“ _____
_____ ” (topic in Russian)

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)
“ _____ ” _____ 20_

(Current supervisor's signature)

(New supervisor's signature)

“ _____ ” _____ 20_

“ _____ ” _____ 20_