

## **Master's Programme 'Politics. Economics. Philosophy'** **Coursework and Master Thesis Guidelines**

**Master's Thesis** is an individual research paper of a Student conducted under the supervision of a Scientific supervisor during the second year of studies.

**Coursework** is a Master's Student research paper to be written and defended during the first year of studies. Optimally, it is the first stage of Master's Thesis research preparation. The working language of a Coursepaper and a Master's Theses is English. The procedures related to a Coursework and a Master's Thesis are regulated by HSE normative acts and Rules of the Programme.

**Scientific Supervisor** helps a Student in doing research for a Coursework and a Master's Thesis.

**Consultant** can be assigned to a Coursework or a Master's Thesis in addition to a Supervisor.

Consultant provides advice to a Student in the choice of research methods, in the selection of literature and factual material, and gives expert advice on the content of a Coursework or a Master's Thesis.

**Academic Supervisor** is the head of the Master's Programme.

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## ***1. Technical Requirements (Formatting)***

### **1.1. Components of a Coursework and a Master's Thesis**

The components of a Coursework and a Master's Thesis include the following elements:

1. Cover Page
2. Table of Contents
3. List of Abbreviations (if included)
4. Introduction
5. Main Body (consists of chapters, paragraphs, etc.)
6. Conclusion
7. Bibliography
8. Appendices (if included)

A Coursework is uploaded and submitted in a single file.

A Master's Thesis is uploaded and submitted in a single file.

### **1.2. Coursework / Master's Thesis Formatting**

#### **COVER PAGE**

Samples are provided in Appendix 3 and Appendix 6.

Number of pages: The cover is not to be numbered, but it is counted (i.e. the next page is number 2).

Headings of sections (Table of Contents, List of Abbreviations, Introduction, Conclusion, Bibliography, Appendices): Times New Roman 16, bold, aligned, numbered.

#### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

It should be done automatically by using the appropriate Word option. It should contain the following elements: List of Abbreviations (if included), Introduction, Chapters, Paragraphs, Sub-paragraphs (if applicable), Conclusion, Bibliography, and Appendices (if included). It should include the page number for each section.

#### **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (if applicable)**

Text: Times New Roman 14, spacing 1.5, aligned left.

#### **INTRODUCTION, MAIN BODY & CONCLUSION**

Text: Times New Roman 14, spacing 1.5, justified, first line of each paragraph indented

Headings of chapters: Times New Roman 16, bold, aligned left, numbered (1.1,1.2, etc.)

Headings of sub-chapters and sub-sub-chapters: Times new Roman 14, bold, aligned left, numbered (1.1.1, 1.1.2, etc.)

Footnotes: Times New Roman 11, single-spaced. Footnotes are to comply with the chosen style. If Chicago style is chosen, continuous numbering of footnotes is to be done.

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

The entries should be alphabetized. Chicago Style applies (<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/>).

Text: Times New Roman 14, aligned left

### 1.3. Additional Requirements

**Length:**

- Coursework: not less than 10 000 words (footnotes and bibliography are excluded from the count).
- Master's Thesis: not less than 15 000 words (footnotes and bibliography are excluded from the count).

**Referencing style:** Chicago Style with footnotes and bibliography – see Chicago Manual (<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/>).

**Page margins:** upper – 2 centimetres, lower – 2,5 centimetres, left – 3 centimetres, right – 1,5 centimeters.

**Page numbering:** Page numbers should start from the Table of Contents (page 2) and end with the Bibliography (or Appendices, if any).

### 2. Stages of Coursework and Master's Thesis Development

What	1st year – Coursework	2nd year – Master's Thesis
<b>Application</b> for Coursework / Master's Thesis to be submitted in LMS	Before November 20	Before November 20
<b>The first draft</b> of Coursework / Master's Thesis	March Exact timing to be discussed with a Supervisor	March Exact timing to be discussed with a Supervisor
<b>The final draft</b> of a Coursework / a Master's Thesis	Beginning of April Exact timing to be discussed with a Supervisor	Beginning of April Exact timing to be discussed with a Supervisor
<b>Preliminary defence</b> of a Coursework / a Master's Thesis	April To be discussed on the Research Seminar	April To be discussed on the Research Seminar
<b>Finalized</b> Coursework / Master's Thesis submission to LMS	Not less than 7 days before the defence	Not less than two weeks before the defence  The Programme Manager will inform about the deadline
<b>Defence</b> of Coursework / Master's Thesis	Within the period of June 1 – June 30  Exact date to be set by the Study Office beforehand.	May – June  The Programme Manager will inform about the exact day

### ***3. Supervisor and Consultant***

A Supervisor is to be chosen by a Student based on research priorities of a Student and professor's specialisation. A Student needs to submit the application with the proposed topic and the signature of a Supervisor.

A Student may submit an application for the Supervisor change (See Appendix 7) not later than two months before the defence of Coursework and Master's thesis.

If necessary, a Consultant can be assigned to a Coursework or a Master's Thesis in addition to a Supervisor. Consultant's name is stated in the Coursework / Master's Thesis Application and thus is the result of consensus between a Supervisor and a Student. A Consultant provides advice to a Student in the choice of research methods, in the selection of literature and factual material, and gives expert advice on the content of the thesis.

A Supervisor provides support to Student's research, including:

- Provides advice to a Student in determining the final research topic, in selecting literature and factual material, in preparing a Research Proposal (and an Outline);
- Assists in the choice of research methodology and methods;
- Carries out systematic monitoring of a Student's research progress and compliance with the schedule;
- Gives expert advice on the content of a Coursework / a Master's Thesis;
- Assesses the quality of Student's performance in accordance with a Coursework / a Master's Thesis research requirements;
- Provides recommendation for promoting to the Defense and grades papers;
- Provides expert judgement on the presence of plagiarism or borrowing in a Student's text based on a Turnitin Report.

Supervisors provide individual consultations to Students. Students provide all materials in accordance with the individual schedule.

A Supervisor may reject his appointment on the basis of:

- Student's lack of response to the e-mail letters;
- regular failure to comply with Supervisor's instructions for a Coursework and a Thesis;
- Student's absenteeism.

Supervisor addresses a statement with a description of the situation and recommendations of solution to the Academic Supervisor.

Academic Supervisor may recommend a new Supervisor to a Student if the arguments for such a change are significant and relevant. The change of a Supervisor is followed by the revision or the change of the topic, which is the responsibility of a Student and fulfilled by submitting the form (see Appendix 2) signed by a new Supervisor to the Program Manager.

### ***4. External Reviewer for Master's Thesis***

Master's Theses are subject to mandatory external review by independent second readers, who are mainly experts in the field of research from other units of the HSE, and external organisations.

The review (see Appendix 4) should be a critical analysis of the content and the main provisions of the research under review, should assess the relevance of the chosen topic, independence of approach to its disclosure (of having their own point of view of the author), the ability to use modern methods of collecting and processing information, the extent of the validity of the findings and recommendations, the reliability of the results obtained, their novelty and practical significance. Weaknesses are also pointed out together with the positive aspects. In conclusion, the reviewer gives a description of the general level of a Master's Thesis and evaluates it on 10-points scale. Review volume should be one to three typewritten pages.

No external review or special second reading is required for a Coursework. This function is carried out by the Coursework Defense Commission members, who provide substantial review and recommendations.

## **5. Coursework and Master's Theses Defense**

The Defense is held on a face-to-face basis when a Student presents the results of a Coursework / a Master's Thesis research in front of the Commission (in case of a Coursework) or the State Commission (in case of a Master's Thesis). The Defense is an open event, which may be attended by anyone interested in the research topic or the Defense procedure.

This event is guided by HSE regulations, which means special arrangements: total video recording, other special procedures, and strict time control.

The Programme Manager determines the individual Defense schedule. The Manager may but is not obliged to consider Students' requests for preferred Defense time.

### **5.1. Submitting Materials for Defence**

#### **5.1.1. Coursework**

The student must upload the final version of the Coursework in the LMS ([lms.hse.ru](https://lms.hse.ru)) in electronic non-scanned version not later than 7 days before the Defence. After the paper is uploaded, plagiarism checker is used to verify the originality of work.

The supervisor uploads in the electronic system (LMS, EJK, others) the review for the coursework before the defence procedure.

#### **5.1.2. Master's Thesis**

The student must upload the final version of the Thesis in the LMS ([lms.hse.ru](https://lms.hse.ru)) in electronic non-scanned version not later than 14 days before the Defence. After the paper is uploaded, plagiarism checker is used to verify the originality of work.

The supervisor uploads in LMS the review for the coursework before the defence procedure. After the review is uploaded to LMS, it is available to the student.

The study office sends the thesis to the reviewer. After the review is uploaded to the LMS, it is available to the student.

Students submit Courseworks / Master's Theses and other documents for Defense via LMS. If a Student fails to submit the documents on time there will be no admission to the Defense. This will result in an academic backlog for the 1<sup>st</sup> year Students and expulsion for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year Students.

In case of illness, Students may be granted extended deadline upon the medical certificate presentation. Other emergencies should be proven by a relevant document. More technical details can be announced closer to the date.

## 5.2. Specific Courseworks Defense Procedures

### Coursework Defense approximate time breakdown:

- 10 minutes (up to 15 minutes) – Student’s presentation of Coursework research.
- 5 minutes – questions/answers session, comments by a Supervisor and Commission members.

**Coursework Defense Evaluation.** Courseworks are graded by Commission members. The grading is done at the closed concluding session at the end of each Defense day; the grades are an average of the individual grades of the Commission members; only the final grade is publicly announced. The evaluation is influenced by:

- Research presentation,
- Student’s answers to questions of Commission members,
- Text quality of Coursework,
- Evaluation of research by a Supervisor,
- Independent judgement of Commission members.

## 5.3. Specific Master’s Thesis Defence Procedures

**Master’s Thesis Defence Admission.** A Student gets admission to the defence in the case of:

1. Successful completion of the theoretical (courses from the Individual Study Plan) and practical (internship) parts of studies.
2. Submission of the Master’s Thesis text and accompanying documents according to the Master’s Thesis package to LMS and the Study Office by the established deadlines.
3. Absence of plagiarism in the text.

If one of the requirements is not met, the Study Office initiates the formal procedure for withdrawing the admission to the Defense and further expulsion.

### Master’s Thesis Defence approximate time breakdown:

- Each student is guaranteed to have up to 20 min for the presentation of the Master’s research;
- Up to 10 minutes – questions from Commission members and answers of a Student;
- Up to 10 minutes – External review and Supervisor’s review announcement (if applicable), feedback from Commission members, and concluding remarks by a Student.

**Master’s Thesis Defence is video recorded.** If a Student has a complaint about the compliance to the procedures set by the HSE regulations (not the Master’s Programme regulation, i.e. this text), then the official **Appeal** procedure based on video recording and other evidence may be initiated.

**Master’s Thesis Defence Evaluation.** Master’s Theses are graded by the State Commission members. The grading is done at the closed concluding session at the end of each Defense day; the grades are an average of the individual grades of Commission members. Only the final grade is publicly announced. The Commission takes into consideration Reviews by a Supervisor and an External Reviewer (including grades proposed).

## 6. Turnitin Report: Excessive Borrowing and Plagiarism

Turnitin anti-plagiarism report is the mandatory requirement for admission to the defence of Courseworks and Master’s Theses. Turnitin report, prepared by the Programme Manager after the text of a Coursework/ a Master’s Thesis, is uploaded to LMS, initiates a special procedure:

- 1) A Supervisor is provided with a copy of the Turnitin report for all the relevant Students by the Programme Manager.
- 2) A Supervisor reviews the Turnitin report. If the 20% threshold of borrowing is not exceeded, the Supervisor’s review is done in a regular manner, unless there are signs of plagiarism.
- 3) If the 20% borrowing threshold is exceeded, then a Supervisor reviews the Turnitin report together with a Coursework/Master’s Thesis text and determines if there are problems of plagiarism and/or

excessive borrowing.

- 4) If excessive borrowing (i.e. lack of independent analytical contribution of a Student to the development of the topic) is detected, a Supervisor comments on it in the Supervisor's review. If borrowing is justifiable, then a Supervisor comments on it in the review and provides an explanation. The Defence Commission makes a decision on grading taking into account Supervisor's judgement. Extreme borrowing may be punished by a failure at the Defence.
- 5) If plagiarism in the text is detected and confirmed, a Supervisor comments on it in the Supervisor's Review and informs the Study Office about the plagiarism. After that, the Study Office initiates the formal procedure of the guilty Student's expulsion ([see Annex 2 to Internal Student Regulations at National Research University Higher School of Economics](#)).

## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Application for the Approval of the Topic

To the Academic Supervisor of the “Politics.  
Economics.Philosophy” Master’s Programme

From \_\_\_\_\_ year student

\_\_\_\_\_  
(full name)

#### ЗАЯВЛЕНИЕ/ APPLICATION

Прошу утвердить тему моей курсовой работы/ I submit for your approval the topic of my coursework

Тема на английском языке/Topic in English:

*(все слова в названии темы с большой буквы кроме артиклей и предлогов/capitalize all words except for articles and prepositions)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Тема на русском языке/ topic in Russian (filled by the Student or by the Supervisor):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Full name, signature, date)

Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Full name, signature, date)

Consultant (optional)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Full name, signature, date)

## Appendix 2. Application for the Topic Change

To the Academic Supervisor of the “Politics.  
Economics. Philosophy” Master’s Programme

From \_\_\_\_\_ year student

\_\_\_\_\_  
(full name)

### ЗАЯВЛЕНИЕ/ APPLICATION

Прошу утвердить измененную тему моей курсовой работы/ I submit for your approval the updated  
topic of my coursework

Тема на английском языке/Topic in English:

*(все слова в названии темы с большой буквы кроме артиклей и предлогов/capitalize all words except for  
articles and prepositions)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Тема на русском языке/ topic in Russian (filled by the Student or by the Supervisor):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Согласие научного руководителя/Signature of the Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
(подпись/signature)

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(подпись студента/Signature of the Student)

### Appendix 3. Scientific Supervisor's Review Template

#### Review of the Coursework by Scientific supervisor

Scientific supervisor (full name, title) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of the Coursework \_\_\_\_\_

Author (full name) \_\_\_\_\_

#### General characteristics

1. Originality and relevance of the research question and (or) the hypothesis  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Correspondence with the topic  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Topic development, fullness of presentation of the topic  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Elements of novelty in the results of research, quality of their meaningful interpretation  
(expressed in conclusions)  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Methodology and methods

1. Correctness and validity of the methodology  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Appropriateness of methods in relation to the topic, research question and research objectives  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Theoretical and empirical basis

1. Quality of conceptualization and operationalization of concepts used in the study  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Depth and breadth of acquaintance with the state of art in the field of study  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Consideration of interdisciplinary relationships and interactions  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Formal characteristics

1. Compliance with academic standards (style, terminology, citations)  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Text figuration (conformity with Guidelines)  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

FINAL GRADE (does not need to be an average of previous grades): \_\_\_\_\_

Substantive comments on the coursework (with strengths and weaknesses of the coursework)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 4. Review Template of the Master's Thesis

### Review of the Master's Thesis

Scientific supervisor (full name, title) \_\_\_\_\_  
*Or (choose one of the two options)*

Reviewer (full name, title) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of the Thesis \_\_\_\_\_

Author (full name) \_\_\_\_\_

#### General characteristics

1. Originality and relevance of the research question and/or research hypothesis, correct statement of goals and objectives of research **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. Topic development, knowledge of the subject area **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_
3. Elements of novelty in the results of research **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_
4. Quality of meaningful interpretation of results **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Methodology and methods

1. Validity of chosen methodology and correctness of its application **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. Appropriateness of methods in relation to the goals and objectives of the research **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Theoretical and empirical basis

1. Quality of conceptualization and operationalization of the concepts used in research **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. Depth and breadth of acquaintance with the state of art in the sphere of study, knowledge of relevant interdisciplinary studies in the area **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_
3. Consideration of interdisciplinary relationships and interactions **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Formal characteristics

1. Compliance with academic standards (style, terminology, citations) **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. Text figuration (compliance with the Guidelines) **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FINAL GRADE (does not need to be an average of previous grades):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Substantive and detailed comments on the Thesis (with strengths and weaknesses of the coursework)**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 5. Cover Page Sample: Coursework**

**Government of the Russian Federation**

**FEDERAL STATE AUTONOMOUS EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY  
“HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS”**

**Faculty of Social Sciences**

Coursework

.....*Topic*.....

Field of Study 41.04.04 Political Science  
Master’s Program “Politics. Economics. Philosophy”

Student:

**Full name**

Group #MPF XXX

Supervisor:

**Full name, title**

Moscow, 20XX

**Appendix 6. Cover Page Sample: Coursework**

**Government of the Russian Federation**

**FEDERAL STATE AUTONOMOUS EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY  
“HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS”**

**Faculty of Social Sciences**

**Full name**  
student

**MASTER THESIS**

**Topic**

Field of Study 41.04.04 Political Science  
Master’s Program “Politics. Economics. Philosophy”

Reviewer  
**Full name, title**

Scientific Supervisor  
**Full name, title**

Moscow, 20 \_\_\_\_

## Appendix 7. Application for the Supervisor Change

To the Academic Supervisor of the “Politics.  
Economics. Philosophy” Master’s Programme

From \_\_\_\_\_ year student

\_\_\_\_\_  
(full name)

### ЗАЯВЛЕНИЕ/ APPLICATION

Прошу изменить ранее назначенного руководителя курсовой работы на/ I would like to submit a  
request for Coursework supervisor change

Имя и должность нового руководителя/New Supervisor :

\_\_\_\_\_

Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Full name, signature, date)

Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Full name, signature, date)

New Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Full name, signature, date)