

Master's Programme

PROTOTYPING FUTURE CITIES

Guidelines
for the Final Project

Moscow, 2020 - 2021



·Graduate
·School
·of Urbanism ...

*shukhov
lab*

DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The **Academic Supervisor** of the degree programme is a HSE academic staff member appointed as per the Rector's directive and responsible for the development, implementation and quality of the programme;

The **Academic Council** of a degree programme is the body responsible for academic supervision of the programme with respect to the consideration and evaluation of topics for term papers and theses;

A **Project** is a final graduation research-based design project;

A **degree programme** is a set of core educational characteristics (e.g., volume, scope, expected outcomes, etc.), administrative and teaching provisions, and assessment methods presented as a curriculum, an academic calendar, syllabuses for courses, and other components, as well as relevant evaluation and teaching materials;

HSE ES – educational standards for higher education, as set forth by HSE;

Guidelines (for the final project/final project preparation) are standards and recommendations for preparation and assessment of final projects/theses;

An **Employer** is a party to the educational process, an individual or a legal entity incentivized for student training as part of a given degree programme in order to subsequently hire its alumni;

Students are individuals studying in Master's level programmes;

The **University** or HSE refers to the National Research University Higher School of Economics;

The **Programme** Office is a curriculum support unit or programme coordinator responsible for administrative support of processes related to study within a given degree programme;

GSU is Vysokovsky Graduate School of Urbanism;

FSC refers to Final State Certification;

SEB is the State Examination Board;

HE FSES – Federal State Standards of Higher Education;

LMS (Learning Management System) is a platform for the provision of online support in regards to educational process at HSE.

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1. FINAL PROJECT

Final Projects are prepared as conceptual schemes for urban development based on research and propose new patterns or a strategy or a convention for the construction of an object or a new system in contemporary environment.

Final Projects are prepared by students individually using contemporary urban research methods, and shall be devoted to relevant problems in urban studies and urban design. Furthermore, Final Projects represent a project with results correlating to the topic, goals and objectives formulated by a given author.

In the Final Project, a student must demonstrate his/her theoretical, methodological, empirical and design skills acquired during the period of study in the Prototyping Future Cities (hereafter, "PFC") programme, as well as demonstrate abilities in self-study and creative work.

A Final Project is comprised of the following parts (more details pp. 8-9):

1. **Project Brief** that includes a problem statement and Project objectives and is presented in a text format (apr. 5000 characters);
2. **Research Study** in a text format with illustrations and diagrams (apr. 25 000 – 30 000 characters);
3. **Concept** that explains the logic of the Project and is presented as a scheme or diagram;
4. **Project Proposal** that should include explanatory texts, diagrams, spatial schemes, and other visual materials explaining the idea and future impact of the Project (no less than 5 spreads, 1 spread = 2 A4);
5. **Prototype** - is a part of Project Proposal (or Research Study), a physical or digital prototype of the technology for urban environments.

2. PROCESS OF PREPARATION

The process for the Final Project preparation includes the following required stages:

- every student chooses his/her topic for the Final Project (including a preliminary study of literature on relevant topics and a feasibility study) and looks for an appropriate supervisor;
- the student prepares a work schedule jointly with the supervisor;
- the student develops a programme for research work and receives the supervisor's approval;
- the student submits a synopsis / a compact description of the Project to his/her supervisor;
- the student receives the supervisor's approval of the synopsis / description of the project;
- collection, systematization, study and analysis of available sources, statistical data and research literature on the subject of the student's research;
- relevant chapters are prepared in accordance with the milestones set forth in the student's schedule of work and the progress is presented at midterm reviews;
- a final draft of the Final Project paper is first submitted to the supervisor, to be subsequently corrected, if necessary;
- a last version of the paper is uploaded to LMS, and is subject to review via the "Anti-plagiat" system;
- a last version of the paper is submitted to the supervisor and a reviewer;
- a last version of the paper is submitted to the Programme Office electronically and in hard copy;
- the paper is evaluated and reviewed by the supervisor;
- the paper is reviewed by an external critic (reviewers may be faculty members or researchers at HSE or any other institutions of higher education and research centres, as well as recognized experts and researchers);
- a public presentation of the Final Project is conducted in presence of the SEB.

3. TOPIC

A given topic of the Final Project is a formulated research problem, including the object and subject matter of a project research, representing the contents of the paper.

Topics proposed and adjusted by students must be approved by their Supervisors and the Academic Council of master programme and submitted to LMS in accordance with the deadline.

A Final Project topic must satisfy the following requirements:

- academic and practical relevance;
- be based on theoretical and methodological knowledge, acquired in the course of studies in the PFC programme;
- be based on available literature, research materials and required secondary data;
- present an opportunity for a student to conduct theoretical and empirical research;
- present an opportunity for a relevant project proposal.

4. FINAL PROJECT STRUCTURE

Part 1. Project Brief

Project Brief is an assignment that is based on a student's own problematization and a case for change. It could be also an external brief provided by an interested client or an organisation/institution. The Brief should clearly state a problem that a project can solve or an opportunity that a project can explore and exploit.

It should also define the territory and context of the project (e.g. an area, a city, a district, etc.) and state the objectives and deliverables for both the Research part and the Project Proposal.

/ PROBLEMATIZATION

Written document of about 5000 characters that can include the following subchapters: problem or opportunity statement; definition of the territory; parties involved; research objectives; project objectives, requirements and deliverables.

Part 2. Project Research

As the Final Project should be research-based, the important part of the Project is the Research study that responds to the objectives stated in the Brief and forms a basis for the Project Proposal.

For this part it is mandatory to formulate the research question (s), explain the methodology, present the research findings in a clear and articulate form, and end with the conclusions and recommendations for the Project Proposal.

/ METHODOLOGY

Written document of about 25 000 - 30 000 characters (10-12 pages = 5-6 spreads), with illustrations and diagrams.

In structure, logic and language it follows the general requirements for the term paper (see Annex 1), although it does not need to adhere strictly to the exact same composition of chapters.

Part 3. Concept

Concept is presented as a flowchart or scheme or diagram that demonstrates the logic of the Project.

/ LOGIC OF THE PROJECT

Flowchart / scheme / diagram (1-2 pages = 1 spread).

Part 4. Project Proposal

This part should present an integrated design scheme with fact-based rationale. The Proposal is expected to be founded on critical and design thinking and respond adequately to the Project Brief.

/ IDEA AND FUTURE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

No less than 10 pages / 5 spreads.

The elements of the Proposal depend on the design approach and the scale of operation and can include a manifesto, a system, a development plan, a description of a platform, a set of recommendations, (new) standards, rules and regulation, a scheme for spatial organisation, description of a (new) software, budget calculations, and a communication strategy.

Should include explanatory texts and be rich in original visual information, such as graphs, photos, renders, collages, etc., produced by the student him/herself. It could also feature quotes from the experts.

Project Proposal is expected to be holistic and supported by the multidisciplinary expertise. It should present a clear solution to the problem; estimation of a budget; a timeline for realisation; a proposal for collaborators; and a description of the future impact.

Part 5. Prototype

Prototype is a part of the Project Proposal (or Research Study) and an instrument for achieving results. It allows either to test a hypothesis or to get an answer to the question (s) formulated in the Project Research.

/ TEST LAUNCH

Physical or digital prototype of the technology for urban environments.

5. SUPERVISOR

A supervisor appointed by the GSU Dean's directive shall be responsible for overseeing a student's Final Project.

Final Project supervisors are appointed from among HSE staff or any external person holding an academic degree (doctor of sciences, PhD, and/or candidate of sciences), or professionals with at least three (3) years of experience.

Supervisors must perform the following duties:

- advising students on how to shape a final topic for their Final Project, drafting Final Project outlines, and preparation schedules, drawing up a Project synopsis/description and initial draft, and selecting appropriate scholarly literature and resources;
- helping students choose an appropriate research or project methodology; collaborating with students to define the provisional stages for the topic exploration and development;
- monitoring the progress and quality of Final Project preparation against a student's outline and preparation schedule;
- notifying the Programme Office if students are behind schedule;
- advising students on the content of their Final Project;
- helping with experts, external consultants and reviewer;
- assessing the quality of Final Project as per established requirements (in particular, providing a review);
- confirming Final Project information that students intend to publish on HSE's corporate portal (website) and other public online platforms.

Supervisors are entitled to:

- select a suitable mode of interaction with students (e.g., agreeing on a Final Project preparation schedule, the frequency of face-to-face meetings or other communications, etc.);
- take into account compliance with the preparation schedule and deadlines for submission of a first draft and final draft when grading students' Final Project;

- request that students prepare and present brief summaries of received recommendations and further steps for Final Project preparation after each face-to-face meeting;
- request that students pay close attention to received recommendations and attend meetings well-prepared;
- take part in committee proceedings at Final Project presentations;
- take part in SEB proceedings at Final Project presentations (defences).

If a Final Project supervisor is not employed at HSE, monitors appointed from among the University's staff must assume the following duties:

- regularly checking the progress of Final Project preparation against a student's outline and preparation schedule (jointly with the Final Project supervisor);
- notifying the Programme Office if students are behind schedule.

For an interdisciplinary Final Project, an advisor may be appointed.

Both a student and a supervisor may submit a substantiated request to change a supervisor / stating his/her refusal to supervise a student's Final Project to the Academic Supervisor of the Programme no later than in two (2) calendar months to the deadline for submission of the Final Project. In turn, the Academic Supervisor of the Programme may reject the student's /supervisor's request with an explanation provided.

In the event of any conflict or dispute, if a request for changing a supervisor/refusal to supervise the Final Project is not granted, this particular issue shall be settled by the GSU Dean.

6. ADMINISTRATION OF FINAL PROJECT PREPARATION

Monitoring of the progress and quality of the Final Project preparations for subsequent presentation shall be assumed by the supervisor and/or a monitor, as well as by the Programme Office with respect to the deadlines for submission of all necessary documents and completion of all stages of the Final Project preparation.

The progress of the work is presented by a student at the preliminary presentations / midterm reviews.

Preliminary presentation / midterm review procedure:

- student's presentation (up to 10 minutes);
- questions and answers;
- discussion, comments provided by the supervisor, advisor (s), monitor, guest critics;
- further recommendations.

7. PRESENTATION / DEFENCE OF THE FINAL PROJECT

Final Projects are subject to review and public presentation before an examination committee.

The final grade presented by the examination committee for a student's final work highly depends on his/her oral presentation. The presentation of the Final Project must take up to 15/20 minutes, as well as be clear and to the point.

In order to give committee members an opportunity to evaluate the student's ability to independently solve academic and practical tasks in regards to urban planning, his/her presentation should be delivered as per the following plan:

- Final Project topic;
- relevance of term Final Project;
- goals and objectives of Final Project;
- scientific or/and design novelty of Final Project;
- principal results of Final Project;
- practical relevance of Final Project;
- key areas for further research or projective explorations.

The student supports his/her report with a presentation, illustrating the results of their work and research (in PowerPoint, Keynote, Pages or any other programme of choice).

In addition to his/her presentation, the student may provide handout materials to the committee members, as this might help them to get a better idea of the different points discussed during the Final Project public presentation (defense). Printed A1 panel may be provided along with the printed document and oral presentation. Handout materials and printed A1 panels are optional.

8. FINAL PROJECT ASSESSMENT

The grade for a Final Project shall be based on the following elements:

- grade, recommended by a supervisor and reflected in his/her review (Annex 4.2);
- grade, recommended by a reviewer and reflected in his/her review (Annex 4.2);
- grade, given by the committee as a collective grade based on the results of the student's presentation.

The final grade formula is:

$$\begin{aligned} &0.7 * [\text{grade provided by the committee for the student's defence/presentation}] \\ &+ 0.15 * [\text{supervisor's grade}] \\ &+ 0.15 * [\text{grade provided by the reviewer, or average grade given by reviewers}] \end{aligned}$$

The final grade is rounded according to the mathematical rounding rules, however grades below 4 points are not rounded up. In this case, it is considered that the student did not overcome the required minimum threshold and the work is assessed as 'fail'.

A supervisor and reviewer(s) shall evaluate a paper on a 10-point grading scale on the basis of the following criteria:

Brief:

- clarity and relevance of a problem or an opportunity stated in the Project Brief;
- novelty of the Project Brief and originality of the chosen approach;
- scale of action: does the Brief call for a one-off solution for a particular territory or give an opportunity to create a prototype, a system or a network on a larger scale?

Research Study:

- relevance of the problem/matter being researched; level of response to the Project Brief;
- acquaintance with scientific/academic research methods (e.g., adequate use of methodological tools and relevance of goals vis-a-vis the results generated);
- quality, novelty and relevance of the sources presented in the Research part, and grounds for their use; relevance of the sources to the particular problem, hypothesis and objective of the given research;
- interconnection between the data/information presented in the text and the established research objectives; reliability and novelty of the results; ability to work independently;
- presentation of the student's own opinion; sustainability of conclusions and recommendations; relevance of conclusions to the research objectives and to the Project Brief;
- ability to conduct research as a basis for further projective exploration and concept development;

Project Proposal:

- quality and novelty of the proposed design solution;
- quality and accuracy of the visual materials: maps, infographics, plans, sections, collages, renders, etc.;
- adequacy of response to the Project Brief and logical interconnection with the Research Part of the Project;
- ability to design systematically and in a holistic manner, activating competencies and expertise from various fields;
- consistency of the Project narrative and argumentation;
- practical applicability of the Project proposal.

9. KEY DEADLINES

Date	Phase	Responsibility	Comments
February 5	Midterm 1. Presentation of the Project Synopsis/Description Project Synopsis/Description and Work Plan are submitted to the Programme Office.	Student / Supervisor	Supervisor should be present in person or via Zoom
April 23	Assigning the change of Supervisor by directive	Programme Office / Student	The new Supervisor should be approved by Academic Supervisor 4 days before this deadline
April 26	Midterm 2. Presentation of the Final Project Brief, Research and Concept are completed.	Student / Supervisor	Supervisor should be present in person or via Zoom
May 25 (30 days till the Final Presentation)	First Final Project draft is submitted	Student / Supervisor / Programme Office	Programme manager should be copied in all correspondence with the Supervisor
	External Reviewers are confirmed and assigned by directive	Academic Supervisor / Supervisor / Reviewer	
	Assigning the change of Topic by directive	Programme Office / Student	The new Topic should be approved by Academic Supervisor 4 days before this deadline
June 9 (15 days till the Final presentation)	Complete Project - is uploaded to LMS system; - is submitted to the Supervisor	Student	If the work is not submitted on time, the student will not be allowed to present at the Final Presentation and shall be dismissed. Programme manager should be copied in all correspondence with the Supervisor.
	"Anti-plagiarism" check	Programme Office	If plagiarism is detected university will take administrative actions according to the HSE Rules and Regulations
June 11 (13 days till the Final presentation)	Final Project is sent to an External Reviewer	Programme Office / Reviewer	
June 18 (6 days till the Final Presentation)	Supervisor's review and written feed-back from an External Reviewer are submitted to the Programme Office	Supervisor / Reviewer / Programme Office	
June 19 (5 days till the Final Presentation)	Student receives feed-back from an External Reviewer	Programme Office / Student	
June 24-25	Final Presentation / Defense	Student / Supervisor / Academic Supervisor	Supervisor should be present in person or via Zoom

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON CONTENTS AND STRUCTURE OF FINAL PROJECT PAPER

Contents and Structure of the Final Project

- Front page;
- Table of contents;
- A list of tables and illustrations;
- A list of abbreviations;
- Annotation;
- Project Brief, a short introductory text stating the objectives and deliverables of the Project;
- Research Study, consisting of an undefined number of sections, depending on the topic, range of applied methods, and other factors;
- Concept that demonstrates the logic of the Project;
- Project Proposal, consisting of an undefined number of sections and presenting the main design scheme that responds to the Brief and is research-based;
- Bibliography;
- Annexes (if any).

The individual characteristics of the Final Project's structure (e.g., subdivision of its main part into chapters/sections/paragraphs) shall depend on the topic, goals and objectives of the research project, as well as the sequence of work. The same applies to the materials related to the prototype, thus it can be included into the Research or Proposal part.

Final Project Front Page (Annex 4.1)

Final Project Table of Contents

Contents shall include the titles of the main parts of the Final Project and the individual numbers of pages: Brief, Research part with the titles of chapters and paragraphs/sections inside the chapter (if any), Project Proposal bibliography and annexes (if any).

Tables and Illustrations

Lists of illustrations and tables must be presented after the contents and contain the titles and page numbers for all illustrations and tables in the paper and attachments thereto. Illustrations and tables must be numbered separately. As such, page numbering may either be continuous or linked to individual sections and chapters of the given paper (e.g., "Picture 4.2.1" – Picture No. 1, in Subsection 2 of Chapter 4, etc.).

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviated terms or concepts used in paper must be presented with a definition when used for the first time in the text of the paper.

Project Brief

The Brief should include the following:

- problem or opportunity statement;
- definition of the territory;
- parties involved;
- Research objectives,
- Project objectives, requirements and deliverables.

Research Study

This part should include the following:

- introduction (relevance and importance of the research problem);
- literature review (extent of previous research on the topic (e.g., monographs, collections, and articles), with the names of authors and titles of papers in footnotes; limitations of previous research on the problem and how your research will contribute to filling the gap);
- research objective;
- research question(s);
- methodology;
- research findings in a clear and articulate form;
- research summary/conclusions and recommendations for the Project Proposal.

Concept

Flowchart or scheme or diagram that demonstrates the logic of the Project.

Project Proposal

The elements/subchapters of the Proposal depend on goals and objectives of the project, the design approach and the scale of operation.

It should present:

- a clear solution to the problem;
- an estimation of a budget;
- a timeline for realisation;
- a proposal for collaborators;
- a description of the future impact.

Bibliography

A paper's bibliography must specify its main scientific sources (e.g., monographs, collections, articles, etc.), including information that is relevant for understanding and further development of the analysed phenomena (e.g., theoretical, methodological and empirical), which was used by the author during the paper's preparation (there are references thereto in the text of this paper). All sources of statistical and other data should also be presented in the bibliography (even if references thereto are provided in the paper's narrative).

Annexes

If necessary, all materials used during the research process and work development, and not included in the main body of the paper, but may provide more comprehensive and detailed understanding of the theoretical, methodological and empirical foundation of the research and relevance of the generated results, are shall be presented in the paper's Annexes. Therefore, the following information should be presented in the annex: documents, techniques/methods, tables, diagrams, graphs, description of programmes and practical steps, etc. The aforementioned details are not included in the chapters, paragraphs and sections of a paper owing to their redundancy.

ANNEX 2.

NARRATIVE STYLE OF FINAL PROJECT PAPER

The text of a given Final Project must be clear and concise, as well as correspond to the given titles of its chapters (sections) and paragraphs, and respond to the goals and objectives initially formulated by the author. Academic and special terminology from those fields of study that are tackled by the Final Project must be used in the text. The author must strictly stick to an academic style. Journalistic jargon, clichés, and slang, as well as terms and phrases that are not commonly used in the academic literature and diminutive suffixes, should be avoided as much as possible. Furthermore, elements of elevated style, populism, political slogans, accusations and emotional evaluations, are unacceptable in the Final Project.

Authors must employ an academic style, free from extra exaltation or emotion. As such, readers must be able to focus on the main points of the problem being examined.

The following elements are unacceptable in the text of the Final Project:

- using different scientific terms for one and the same concept, even if they have close meanings (i.e., an author must choose one term and explain his/her reasons for this choice);
- using abbreviated forms of words, except for abbreviations stipulated by English orthographical rules, as well as special standards in different scientific and research fields.

Authors must stick to common terminology, definitions, abbreviations and symbols. Excessive clichés must be avoided. Uniform terms and definitions shall be consistently used in the course of a given Final Project, as well as in a list of abbreviations and the paper's contents.

If a company's name or the title of a document is mentioned in the Final Project, as well as on the front page and in the contents, for the first time, the full name or title must be provided, in case such names or titles have an abbreviated form. If abbreviations are used further on in the text, an abbreviation must be placed in parentheses after it is mentioned for the first time. For example, this can be presented as follows: "... land use and development rules (hereafter, "LUDR")".

Abbreviated terms shall be included in the Final Project list of abbreviations.

The paper must also provide a logical reasoning and be delivered in an argumentative style. Furthermore, students should avoid using a referential style.

ANNEX 3.

GENERAL RULES FOR FORMATTING AND SIZE OF FINAL PROJECT PAPER

It is advisable to commence the introduction, individual sections and paragraphs inside a chapter, conclusion, bibliography and annex from a new page.

Elements of a given paper must feature a coherent numbering system.

Titles of sections and paragraphs must be concise and correspond to their contents. No periods shall be put at the end of a section or paragraph title. If the titles of sections and paragraphs consist of two (2) sentences, they must be separated by a period.

The following parameters are applicable

font	Arial
font size	- 14 for the headings of sections; - 11 for the main text; - 10 for captions
interline spacing	1.5
paragraph break	12.5 mm
fields	upper – 20 mm; bottom – 20 mm; left – 25 mm; right – 15 mm
header space	upper – 10 mm; bottom – 10 mm

All sources of literature, information, illustrations and any other quoted or interpreted materials must contain references. Bibliographic references and bibliography lists shall be provided pursuant to the requirements of APA 6 (American Psychological Association, 6th edition)

Source in the text: (Oliveira, 2013)

In bibliography: Oliveira, V. (2013). Morpho: a methodology for assessing urban form. *Urban Morphology*, 17(1), 21–33.

Recommended Final Project's size

Final Project is measured in characters, including punctuation marks, figures and spaces. It includes bibliography but excludes annexes.

Recommended size: 50 000 - 100 000 characters.

Brief:

- is presented in the text format and could include 1 illustration and 1 diagram with captions;
- recommended size is 5000 characters.

Research Study:

- is presented in a text format and could include some illustrations, diagrams, and maps with captions;
- recommended size is 25 000 - 30 000 characters.

Concept:

- is presented as a flowchart or scheme or diagram (1-2 pages / 1 spread)

Project Proposal:

- is presented in the text format and should be rich in visual information, such as graphs, photos, renders, collages, etc., produced by the student him/herself.;
- recommended size is no less than 20 000 characters / 10 pages / 5 spreads.

NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY
HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

Faculty of Urban and Regional Development

Student's full name

FINAL PROJECT TOPIC

Master's Degree Final Project
in the field of study: Urban Development (07.04.04)
academic programme: Prototyping Future Cities

Reviewer
degree and title, organization, position
Last name and initials

Supervisor
degree and title, organization, position
Last name and initials

National Research University - Higher School of Economics
Faculty for urban and Regional Development

Supervisor's / External Review of the Final Project

Full name of a student:
Master's Programme 'Prototyping Future Cities'

Topic:

	Evaluation Criteria	Grade (1-10)
1	The Final Project contents corresponds with the chosen topic	
2	Project Brief 1. clarity and relevance of a problem or an opportunity stated in the Project Brief; 2. novelty of the Project Brief and originality of the chosen approach; 3. scale of action: does the Brief call for a one-off solution for a particular territory or give an opportunity to create a prototype, a system or a network on a larger scale?	
3	Project Research 1. relevance of the problem/matter being researched; level of response to the Project Brief; 2. acquaintance with scientific/academic research methods (e.g., adequate use of methodological tools and relevance of goals vis-a-vis the results generated); 3. quality, novelty and relevance of the sources presented in the Research part, and grounds for their use; relevance of the sources to the particular problem, hypothesis and objective of the given research; 4. interconnection between the data/information presented in the text and the established research objectives; reliability and novelty of the results; ability to work independently; 5. presentation of the student's own opinion; sustainability of conclusions and recommendations; relevance of conclusions to the research objectives and to the Project Brief; 6. ability to conduct research as a basis for further projective exploration and concept development;	
4	Project Proposal 1. quality and novelty of the proposed design solution; 2. quality and accuracy of the visual materials: maps, infographics, plans, sections, collages, renders, etc.; 3. adequacy of response to the Project Brief and logical interconnection with the Research Part of the Project; 4. ability to design systematically and in a holistic manner, activating competencies and expertise from various fields; 5. consistency of the Project narrative and argumentation; 6. practical applicability of the Project proposal;	
5	Recommended grade (arithmetic mean based on the beforementioned criteria)	

Comments and further assessment remarks (up to 600 words with an emphasis to the strong points of the Final Project and weaknesses (if any)):

Reviewer's academic degree, title, academic unit/school (place of employment)

_____/signature/_____/name and initials/

Date: