

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE BACHELOR'S THESIS

Educational Programme «International Business and Management Studies»

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1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR'S THESIS

The Bachelor's thesis must be written in English.

The Bachelor's thesis may be completed either individually or in groups of 2 or 3 students. The structure of the Bachelor's thesis and required length are the same both for individual and group projects regardless of the number of students and regardless of the format. This requirement refers to the submission requirements to academic journals and consulting as well as the start-up format requirements.

The recommended length of the Bachelor's thesis is 8,000 — 15,000 words.

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

The Bachelor's thesis may be written in one of the three formats:

1.1. Article format (research article / manuscript)

The thesis should be in the form of a research article and 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. Students who write their thesis in the form of a research article must submit together with the thesis a copy of the author guidelines for the relevant journal¹. In most cases, these guidelines are available on the journal's website. For the format of the thesis, students may not use a journal included in the blacklist of HSE University: https://scientometrics.hse.ru/en/list_z. In case of any contradictions between author guidelines provided by the journal and the requirements listed in this document, the journal guidelines have the second priority.

1.2. Consulting format

Consulting format implies developing a solution to a practical problem based on a comprehensive analysis of an active company. The formal company request (a letter from the company) is required to conduct this format of Bachelor's thesis.

This format may be used only if the project of the thesis is based on and proposed by a real, active company (which is certified by the abovementioned letter) and is formally approved by both the student's academic supervisor and the academic council of the programme "International Business and Management". Please be aware that your suggested topic/project might not be supported if suggested activities and project outcomes do not

¹ For a list of relevant journals, please use the websites <https://charteredabs.org/academic-journal-guide-2021-view> <https://scientometrics.hse.ru/goodjournals/>

correspond with the managerial competences as stated in the educational standards of HSE. This format involves analysing a problematic situation, using a clear-cut research framework, applying (or developing, if relevant) a set of tools that can be used to solve the real business challenges and making recommendations for how to use these tools to solve these challenges. With this format, the thesis is required to have practical significance (i.e. managerial implications) and be based on the analysis of an active operating company.

Required documents:

Step 1. In order to get your suggested thesis topic approved, the formal request should be submitted in the form of the official letter in written form (paper original) stating that: the following students (state your full names) are participating in the following project (state the name of the project) realization upon company request, the company is willing to provide necessary support and/or information for the realization of consulting project, the supervisor from the company would be (state full name and position), and the projects outcomes will be used by the company within their operations.

Step 2. After your suggested thesis topic has been approved by Academic supervisor and/or Academic Council, the formal technical task for the project's realization should be submitted in written form (as a letter, or independent document) signed and sealed by the company.

In the final version of the thesis, the documents (letter of request and technical task) signed by the company must be attached to the "appendices" section.

1.3. Start-up format

Within the consulting format, students may write their Bachelor's theses in the format of **"Start-up as a thesis" (Start-up format)**.

The results of a thesis prepared using the format "Start-up as a thesis" are a legitimate entrepreneurial project that involves the foundation of a new juridical person (legal entity), creation and circulation of a product (services) acknowledged by clients as valuable (i.e. the existence of preliminary and/or concluded agreement on product/service delivery and/or other forms sales proof (e.g. transaction receipts)).

Bachelor's theses may be written in the format "Start-up as a thesis" **only if they are authorised by the academic council of the programme "International Business and Management Studies"**. Students who wish to write a thesis in the format "Start-up as a thesis" should submit by email to the academic director of the programme "International Business and Management" a letter with information about the project and the student's role in the start-up.

In addition, students should submit by email to the **Academic Supervisor** of the programme “International Business and Management” documents that confirm that the thesis has the signs, defined below, of a Bachelor’s thesis in the format “Start-up as a thesis”.

The supervisor for Bachelor’s theses written in the format “Start-up as a thesis” is appointed by a professor with experience as an academic supervisor and with practical experience in managing a business and recruiting consultants (mentors) for projects in the sphere of activity relevant for the project.

Formal documentation confirming the start of a new business is required (!).

Required documents:

Step 1. In order to get your suggested thesis topic approved, a written application addressed to Academic Council of a degree programme is required. With this application you should state the name of the project (i.e. start-up company), description of existing groundwork on the project (i.e. what has already been done), confirmation of your topic by your thesis supervisor.

Please be aware that your suggested topic/project might not be supported if suggested activities and project outcomes do not correspond with the managerial competences as stated in the educational standards of HSE.

Step 2. After your suggested thesis topic has been approved by Academic Council of a degree programme, you have to get approval of your suggested business model from your thesis supervisor (you may use the business canvas as a template to present your business model for approval).

Step 3. After your suggested thesis topic and business model has been approved, but before the defence, you have to take part in at least 2 pitch sessions, during which you will have to defend your idea and present your progress on the project. To assess students’ progress in the preparation of abstracts, the Centre for Innovative Entrepreneurship NRU HSE can arrange two pitch sessions for a start-up, with the involvement of experts.

If you fail to defend your idea and/or prove the current progress during the pitch sessions, your thesis cannot be qualified as a start-up format and you will have to immediately change the format of your thesis to article or consulting in order to be able to continue working on your thesis. For details on how to change the format please consult the study office.

Step 4. Before admission to the defence, Bachelor’s theses written in the format “Start-up as a thesis” should have at least two of these three signs:

∉ the availability of legally valid documents that confirm the independence of the project (signed documents, including the constituent documents; articles of association, in the

case of the creation of a legal entity; contracts with purchasers or suppliers; licenses, patents, permissions etc.). A charter (other constituent documents of Legal Entity), supply contract (contract of sale) / confirmation of sales (e.g. transaction receipts), licenses, patents etc. must be provided.

≠ the availability of verified reports about the provision of services, the performance of work, the provision of goods, sales and cash flows of the project, etc. Supply contracts (contracts of sale), sales proof documents (e.g. transaction receipts), and financial records must be provided.

≠ government registration of a legal entity or individual entrepreneur or the registration of a project as a spin-off in an organisation with the participation of the National Research University Higher School of Economics. Certificate on the state registration of a legal entity (“свидетельство о гос.регистрации”), an extract from the unified state register of legal entities (“ЕГРЮЛ”), and an extract from the unified state register of individual entrepreneurs (“ЕГРИП”), or a certificate on the state registration of a SIE (small innovative enterprise) with the participation of the National Research University Higher School of Economics must be provided.

If you fail to submit the minimum required documents (2 out of 3 from the abovementioned), your thesis cannot be qualified as a start-up format and you automatically receive 0 at the defence, which means being expelled from the university.

The defence (presentation) of the Bachelor’s thesis must be held in English.

2. TIMELINE FOR THESIS PREPARATION

Table 1. Timeline for thesis preparation: student-supervisor communication

	Stages of preparing the Bachelor's thesis with the supervisor	Deadline
1.	Research proposal: the proposed plan should be presented and sent to the research advisor	December 15
2.	The second submission of the research proposal to the research advisor in case of a major revision	December 25
3.	The final topic of the thesis should be approved by the supervisor	March 1
4.	The first draft of the Bachelor's thesis to be sent to the research advisor	April 1
5.	The final text of the Bachelor's thesis to be sent to the research advisor	May 1
6.	The final presentation file for the Bachelor's thesis defence to be sent to the research advisor	May 1

Please note that the abovementioned deadlines refer solely to the student-advisor interactions. There are several official university deadlines that you have so strictly follow while preparing for the thesis defence. Specific deadlines are set each academic year for the students graduating within the corresponding academic year, and are communicated to the students by the study office via official channels of communication (HSE electronic systems). Please be aware of the following obligatory stages of your graduation process listed below.

Table 2. Timeline for the thesis preparation: obligatory dates at HSE University

	Stages of preparing for the Bachelor's thesis defence: HSE University deadlines	Approximate deadlines²
1.	Choosing the thesis topic and your supervisor via HSE electronic systems	October 10 – November 20
2.	Uploading Research proposal to the HSE electronic systems	March 1 – March 15
3.	Final dates for updating the information about chosen supervisor via HSE electronic systems	March 15 – April 1

² Specific deadlines are set each academic year independently and communicated to the students by the study office via HSE official electronic systems.

	Stages of preparing for the Bachelor's thesis defence: HSE University deadlines	Approximate deadlines²
4.	Final dates for updating the information about final thesis topic via HSE electronic systems	April 15 – May 1
5.	Uploading the final text of the Bachelor's thesis and the final presentation file for the Bachelor's thesis defence to the HSE electronic systems	May 10 – May 25
6.	Uploading the Supervisor's Report to the HSE electronic systems for the state examination boards ³	May 25 – May 30
7.	Thesis defence procedures	June 1 – June 15

3. BACHELOR'S THESIS STRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

3.1. The Bachelor's thesis consists of the following parts:

- ∉ abstract
- ∉ introduction
- ∉ main body⁴
- ∉ conclusion
- ∉ references
- ∉ appendices, if relevant

The structure of the work for three different formats is the following:

Table 3. Recommendations for the thesis structure in the article format.

Component	Recommended %, as a % of the entire thesis
Introduction, including research question(s)	15%
Literature review	20%
Methods and Data	25%
Results	15%
Discussion	15%
Conclusion	10%

³ This step is done by the thesis supervisor. Please make sure that the supervisor's report is available for the State Examination Commission (SEC) in the HSE electronic systems no later than 2 days before the date of the defence.

⁴ The structure of the Main body depends on the thesis format (see Section 4).

Table 4. Recommendations for the thesis structure in the consulting format.

Component	Recommended %, as a % of the entire thesis
Introduction	10%
Literature review	25%
Analysis of the situation	30%
Project section	25%
Conclusion	10%

Table 5. Recommendations for the thesis structure in the start-up format.

Component	Recommended %, as a % of the entire thesis
Introduction	15%
Analytical section	30%
Project section	40%
Conclusion	15%

3.2. Abstract

The **Abstract** is a short description of the purpose, methods, main results and contribution of the Bachelor's thesis. The abstract should be between 200-300 words⁵. The abstract should be placed before the introduction to the main body of the Bachelor's thesis.

3.3. Introduction

The **Introduction** should contain the following:

- ∉ research background and motivation (how the thesis differs from prior research on the topic: the extent to which prior studies have analysed the topic of the thesis, and what is new about the analyses in the thesis);
- ∉ the research problem which is relevant and linked to the specified context;
- ∉ the relevance of the research problem to the specified context must be justified in a separate paragraph;

⁵ <https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/how-to/authoring-editing-reviewing/write-article-abstract>

- ≠ a research question grounded in the specified research context;
- ≠ the methods that will be used to address the research question;
- ≠ the proposed managerial implications and scientific contribution;
- ≠ the outline of the subsequent sections (1 paragraph in the end of the introduction).

After the Introduction, research background, research motivation, research question(s), managerial implications and scientific contribution of the thesis relative to prior studies should be clear.

In contrast to the guidelines for the project proposal defence, introduction to the articles in Economics and Management research domain does not imply stating your hypotheses, which must be included strictly to the literature review section.

The *managerial implications and scientific contribution of the thesis* relates to the importance of the solution for the research problem (“so what” question). When discussing the practical significance, the thesis should contain a discussion of (1) the importance of the analysed problem for companies and/or policy makers; (2) the potential contribution of the results of the thesis to increasing the efficacy of organisations, etc. When discussing scientific contribution, the thesis should outline the academic value of the research: (1) within which research streams the thesis is positioned, i.e. what is already known from the extant research on the topic and (2) the way the thesis advances the knowledge on the chosen topic.

The last paragraph of the introduction section should contain an outline of all of the sections in the document.

3.4. Main Body

The structure and content of the **Main body** of the Bachelor’s thesis depend on the format of the thesis (Section 4).

3.5. Conclusion

Regardless of the format, the final section is the **Conclusion**. In this section, students are required to summarise the theoretical and empirical parts of the thesis and to outline potential directions for future research depending on the chosen format (Section 4).

The conclusion should contain the following:

- a brief summary of the conducted analysis based on the research focus;
- a more generic (as opposed to results section) summary of the main results;
- theoretical contribution of the research together with the proposed managerial application of the research results, e.g., to the creation of new knowledge, to helping organisations, countries, economies operate in an effective manner, etc.;

- the primary limitations of the thesis, and how these limitations could be overcome in future research;
- whether using different assumptions, methodologies, etc. could lead to different results;
- the way(s) the topic of this research could be further developed in future research.

The total number of conclusions can differ between theses but should be between at least 3 to 5. With more than 5 conclusion statements, it could be useful to impose additional structure on these conclusions – for example, by placing conclusions into groups.

The conclusion should not be a summary of the prior sections of the research. The conclusion section should start with a brief summary of the conducted analysis and the research aim and provide a summary of the main results, emphasise the correspondence of the results with the stated research question and theoretical foundation.

3.6. Reference list

After the conclusion, the thesis should include a **Reference list**. Each reference included in the reference list must be cited in the text and vice versa. The reference list should consist of original sources written in English and include at least 25 academic articles (normative acts are not regarded as either a monograph or a scientific article).

In the Bachelor's thesis for International Business and Management programme, the preferred type of source is academic papers published in English in top tier journals from Academic journal guide of the Association of Business Schools⁶. In case of a strong necessity, an alternative source of the relevant journals can be the website <https://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php>, but in this case, the journal has to be at least of Q1 rank in the corresponding knowledge area. It is highly recommended to consult your research supervisor regarding the correct keywords for your article search.

The reference list contains continuous numbering, using Arabic letters. Foreign sources are placed in alphabetical order at the end of the list (see 5.3.2. for examples).

The reference list can be based on either the Harvard reference system⁷ or the APA reference style.⁸

⁶ <https://charteredabs.org/academic-journal-guide-2021-view>

⁷ <http://www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/authors/guides/write/harvard.htm>

⁸ <http://www.apastyle.org/index.aspx>

3.7. Appendices

The **Appendices** are included after the reference list. The objective of including material in the appendices is to avoid including in the text calculations, data, etc. that contain information that is relevant but not essential for the main research problem of the thesis. Each appendix should begin on a new page, have its own heading and be mentioned in the Thesis main body (see 4.4. for details).

4. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS TO BACHELOR'S THESIS MAIN BODY WITH RESPECT TO DIFFERENT FORMATS

4.1. Bachelor's thesis in article format

The main body of the Bachelor's thesis in article format should consist of at least four sections (Literature review; Methods and Data; Results; Discussion).

4.1.1. Main body: Literature review

In the **Literature review**, students should demonstrate the ability to do the following:

- ∉ to summarise and analyse in a critical manner theory relevant for the issue the thesis focuses on;
- ∉ to identify the most important theoretical issues relevant for the topic of the thesis;
- ∉ to use theory to develop a foundation for the empirical analyses in the thesis that they use to evaluate the obtained results against the chosen theoretical lenses;
- ∉ formulate operationable hypotheses based on the relevant academic articles.

In the **Literature review**, students should do the following:

- ∉ specify the prior research that is the basis for the research question in the thesis;
- ∉ identify relevant problems that have not been solved in full in prior research;
- ∉ define the main concepts, theory, etc. required to address the research problem;
- ∉ formulate hypotheses for further testing or justify the choice of an alternative research strategy (e.g. case study: outline the choice of the research paradigm: Eisenhard (1989) or Yin (2003), and the methodological approach: inductive, deductive, abductive as well as the type of a case study: single, multiple, etc.).

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

The literature review should be based on only the most relevant and fundamental prior research in top tier academic journals (see Section 3, “3.6. Reference List” subsection). In the literature review, references to textbooks are not allowed. The literature review should not consist of only a list of previous studies and the primary conclusions of these studies. In the literature review, students are required to organise prior studies in a systematic way, to identify similarities and differences in these studies and justify the relevance of each prior study for the thesis. When different prior studies come to different conclusions, students should summarise these different conclusions and discuss which conclusion they agree with, using logical arguments and reasoning. Your author’s voice when discussing extant research is highly necessary to demonstrate your ability to summarise and analyse information in a critical manner (constructive critique).

In the end of the literature review section, students should specify the relationships between concepts to be analysed based on the links to extant research for each hypothesis. justify and develop their hypotheses. The students should introduce the corresponding research streams for each hypothesis before it is formulated by starting with a critical review of the studies focusing on the relationship of interest. After outlining the main directions of the academic discussion on the relationship of interest, students formulate the hypothesis. This should be done separately for each hypothesis to adhere to the generally accepted standards for hypotheses’ development in academic journals of decent quality.

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

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

The literature review is the main pillar for the further development of the thesis as it facilitates the choice of methodology and the specific research question that the thesis will focus on. Most importantly it sets the boundaries for the discussion section, where students must discuss the obtained results in the context of the chosen theoretical lenses and provide detailed explanations of the underlying theoretical reasons for the results. The literature review section must supply a research framework of the thesis after the hypotheses development.

4.1.2. Main body: Methods and Data

For the article format the **Methods and Data** section must include:

- ∉ the specification of the research design used to address the research question;
- ∉ a description of the methods and procedures used to analyse data and of the statistical software used to analyse data;
- ∉ the justification for the choice of a particular methodology;
- ∉ a description of the process used to collect data, data sources, the type of sampling and the representativeness of the sample;
- ∉ a description of the data collected in each stage of the research process;
- ∉ a description of the tools used (tool specific files and logs should be included as an attachment – e.g. a Do-file from Stata).

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

- ∉ what is the connection of this section and the research question(s) together with the theoretical foundation?
- ∉ are the proposed methods sufficient to analyse the stated research question and why? Extant research must be cited as a justification;
- ∉ do the data and the sampling approach used address the stated research context?
- ∉ are the chosen methods appropriate and correspond with the previous sections?
- ∉ what is the difference in the chosen methodology and the research tradition in the field (references to the extant research using the similar methodology and research setting)?
- ∉ what is the data source, and what is the sampling type?
- ∉ how are the data collected, sampled out and analysed? What are the data transformations that the researchers carried out?

The objective of this section is to justify why the chosen data and methods can be used to address the research question. In this section, it is necessary to present a convincing argument that the data and methods are relevant for the research question and to discuss the limitations of the methods and data that are used.

4.1.3. Main body: Results

Results section presents the results of the empirical analysis. This section should contain an objective description of the results. This section should NOT contain a critical analysis or a discussion of conclusions that could be drawn based on these results. Based on the results of this section, it should be clear which hypotheses are statistically significant, which hypotheses are rejected, which hypotheses are confirmed. The validity of the model should be justified. It is highly recommended to conduct robustness checks to justify the validity of the obtained results. If relevant, the results can be presented via an empirical framework (i.e. the

scheme of the empirical model with the regression coefficients) as an addition to tables, graphs, and diagrams.

All of the source files, including files with algorithms and code, that the results are based on should be included as an attachment to your final submission to the LMS system – either archived or separately.

4.1.4. Main body: Discussion

Discussion section should discuss the obtained results in the context of the chosen theoretical lenses and provide detailed explanations of the underlying theoretical reasons for the results, i.e. to provide an explanation for each result generated with a detailed reasoning based on the adopted theoretical lenses. A discussion of the obtained results should include references to extant research in the field and build up the core of the contribution of the research.

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

- what are the primary results of the research?
- how are these results similar to and different from the results of prior studies?
- how could these results be interpreted based on the chosen theoretical foundation and/or alternative angles from the extant research?

4.2. Bachelor's thesis in a consulting format

The **main body** of the theses written in a consulting format should include the following parts: Literature review, Analytical section, Project section.

4.2.1. Main body: Literature review

The **Literature review section** should include all the elements of the literature review section for article format (see 4.1.1.) which are relevant and can be attributed to the analysed problem.

4.2.2. Main body: Analytical section

The **Analytical section** of the thesis should contain a general description of the object of the thesis, an analysis of the relevant problem and data developed with modern techniques described in the theoretical foundation of the thesis. In addition, this section should contain different indicators related to the characteristics of the research object. This section should also contain a justification of the subsequent development of the thesis.

This section should start with a description of the object researched in the thesis and a justification of why it is necessary to examine this object. Relevant reasons include a decline in the market, financial or organisational position of the object, potential new developments in the object, the initiation of new projects, etc.

Next, this section should include a comprehensive analysis, starting from the formulation of the research programme. The research programme includes the different stages of analysis and the definition of instruments and statistical data that will be used in each stage of the analyses.

This section should conclude with conclusions and recommendations for further measures that could be taken. These further measures are the basis for the third part of the Bachelor's thesis.

4.2.3. Main body: Project section

The ***Project section*** is the central part of this format and should contain the development of a set of measures for the solution of the stated problem as well as forecasts, with supporting calculations, for the results of the application of these measures. The basic requirement for this section is to present a comprehensive, thorough and complete solution to the problem studied in the thesis. This section should NOT include only general recommendations or general suggestions for further development. All of the suggestions and recommendations should be developed to the stage of implementation and should guide action, be detailed and precise. The thesis should show how these measures relate to the indicators relevant for the firm, organisation, etc.

The content of the project part should be drawn up **either** in the form of a *project charter* (for the case of preparing a project related to the improvement of the company's current activities), **or** in the form of a *business plan* (for the case of creating a new business, product, service, etc.).

The structure of the charter of the project, as a rule, is as follows:

1. Prerequisites for project initiation
2. Project goals
3. Project objectives
4. High-level description of the project content
5. Product and project requirements
6. High-level project risks
7. Project Limitations

8. Project assumptions
9. Criteria for the success of the project
10. Summary schedule of control events
11. Appointment of a project manager
12. Powers and responsibilities of the project manager
13. Approval Sheet

The structure of the business plan, as a rule, is as follows:

1. Resume
2. Company description
3. Goals and objectives
4. Products/services
5. Market Analysis
6. Marketing plan
7. Production plan
8. Organizational plan
9. Sources and amount of funds required
10. Risk assessment
11. Financial plan (budget)

For the purposes of preparing the thesis in consulting format the UNIDO “[Guidelines for the preparation of industrial feasibility studies for consulting firms](#)” are recommended to be used as reference.

The guidelines for the Introduction and Conclusion sections can be found in Sections 3.4 and 3.5. respectively.

4.3. Bachelor’s thesis in a start-up format

The main output of a thesis prepared using the format “Start-up as a thesis” is a legitimate entrepreneurial project which involves creation and circulation of a product or service acknowledged by clients as valuable.

The **main body** of the theses written in a “Start-up” format should include the following parts: Analytical section, Project section.

4.3.1. Main body: Analytical section

In the analytical part, the student identifies a research problem; demonstrates all the knowledge from the related educational courses to present the results of testing a business idea; presents research results on the market segment based on relevant instruments of analysis and with a justification of these instruments; justifies the business model; and forms the fundamental requirements for the business and for the product or service to enter the market.

4.3.2. Main body: Project section

The project part of the Bachelor's thesis includes such issues as the objective of the project, the tasks that are necessary to achieve these objectives, the risks of the project, the participants in the project and other information relevant for the project; and a completed business plan developed in accordance with international or Russian standards.

4.3.3. Additional requirements for appendices

In addition to required calculations, tables and graphs, the appendix to the thesis should contain information in the form of scans (copies) of documents that confirm that the thesis has the attributes, defined under section 4.3. "Bachelor's thesis in a start-up format".

For the purposes of preparing the thesis in start-up format the UNIDO [guidelines for business plan](#) are recommended for usage as reference.

The guidelines for the Introduction and Conclusion sections can be found in this document, in Sections 3.4 and 3.5. respectively.

5. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND FORMATTING OF THE BACHELOR'S THESIS

5.1. Technical requirements

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

Line spacing:

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

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

Font size:

- Main text – 12
- Reference list – 12
- Shorter tables, figures, graphs and equations – 12
- Larger tables – not less than 10
- Footnotes – 10
- Font colour – black. Drawings and graphs may be presented in colour.
- Alignment:
 - Main text, reference list, footnotes, abstract and keywords – justified
 - Headings – centred

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

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

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

The second page of the thesis contains the abstract.

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

The text of the Bachelor's thesis may contain abbreviations – both commonly used abbreviations (e.g., the USA for the United States of America) and abbreviations introduced by the author. In both cases, in the first mention of the abbreviation, the word or words should be written in full, with the abbreviation given in parentheses. For subsequent references, the abbreviation may be used without reference to the full word or words.

5.2. Formulas

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

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

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

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

Example:

$$NPV = -I_0 + \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{CFO_k}{(1+d)^k}, \quad (1)$$

where: I_0 – the initial investment;

n – the number of periods in the project;

CFO_k – cash flows during the period;

d – the discount rate.

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

5.3. References

5.3.1. Citation in text

Please ensure that every reference cited in **both** the power point slides text and the thesis text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa). Any references cited in the thesis must be given in full. Citations in the text should follow the referencing style used by the Harvard reference system⁹ or the APA¹⁰ reference style.

⁹ <http://www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/authors/guides/write/harvard.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.apastyle.org/index.aspx>

Examples of in-text citations using the APA Style:

∄ Single author: the author's name (without initials, unless there is ambiguity) and the year of publication. An example: (Kumar, 2020);

∄ Two authors: both authors' names and the year of publication. An example: (Kumar & Kumar, 2020);

∄ Three or more authors: first author's name followed by 'et al.' and the year of publication. An example: (Kumar et al., 2020).

Citations may be made directly (or parenthetically). Groups of references should be listed first alphabetically, and then chronologically. Example: "as demonstrated (Allan, 1996a, 1996b, 1999; Allan & Jones, 1995). Kramer et al. (2000) have recently shown"

5.3.2. Reference list

The reference list is placed at the end of the thesis, there is no need to have a reference list in your defence power point presentation as the main slide, but are allowed as backup slides.

The reference list contains continuous numbering, using Arabic letters. Foreign sources are placed in alphabetical order at the end of the list. The reference list can be based on either the Harvard reference system¹¹ or the APA reference style.¹²

Examples using the APA Style:

∄ Articles in journals:

Hsu, Y.-S., Chen, Y.-P., Chiang, F. F. T., & Shaffer, M. A. (2021). It takes two to tango: Knowledge transfer between expatriates and host country nationals. *Human Resource Management*, 1– 24.

Colquitt, J. A., & Zapata-Phelan, C. P. (2007). Trends in theory building and theory testing: A five-decade study of the Academy of Management Journal. *Academy of management journal*, 50(6), 1281-1303.

∄ Sources from the internet:

Krivkovich A., Starikova I., Robinson K., Valentino R., and Yee L. (2021). Women in the workplace. McKinsey report. Available from: [<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/women-in-the-workplace>].

OECD (2020), COVID-19, crises and fragility, OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus, OECD Publishing, Paris. Available from: [<https://doi.org/10.1787/2f17a262-en>].

∄ Books, monographs:

¹¹ <http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/authors/guides/write/harvard.htm>

¹² <http://www.apastyle.org/index.aspx>

Chinyong Liow, J., Liu, H., & Xue, G. (Eds.). (2021). *Research Handbook on the Belt and Road Initiative*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Pan, Z. (2015). *Global Value Chains and Production Networks: State-Business Relations and Complexity in Economic Crises*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Graduate School. <https://doi.org/10.17615/8zkc-pr75>

5.4. Appendix

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

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

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

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

6. REPORT OF THE SUPERVISOR

The report is submitted by the thesis supervisor in written form (no strict template required) no later than 2 days prior to the defence procedures. The report in general should reflect the supervisor's opinion on the quality of work and on the student's attitude to the thesis preparation (quality of preparation, implementation of the supervisor's recommendation, following the schedule, etc.). The report is of an advisory nature, the marks for the defence is assigned by the State Examination Commissions (SEC) (see Section 7 and Section 8).

6.1. The supervisor notes for Bachelor's Theses written in the article format:

∉ **The general characteristics of the thesis:** the presence of a research question; the clarity of the formulation of the problem and hypotheses of the research; the correspondence of the research question to the topic of the thesis; the discussion of the topic, the completeness of the presentation of the material on the topic; the logic of the thesis and its correspondence to the tasks of the research

∉ **The methodology and methods:** the appropriateness and justification of the methods; the correspondence between the methods of the thesis, the research question and the tasks of the thesis

∉ **The theoretical and empirical foundation of the thesis: The evaluation** of alternative solutions to the problem and justification of the choice of a solution the thoroughness of the discussion of relevant theory; the quality of the discussion about the condition of the research question; the use of appropriate data sources.

∉ **Conclusions:** to what extent the conclusions and recommendations are justified based on the empirical results; the credibility of the results

∉ **Formatting:** the thesis's correspondence to academic standards in style and use of terminology

∉ Strong points and weak points of the thesis

∉ Whether the thesis should be admitted to defence

6.2. The supervisor notes for Bachelor's Theses written in the consulting format:

∉ **The general characteristics of the thesis:** understanding the problem being solved by a consulting project; quality of the justification of the reasons why it is necessary to analyse and develop measures for the improvement of the object of the research; the presence of a research question; the clarity of the formulation of the problem; the correspondence of the research question to the topic of the thesis; the completeness of the presentation of the material on the topic; the logic of the thesis and its correspondence to the tasks of the research

∉ **The methodology and methods:** the appropriateness and justification of the methods; the correspondence between the methods of the thesis, the research question and the tasks of the thesis

∉ **The evaluation** of alternative solutions to the problem and justification of the choice of a solution: quality and completeness of the consulting project; project implementation risk evaluation; project customer report

⊄ **Conclusions:** to what extent the conclusions and recommendations are justified based on the project customer report; the credibility of the results

⊄ **Formatting:** the thesis's correspondence to professional standards in style and use of terminology

⊄ Strong points and weak points of the thesis

⊄ Whether the thesis should be admitted to defence

6.3. The supervisor notes for Bachelor's Theses written in the startup format:

⊄ **The general characteristics of the thesis:** understanding the problem being solved by a startup; quality of the justification of the reasons why it is necessary to analyse and develop measures for the improvement of the object of the research; the presence of a research question; the clarity of the formulation of the problem; the correspondence of the research question to the topic of the thesis; the completeness of the presentation of the material on the topic; the logic of the thesis and its correspondence to the tasks of the research

⊄ **The methodology and methods:** the appropriateness and justification of the methods; the correspondence between the methods of the thesis, the research question and the tasks of the thesis

⊄ **The evaluation** of alternative solutions to the problem and justification of the choice of a solution: quality of marketing research: segmentation of the consumer market; quality of competitive analysis; formulation of a unique value proposition; analysis of start-up viability based on the business model; analysis of the effectiveness of the startup's customer acquisition channels; relevance and development of the startup's financial model; startup development strategy / analysis of reasons that hinder the development of start-ups

⊄ **Conclusions:** to what extent the conclusions and recommendations are justified based on the financial report, marketing research, etc.; the credibility of the results

⊄ **Formatting:** the thesis's correspondence to professional standards in style and use of terminology

⊄ Strong points and weak points of the thesis

⊄ Whether the thesis should be admitted to defence

7. BACHELOR'S THESIS DEFENCE ASSESSMENT

7.1. Assessment of the thesis in article format

For Bachelor's Theses written in the **article format**, the presentation *must* be based on the submitted Thesis text, the final evaluation of the defence shall be based on these criteria:

Table 6. Assessment Criteria for the Article Format

No.	Assessment Criteria	Weight
1.	The quality of the justification of the research motivation and the research framework	20%
2.	The quality of the research design (the fit of the chosen theoretical foundation and the research question formulation to the methodological choice)	30%
3.	Clear and validated results (robustness \ validity \ reliability tests, qualitative research protocols)	20%
4.	The quality of the discussion and conclusion sections (clearly presented value added of the research, sufficient scientific contribution, relevant managerial implications)	20%
5.	Responses to the questions	10%

For theses written in article format, the final evaluation of the defence is:

Criterion (1) x 0.20 + Criterion (2) x 0.30 + Criterion (3) x 0.20 + Criterion (4) x 0.20 + Criterion (5) x 0.10

7.2. Assessment of the thesis in consulting format

For theses that are written in a **consulting format** the defence is organised only after approving all the necessary documents from the case company.

Table 7.

A

Assessment Criteria for the Consulting Format

#	Evaluation criteria	Weight
1.	Understanding the problem being solved by a consulting project	10%
2.	The quality of the justification of the reasons why it is necessary to analyse and develop measures for the improvement of the object of the research	10%
3.	Quality and depth of the analysis of the identified problem. Formulation of research gap.	10%
4.	Evaluation of alternative solutions to the problem and justification of the choice of a solution.	10%
5.	Quality and completeness of the consulting project	30%
6.	Project implementation risk evaluation	10%
7.	The quality and completeness of the conclusions	10%
8.	Project customer report	10%

For theses written in a consulting format, the final evaluation of the defence is:

Criterion (1) x 0.10 + Criterion (2) x 0.10 + Criterion (3) x 0.10 + Criterion (4) x 0.10
+ Criterion (5) x 0.30+ Criterion (6) x 0.10 + Criterion (7) x 0.10 + Criterion (8) x 0.10

7.3. Assessment of the thesis in “Start-up” format

For theses that are written in a **start-up format** the defence is organised only after approving all the necessary documents. The final evaluation of the defence shall be based on these criteria:

Table 8. Assessment Criteria for the Start-Up Format

#	Evaluation criteria	Weight
1.	Understanding the problem being solved by a startup	10%
2.	Quality of marketing research: segmentation of the consumer market	20%
3.	Quality of competitive analysis. Formulation of a unique value proposition	10%
4.	Analysis of startup viability based on the business model	20%
5.	Analysis of the effectiveness of the startup's customer acquisition channels	10%
6.	Relevance and development of the startup's financial model	10%
7.	Startup development strategy / analysis of reasons that hinder the development of startups	10%
8.	The quality and completeness of the conclusions	10%

For theses written in a start-up format, the final evaluation of the defence is:

Criterion (1) x 0.10 + Criterion (2) x 0.20 + Criterion (3) x 0.10 + Criterion (4) x 0.20+
+Criterion (5) x 0.10 + Criterion (6) x 0.10 + Criterion (7) x 0.10 + Criterion (8) x 0.10

In each format, each member of the commission shall evaluate students on each criterion from a scale of 1-10. The evaluation for each criterion is the average evaluation from the members of the commission.

Following the defence, together with the final evaluation for the defence, the evaluation for each criterion could be disclosed to the student upon request. Only the average evaluation for each criterion could be disclosed; the individual evaluations of each member of the commission shall not be disclosed.

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

If a student receives the evaluation ‘Unsatisfactory’ for the defence of the Bachelor's thesis the student is subject to exclusion from the HSE.

If a student is not present at the defence (either for a valid or non-valid reason) the student is subject to exclusion from the HSE.

Based on the results of the defence of the Bachelor's thesis, the SEC decides whether to grant the student the graduate degree in Management and issue a diploma of higher education.

8. REGULATIONS ON BACHELOR'S THESES DEFENCE

The Bachelor's theses must be written and presented in English. The Bachelor's theses may be completed in groups of 2 or 3 students. The allotted time for presentation of the Bachelor's theses results and questions-answers section is up to 25-40 minutes. Public defence procedure is held in the format of oral defence.

8.1. List of Commission members and list of students, defending the Bachelor's Theses with respective commissions, should be formed and the students should be notified no later than one day before the date of the Bachelor's theses defence.

8.2. Before the presentations start the chair of the Commission should communicate the details of the defence procedure to the students and ask them if there are any objections against the defence procedure.

8.3. Students present their Bachelor's theses in order that is specified by the student list, or in any other order as per Commission's decision.

8.4. Students submit their presentation slides to the Commission and present the results of the Bachelor's theses within the time limits stated in the table below:

Table 9. Allotted time for thesis defence

Bachelor's theses format	Presentation time	Questions and comments
Individual format (1 student)	Up to 15 mins	Up to 10 mins
Group format (2 students)	Up to 20 mins	Up to 10 mins
Group format (3 students)	Up to 30 mins	Up to 10 mins

8.5. All student group representatives should be present during the defence, each student should participate in group presentation and answering the questions. It is recommended for the presentation to be divided into relatively equal parts among the students presenting.

8.6. At the end of students' presentation of their Bachelor's theses results, the members of the Commission can ask clarifying questions related to the presentation, Bachelor's thesis text content, scientific advisor's comments given in the review, student's input in the results of the Bachelor's thesis, or other. Students can answer the questions. Commission members are allowed to comment on the content of the Bachelor's theses and/or presentation. After all the

questions have been answered and the comments have been made, the chair of the Commission should ask the students if they have any complaints and/or objections concerning the defence procedure.

8.7. After all the presentations of all students at the Commission have been made and all the questions have been answered, Commission members leave to discuss the marks. Assessment criteria are given in Section 7.

8.8. After the Commission has decided upon the marks, the marks are communicated to the students. Student lists containing the final marks should be handed over to the study offices no later the one day after the defence.

Bachelor's thesis supervisor's review template

National Research University Higher School of Economics

St. Petersburg School of Economics and Management

department

Student: _____

full name

Programme/Year: Bachelor programme «**International Business and Management
Studies**»/year 4

Thesis title: « _____
_____ »

Bachelor's thesis review should contain an in-detail description of each of the following criteria:

1. *Problem statement and its justification*
2. *Literature review*
3. *Data and information gathering, analysis, and systematisation*
4. *Research conduction*
5. *General conclusion*

Please evaluate:

- *motivation of the paper;*
- *correspondence of the paper to the chosen topic;*
- *logic, clarity and consistency of the text;*
- *quality of the paper formatting;*
- *quality of the literature review (review of existing approaches to the development of projects in this field);*
- *quality of data processing (if there is an empirical part in the work);*
- *relevance of the selected research methods (approaches to the project development, case studies), quality of use of methods;*
- *achieved results, their theoretical and / or practical aspects/significance;*
- *following the time plan, interaction with the scientific supervisor, general assessment of the research potential of the author;*
- *additional comments (if any).*

Conclusion and grading on a 5-point and 10-point scale.

In case if work is written in the form of an article, the review **must** include a link to the requirements of the relevant periodical. In addition to that, the text of the requirements itself should be attached to the review.

Bachelor's thesis supervisor

academic degree and title,

department

(place of employment) _____/signature/ _____ Initials/Name

Date

Saint Petersburg 202__

An Example of the Title Page for Bachelor Thesis

Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution for Higher **Education**
«NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY
«HIGHER SCHOOL OF **ECONOMICS**»

Faculty «Saint Petersburg School of Economics and **Management**»
Department (Center, Laboratory) _____

Full Name of the Author(s)¹

THE TITLE OF BACHELOR THESIS

Bachelor's thesis format: Article/ Consulting/ Start-up

BACHELOR THESIS

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

«International Business and Management **Studies**»

Student's group number № _____

Adviser

Position

Full name

Consultant²

Position

Full Name

Saint Petersburg

202__

An Example of the Title Page for Bachelor Thesis

¹ In the case of group work, all authors are indicated

² In case of his absence, remove all information related to the consultant

