

2.2. Term Paper and Master's Thesis

A Term Paper 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 a Master's Thesis research preparation. A Master's Thesis is an individual research paper of a Student conducted under the supervision of a Scientific Supervisor and to be defended at the end of the second year of studies. A Term Paper and a Master's Thesis are to be written in English. The procedures related to a Term Paper and a Master's Thesis are regulated by HSE normative acts and Rules of the Programme.

A Student is to work on a regular basis with a Scientific Supervisor. Scientific Supervisor helps a Student in doing research for a Term Paper and a Master's Thesis. Consultant can be assigned to a Term Paper or a Master's Thesis in addition to a Supervisor. Consultant provides advice to a Student in the choice of specialized research methods, in the selection of literature, in the empirical data collection, and gives expert advice on the content of a Term Paper or a Master's Thesis.

2.2.1. The components of a Term Paper 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 Term Paper is uploaded in a single file in LMS System. A Master's Thesis is uploaded and submitted in a single file in LMS System.

2.2.2. Term Paper / Master's Thesis Formatting

COVER PAGE

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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

It should be generated automatically by using the appropriate Word option. It should contain the following elements: List of Abbreviations (if included), Introduction, Chapters, Paragraphs, Subparagraphs (if applicable), Conclusion, Bibliography, and Appendices (if included). A page number is to be indicated 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.

Additional Requirements

Volume:

- Term Paper: 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 centimetres.

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

2.2.3 Stages of Term Paper and Master's Thesis Development

Term Paper / Master's Thesis Topic, Supervisor and Consultant

A Student needs to submit an application with a proposed topic and a signature of a Supervisor (See Appendix 2). Topics are then to be approved by the Academic Council. At this stage, topics may be modified by the Academic Council of the Programme.

A Supervisor is to be chosen by a Student based on research priorities of a Student and Supervisor's specialisation. Supervisors provide individual consultations to Students. Students provide all materials in accordance with the individual schedule.

A Supervisor organizes support to Student's research, i.e. a Supervisor:

- Provides advice to a Student in determining the final research topic, in selecting literature and data, 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 Term Paper / a Master's Thesis;
- Assesses the quality of Student's performance in accordance with a Term Paper / a Master's Thesis research requirements;
- Provides recommendation for promoting to the Defence and grades papers;
- Provides expert judgement on the presence of plagiarism or borrowings in a Student's text.

A Supervisor may reject his appointment on the basis of:

- Student's lack of response to e-mails or messages;
- regular failures to comply with Supervisor's instructions for a Term Paper and a Master's Thesis;
- Student's absenteeism.

Supervisor addresses a statement with a description of the situation and recommendations for the solution to the Academic Supervisor of the Programme. The change of the Supervisor could be also initiated by a Student in a case of an inability of a Supervisor to provide the abovementioned support. Academic Supervisor of the Programme may recommend a new Supervisor to a Student if the arguments for such a change are significant and relevant. A Student may submit an application for a Supervisor change (See Appendix 6) not later than two months prior to the defence of a Term Paper or a Master's Thesis.

The change of a Supervisor is followed by the revision or the change of the topic, which is the responsibility of a Student and is fulfilled by submitting the form (see Appendix 3) signed by a new Supervisor to the Programme Manager. A Student can change the topic of a Term Paper / Master's Thesis without changing a Supervisor. The change must be approved by a Student's Supervisor and the Academic Supervisor of the Programme. The application for the new topic (if initiated by a Student) must be submitted before the preliminary defence.

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

2.2.4. Term Paper and Master's Thesis Defence

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

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

The Programme's Manager sets the individual defence schedule. The Manager may but is not obliged to consider Students' requests for preferred Defence time.

Submitting Materials for Defence Term Paper

A student must upload the final version of the Term Paper in the LMS (lms.hse.ru) in electronic non-scanned version not later than 7 days before the Defence. If a Student used any AI instruments for preparation of the Term Paper text, then it must be disclosed and indicated in the system during the uploading process. After the paper is uploaded, plagiarism checker is used to verify the originality of work.

A supervisor uploads in the electronic system (LMS, SmartLMS, EJK, etc.) the review for the Term Paper before the defence procedure. A Student is responsible of reaching out to a Supervisor for the Term Paper review.

A Student must upload the final version of a Master's Thesis in the LMS (lms.hse.ru) in electronic non-scanned form not later than 14 days prior to the defence. If a Student used any AI instruments for preparation of the Master's Thesis text, then it must be disclosed and indicated in the system during the uploading process. After the paper is uploaded, plagiarism checker is used to verify the

originality of work. A Supervisor uploads in LMS the review for the Thesis before the defence procedure (See Appendix 4). After the review is uploaded to LMS, it is available to the Student. The Study Office sends the thesis to a Reviewer. After the review is uploaded to the LMS, it is available to a student.

Students submit Term Papers/ Master's Theses and other documents for Defence via LMS. If a student fails to submit the documents on time, there will be no admission to the Defence. This will result in an academic backlog for first year Students and expulsion for second year students. In case of illness, a student may be granted extended deadline upon the medical certificate presentation. Other emergencies should be proven by relevant documents. More technical details can be announced closer to the date.

External Reviewer of a Master's Thesis

Master's Theses are subject to mandatory external reviews 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 provide 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), Student's 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 a 10-points scale. Review volume should be one to three typewritten pages. No external review or special second reading is required for a Term Paper. This function is carried out by the Term Papers Defence Commission members.

Specific Term Paper Defence Procedures

Term Paper Defence approximate time breakdown:

- 10 minutes – Student's presentation of a Term Paper research.
- 5 minutes – questions/answers session, comments by a Supervisor and Commission members.

Term Paper Defence Evaluation. Term Paper is graded by Commission members. The grading is done at a closed concluding session at the end of each Defence day; the grades are an average of the individual grades of the Commission members; only the final grade is publicly announced. The evaluation is determined by:

- Quality of the presentation,
- Student's answers to questions of Commission members,
- Quality of a Term Paper,
- Evaluation of research by a Supervisor,
- Independent judgements of Commission members.

Specific Master's Thesis Defence Procedures

Master's Thesis Defence Admittance. A Student gets admittance to the defence in the case of:

1. Successful completion of the theoretical (courses from the Individual Study Plan) and practical (internships) parts of studies. This includes a successful pre-defence of a Thesis' draft.
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 and in the text.

4. Absence of the improper use of AI instruments to generate content and/or conduct the analysis.

If one of the requirements is not met, the Study Office initiates the formal procedure for withdrawing the admittance to the Defence and further expulsion from the Programme.

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, 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 evidences may be initiated. Master's Theses are graded by the State Commission members. The grading is done at the closed concluding session at the end of each Defence 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).

2.2.5. Antiplagiarism Report: Excessive Borrowing, Plagiarism and/or AI generated content

"Antiplagiat" anti-plagiarism report is the mandatory requirement for admission to the defence of a Term Paper and a Master's Thesis. "Antiplagiat" anti-plagiarism report, prepared by the Programme Manager after the text of a Term Paper/ a Master's Thesis, is uploaded to LMS, initiates a special procedure:

1. A Supervisor is provided with a copy of the "Antiplagiat" anti-plagiarism report for all the relevant Students by the Programme Manager.
2. A Supervisor reviews the report. If the 20% threshold of borrowing and/or AI generated content is not exceeded, the Supervisor's review is done in a regular manner, unless there are signs of plagiarism or improper use of AI instruments.
3. If the 20% borrowing and/or AI generated content threshold is exceeded, then a Supervisor reviews the report together with a Term Paper/Master's Thesis text and determines if there are problems of plagiarism, use of AI instruments and/or excessive borrowing.
4. If excessive borrowing and/or AI generated content (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 borrowings and the disclosed use of AI instruments are justifiable, then a Supervisor comments on it in the review and provides an explanation. The Defence Commission decides on grading taking into account Supervisor's judgement. Unjustifiable borrowing and improper use of AI instruments to generate content and/or conduct the analysis may be punished by a failure at the Defence.
5. If any plagiarism and/or improper use of AI instruments is detected and confirmed, a Supervisor comments on it in the Supervisor's Review and informs the Study Office about the plagiarism and/or AI generated content. After that, the Study Office initiates the formal procedure of punishment (see Annex 2 to Internal Student Regulations at National Research University Higher School of Economics).

Appendix 2. 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 3. 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)

Review of the Coursework by Scientific supervisor

Scientific supervisor (full name, title) _____

Title of the Coursework _____

Author (full name) _____

This coursework meets the formal criteria stated in the Regulations for HSE Student Project Work, Research and Internships for the Master's Programme "Politics. Economics. Philosophy" YES / NO*

General Characteristics

1. Originality and relevance of the research question and (or) the hypothesis

Grade: _____

2. Topic development, fullness of presentation of the topic

Grade: _____

3. Validity of 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

Grade: _____

2. 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 _____

* If the "NO" option is chosen, final grade cannot be satisfactory.

Appendix 5. 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) _____

This thesis meets the formal criteria stated in the Regulations for HSE Student Project Work, Research and Internships for the Master's Programme "Politics. Economics. Philosophy" YES / NO*

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 _____

* If the "NO" option is chosen, final grade cannot be satisfactory.

Appendix 6. 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)

FEDERAL STATE AUTONOMOUS EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY
HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS
Faculty of Social Sciences

Student's name, surname

MASTER THESIS

Topic of the Thesis

Field of study 41.04.04 Political Science
Master's program 'Politics. Economics. Philosophy'
Department of politics and governance

Reviewer
Candidate of Sciences (Phd)

Scientific Supervisor
Assistant professor

Reviewer's full name

Supervisor's full name

Moscow 2026