

## Structure, contents, and wordage of BSc theses

1. A Graduation paper is an individually completed work on a stated topic written by the author under the guidance of the supervisor. Graduation papers are expected to demonstrate the author's ability to work with literature; synthesise and analyse factual material, using the theoretical knowledge and practical skills obtained while completing the programme of higher education. Papers are also expected to contain evidence of academic innovation and make a contribution to existing knowledge.
2. Graduation papers should contain sections where the main problem is described, literature is reviewed, tasks are set, and suggested solutions are explained using mathematical methods of economic theory and econometrics.
3. As a rule, a graduation paper that merely reviews existing literature cannot be graded as higher than "satisfactory" (4-5 on the 10-point scale), even if it contains evidence of the student's own analysis and critical evaluation. The design and empirical evaluation of models replicating other author's research on the basis of new data, as a rule, cannot be graded higher than "good" (6-7 on the 10-point scale). Papers containing some original research but written with significant omissions (no account for the endogeneity, no test for stationarity, errors in theoretical models), as a rule, cannot be graded as "excellent". All other things being equal, papers containing original theoretical results or requiring special skills (e.g. programming) could be assigned a higher grade.
4. A recommended wordage for year 4 Graduation papers is 2 printing pages (80,000 signs including spaces), which roughly corresponds to 40-59 printed pages.
5. Graduation papers at ICEF are written in an academic format, namely as research papers whose aim is to obtain new knowledge about the structure, features of, and patterns in, the object (phenomenon) studied.

Research should be conducted in the field of economics. An interdisciplinary approach is welcomed but papers which in fact belong to the areas of management, sociology, psychology, etc., without any use or only with an occasional use of an economic approach or methods of analysis could not be assigned a high grade.

Graduation papers at ICEF are written in English with a short summary (1-2 pages) in Russian.

6. Graduation papers are graded by the ICEF SEC taking into account the results of an open public defence and reports written by the supervisor and referee. The referee evaluates the following components on the scale from 1 to 10 (see Attachments 5 and 5a):
  - a) A research statement, correspondence of the paper's content to its topic.
  - b) Originality of research, independence of the student's work.
  - c) Quality and completeness of the literature review.
  - d) Quality of theoretical and/or empirical analysis, its correspondence to the methodology of contemporary economics research.
  - e) Correct typesetting of references, sections, equations, figures, tables, bibliography.

A final grade suggested by the referee takes into account grades for separate components but does not have to be the mean grade.

The supervisor evaluates the work and its components in writing (see Appendices 4 and 4a). Although there is no particular template, student's work with supervisor should be evaluated and grade recommended.

Final grade is assigned by the SEC taking into account referee's and supervisor's grades, although it may not be the same.

7. When assigning grades to ICEF bachelor graduation papers, the ICEF SEC uses the following criteria:

- **Excellent (10):** A paper that exhibits novelty, makes a significant scientific contribution, and may be appropriate for publication in an international peer-reviewed journal (possibly after some editing/revisions).
- **Excellent (9):** A paper of high quality that exhibits some elements of scientific novelty and/or makes a marginal scientific contribution due to the narrow/overly specific research question, one or more drawbacks that are not critical from the point of view of the main argument or methodology, or not more than one non-critical error (no up-to date analytical or econometric methods, incomplete evidence, etc.) that do not devalue the main results and the correction of which is not elementary for undergraduate students.
- **Excellent (8):** A paper that demonstrates the author's ability to set and solve research problems, to compare own results with results in contemporary literature using research methods sufficient for an undergraduate ICEF level and/or more complex methods. The paper may contain some omissions in the argument or methodology that are, however, not critical from the point of view of the results. This grade can also be awarded for carefully executed graduation papers, reproducing the methodology of previously published work, if they expand the scope for the use of its analytical methods, and/or shed more light on the nature and causes of the investigated phenomena.
- **Good (7):** A paper that demonstrates the student's knowledge of contemporary economic literature, ability to conduct an economic analysis and to use tools of modern economic science on the level required for ICEF undergraduate students. A combination of these abilities and knowledge has enabled the author to produce an original paper that, however, has no clearly identifiable scientific value and novelty. This grade can also be awarded for an attempt to conduct an original research using new data sources or more sophisticated research methods, which, however, was made with significant methodological omissions - for example, it does not account for endogeneity, there is no test for stationarity, there are errors in the theoretical model, and/or other errors that cast doubt on the claimed results. This grade can be awarded for graduation papers reproducing methodology and analysis of other papers without any scientific value added, as well as for good quality papers addressing a non-scientific (applied, vocational) problem.
- **Good (6):** A paper that demonstrates the student's ability to employ methods of economic analysis, scientific literature and analytical tools appropriate for the ICEF undergraduate level, however, has no obvious scientific novelty and value. This grade can also be awarded for an attempt to conduct an original research and/or to use original data, which was made with significant omissions or gaps that diminish the value of the reported results. This grade can also be awarded for graduation papers that merely reproduce the methodology of other works, or good papers that are of more applied than scientific nature.

- **Satisfactory (5):** A paper that demonstrates the familiarity of the student with the principles of economic analysis, literature and research methods appropriate for the ICEF undergraduate level. This grade can also be awarded for an attempt to conduct an original research and/or to use original data and/or complex methods, which was made with serious mistakes and/or erroneous from the point of view of research methodology and strategy. This grade can also be awarded for papers reproducing the methodology and analysis of other works without gross errors, and/or for applied rather than scientific papers.
  - **Satisfactory (4):** A paper that demonstrates the student's understanding of the principles of economic analysis, familiarity with some works in the field of economics and research methods appropriate for the ICEF undergraduate level. However, the methods are applied in such a manner that no scientific or practical conclusions can be drawn.
  - **Unsatisfactory (3):** A paper that fails to demonstrate a clear understanding of economic principles or techniques, *and/or* reveals fundamental flaws in understanding of the methodology of contemporary economic science.
  - **Unsatisfactory (2):** A paper that demonstrate a lack of understanding of economic principles or techniques, and reveals fundamental flaws in understanding of the methodology of contemporary economic science.
  - **Unsatisfactory (1):** The work displays complete misunderstanding of economic principles or techniques, and reveals fundamental flaws in understanding of the methodology of contemporary economic science.
  - **Unsatisfactory (0):** Graduation papers containing systematic plagiarism.
8. After receiving the final version of the graduation paper, the supervisor writes a report evaluating the quality of the work, outlining its strong points and paying special attention to the omissions which had been indicated earlier but were not corrected by the student. The supervisor also gives their reasons for recommending/not recommending the paper to be submitted to the SEC. The following is indicated in the supervisor's report: compliance with the schedule, student's work ethics, self-sufficiency, creative approach to writing the paper, ability to meet the requirements set for Graduation papers; a recommended grade for the paper is assigned on the 10-point scale; the paper is recommended/not recommended for defence.

If the supervisor does not recommend the work for defence, the student still has the right to defend provided the text contains no breach of academic ethics (plagiarism).

Plagiarism check is one of the duties of the supervisor. In cases when plagiarism is identified in graduation papers the student is automatically assigned unacceptable grade (0) and expelled from ICEF with the right to resume studies and defend their graduation paper the following year; appropriate disciplinary measures are imposed in accordance with the Regulations on disciplinary measures to be taken in case of violation of academic norms in written works in NRU HSE (NRU HSE Rules of internal conduct, Supplement 7).

9. All graduation papers at ICEF are refereed. The referees are appointed by the decree of the ICEF Director no later than one month before the first day of defence of graduation papers at ICEF, and are usually part of ICEF teaching staff.

The referee receives the paper on a scheduled day for submission of all papers and submits the report to the SEC and the student no later than one day before the scheduled date of defence.

The following is assessed in the referee's report independently of the supervisor's report: rationale, relevance of the research topic; the practical value of the research; professional competence, merits and demerits of the work; its practical application. The recommended grade is assigned on the 10-point scale; the work is recommended/not recommended for defence.

If the referee does not recommend the work for defence, the student still has the right to defend, provided the text contains no breach of academic ethic (plagiarism).