



NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Master's Degree Regulations



Article 1. Scope of Regulation

1.1. This Regulation has been developed in accordance with the Law of Georgia “On Higher Education” and regulates the rules for the implementation of the Master's and Master's educational programs of the “NEU - National Educational University” (hereinafter referred to as the “University”), as well as the minimum standard necessary for the award of the Master's academic degree.

Article 2. Objectives of the Master's Degree

2.1. The Master's Degree is the second level of academic higher education, a set of study programs/programs that contain elements of scientific research;

2.2. The Master's Degree aims to prepare a specialist or researcher after the Bachelor's degree and prepares a person to work with the obtained qualification;

2.3. The Master's Degree aims to create the theoretical foundations necessary for continuing studies in doctoral studies and to develop general skills.

Article 3. Admission to Master's Degree

3.1. Under the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education", only a Master's degree candidate who has successfully passed the minimum competency threshold determined by the higher education institution in the general Master's degree examination and the examination/examinations determined by the higher education institution established by the legislation of Georgia has the right to continue studying in the Master's degree educational program;

3.2. Passing internal university exams - the exam determined by the institution (internal university exam) will reveal the general level of knowledge within the framework of the chosen specialty and the B2 level of English. Questions/tests for internal university exams and criteria for assessing students' knowledge will be posted on the official website of the university at least one month before the start of the exams (www.freeacademy.edu.ge);

3.3. A candidate who presents a certificate confirming knowledge of the English language at the B2 level, namely: FCE; IELTS; TOEFL. Also, a candidate who has completed a bachelor's or master's degree program in English is exempted from the English language test.

3.4. According to the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia No. 10/N of February 4, 2010 “Rules for Transfer from a Higher Educational Institution to Another Higher Educational Institution”, enrollment in a master's degree program by mobility is possible twice a year, within the deadlines established by the Ministry, in compliance with the mandatory procedures and rules established by higher educational institutions;

3.5. Master's degree candidates/students have the right to study in a master's degree educational program without passing common master's exams in accordance with the

Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia No. 224 of December 29, 2011 "Rules for Submission and Review of Documents by Master's Degree Candidates/Students Having the Right to Study in a Higher Educational Institution without Passing Common Master's Exams".

Article 4. Master's thesis

- 4.1.** Master's thesis is a mandatory research component of the educational program;
- 4.2.** Completion of the mandatory research component of the master's program is confirmed by the submission and defense of the master's thesis (presentation, discussion);
- 4.3.** Master's thesis is a research work performed by the student within the framework of the master's educational program, which summarizes the master's student's research skills, demonstrates the student's ability to independently conduct research, design the work, publicly present and defend it;
- 4.4.** The purpose of completing the master's thesis and its public defense is to form and develop the student's ability to independently conduct research, present the results of the achieved learning, and publicly communicate their reasoning in a reasoned manner;
- 4.5.** The topic of the master's thesis must correspond to the current scientific direction for the specialty of the master's educational program;
- 4.6.** The master's thesis is completed in compliance with the general requirements established by this Regulation and the additional requirements provided for in the master's thesis syllabus of the relevant program;
- 4.7.** The master's thesis supervisor and topic are selected by the master's thesis student at the beginning of the fourth semester of study, during the academic registration period;
- 4.8.** The master's thesis is completed by the master's thesis student individually, taking into account the instructions of the master's thesis supervisor;
- 4.9.** The mandatory research component of the master's thesis can be completed only by those students who meet the conditions stipulated by the educational component of the master's program and accumulate the appropriate credits in all academic courses before defending the master's thesis;
- 4.10.** The master's thesis is defended by the master's thesis defense commission established by order of the university rector.

Article 5. Selection of the topic and supervisor of the master's thesis

- 5.1.** The topic of the submitted master's thesis is approved by the relevant school council;

5.2. The master's thesis supervisor and topic are selected by the master's thesis supervisor at the beginning of the fourth semester of study, during the academic registration period.

Article 6. Supervisor of the master's thesis

6.1. The master's thesis supervisor guides the work of the master's student, assists him/her in developing the master's research project/prospectus and bibliography, searching for/selecting sources, formulating the research problem, forming research questions and hypotheses, and provides general guidance on current challenges in the field and conducting research in the relevant direction;

6.2. The master's thesis supervisor is responsible for providing guidance on the implementation of the research component and providing direction to the student for the successful implementation of the master's thesis;

6.3. The master's thesis supervisor is obliged to gradually check the process of working on the topic, make comments, recommendations, give advice and help the master's student conduct the research correctly, familiarize himself/herself with the prospectus and confirm that the master's student has developed a correct plan for continuing work on the master's topic. After completing the thesis, the supervisor must prepare a conclusion that includes the following information:

- Name, surname of the master's student;
- Title of the thesis;
- A brief overview of the thesis, indicating its strengths and weaknesses;
- Recommendation for submitting the thesis to the thesis committee.

6.4. The master's thesis is supervised by an academic or invited staff member of the institution who has a doctoral degree in the relevant field;

6.5. One academic/invited staff member can supervise a maximum of 5 (five) master's theses at the same time;

6.6. The supervisor has the right to refuse to supervise a specific thesis during the work process and apply to the dean of the relevant school with appropriate arguments. In this case, the time factor must be taken into account so that the master's student and the program director can respond in a timely manner.

Article 7. Master's thesis reviewer

7.1. The purpose of reviewing a master's thesis is to objectively assess its research value by a person representing a relevant or related field;

7.2. A master's thesis reviewer may be:

- Professor(s) involved in the program;
- An invited person who has an academic degree equivalent to a doctorate or master's degree in a relevant field or field and experience in research on relevant/related issues;
- An invited person who has an academic degree equivalent to a doctorate or master's degree in a relevant field or field and practical experience (not less than 5 years).

7.3. The relevant school determines the reviewer and informs the student of the reviewer's identity;

7.4. The reviewer shall send a written review of the master's thesis to the relevant school no later than 5 (five) days before the date of defense of the master's thesis.

Article 8. Master's Research Project/Prospectus

8.1. The master's research project/prospectus is a preliminary outline of the master's thesis, on which work is being carried out jointly by the master's thesis supervisor and the student in the format of independent work;

8.2. The prospectus should indicate the relevance of the research topic, the theoretical and practical value of the selected topic, the resources used (literature, statistics, etc.);

8.3. The master's research project/prospectus should include:

- Relevance of the research topic;
- Research methods;
- Practical significance and/or scientific novelty;
- Research hypothesis/hypotheses;
- Proposed conclusions;
- Initial list of bibliography;
- Prospectus design;
- Rational use of calendar plan/time;
- Determination of main research questions;
- Expected results of the research.

8.4. The prospectus should consist of 5 - 10 pages;

8.5. Prospectus design:

The text of the master's research project/prospectus should be performed on A4 format paper, font - Sylfaen, size 12, margins (on all sides) 2 cm. Minimum font size for page

numbers and footnotes – 10, line spacing 1.5 cm. The master's research project/prospectus should be printed on only one page and all pages of the prospectus should be numbered sequentially on the lower right side;

8.6. The submission of the master's research project/prospectus to the master's topic supervisor must be carried out no later than 14 (fourteen) calendar days after the topic is approved, where the master's student presents a completed and properly formatted project/prospectus. The master's topic supervisor evaluates the submitted project/prospectus in accordance with the established criteria. The final version is returned to the master for further work;

8.7. In case of receiving a negative assessment of the master's research project/prospectus and/or failure to appear, the master's student is given the right to additional work on the master's research project for a period of 7 (seven) calendar days;

8.8. In case of failure to use the additional period of the master's project/prospectus, failure to appear or a second negative assessment of the revised version, the master's student loses the right to defend the master's thesis in the current semester.

Article 9. Master's thesis evaluation

9.1. The completed master's thesis shall be submitted to the master's thesis supervisor for the purpose of presenting a conclusion no later than the 15th week of the fourth semester of study;

9.2. The student is obliged to complete the master's thesis according to the following established methodology:

- Relevance of the research topic;
- Research goal;
- Research objectives;
- Research subject;
- Research object;
- Determination of the research methodology;
- Development of a research instrument;
- Conducting theoretical and empirical research;
- Development of conclusions and recommendations;
- References.

9.3. The master's thesis supervisor checks the master's thesis for plagiarism before submitting it to the reviewer;

- 9.4. The master's thesis is checked by the electronic program "Turnitin";
- 9.5. The master's thesis supervisor is authorized to return the thesis to the master's student once and give recommendations in case of plagiarism detection;
- 9.6. Up to 10% similarity is allowed in the master's thesis;
- 9.7. If plagiarism is confirmed in the final version of the master's thesis, the thesis is not evaluated and the master's student has the right to revise and submit the same thesis;
- 9.8. In case of a positive assessment of the master's thesis, the supervisor writes a conclusion on the performance of the thesis and the thesis is transferred to the reviewer for review;
- 9.9. The assessment of the master's thesis is determined on the basis of the conclusions of the supervisor and the reviewer;
- 9.10. The final assessment of the thesis is made by all members of the Master's Thesis Defense Commission Based on the summary of the member's assessment;
- 9.11. The Master's Thesis Defense Commission evaluates the work once in accordance with the established criteria (with a final assessment);
- 9.12. The assessment of the Master's Thesis Defense is determined by the arithmetic average of the points received, which the members of the Master's Thesis Defense Commission determine individually (the sum of the points received divided by the number of members of the commission);
- 9.13. Credit can be received only with one of the positive assessments provided for by the legislation;
- 9.14. The assessment of the master's student's achievements is carried out using a 100 - point system;
- 9.15. **The assessment system allows for five types of positive assessments:**

The student's knowledge will be assessed using a 100-point system. In this assessment system, points are distributed as follows:

Assessment system

The student's knowledge will be assessed using a 100-point system system. In this grading system, points are distributed as follows:

A) Five types of positive assessments:

A.a) (A) Excellent – 91-100 points of assessment;

A.b) (B) Very good – 81-90 points of maximum assessment;

A.c) (C) Good – 71-80 points of maximum assessment;

A.d) (D) Satisfactory – 61-70 points of maximum assessment;

A.e) (E) Sufficient – 51-60 points of maximum assessment.

B) Two types of negative assessments:

B.a) (FX) Failed – 41-50 points of maximum assessment, which means that the student needs more work and is given the right to take an additional defense of independent work once (no later than 5 calendar days after the announcement of the results);

b.b) (F) Failed – 40 points of maximum assessment and less, which means that the work done by the student is not sufficient and in case of receiving the above assessment, the master's student loses the right to submit the same scientific and research component.

9.16. Positive assessment of the master's thesis:

A. In case of positive assessment of the master's thesis, the master's student is awarded the academic degree of master, which will be confirmed by the issuance of a master's diploma in his name;

B. A diploma confirming the academic degree of master is issued by the institution. The diploma and diploma supplement are drawn up in accordance with the established procedure of the institution. The master's diploma is signed by the dean and rector of the relevant school.

9.17. The grounds for negative assessment of the master's thesis are:

A. Failure to appear for a public defense without good reason;

B. Refusal to defend it after appearing for a public defense;

C. Detection of a violation of academic integrity/plagiarism;

D. Attempt to obtain an assessment By bullying the examiner, cheating, fraud, and/or other methods that are unacceptable to the student.

Article 10. Components and criteria for evaluating a master's thesis

10.1. The evaluation of a master's thesis is multi-component. The evaluation is subject to an interim evaluation directly by the thesis supervisor and a final evaluation of the master's thesis defense by the commission;

10.2. The components and criteria for evaluating a master's thesis are detailed in the master's thesis syllabus.

Article 11. Defense of a master's thesis

11.1. The defense of a master's thesis is carried out before a master's thesis defense commission approved by the order of the rector;

- 11.2. The commission consists of specialists in the relevant field (not less than 3 and not more than 7 members). An invited specialist may be a member of the commission. The composition of the commission is approved by the order of the rector, which determines the chairman and secretary of the commission;
- 11.3. The commission is authorized if 2/3 of the commission members are present at the defense of the relevant master's thesis;
- 11.4. A member of the commission cannot be the supervisor of the relevant master's thesis;
- 11.5. The defense of the master's thesis is carried out in the form of a presentation, which should not exceed 15 - 20 minutes, 5 - 10 minutes are devoted to questions from the members of the commission. (The presentation of the topic should be made with the help of the Power Point program);
- 11.6. The defense of the master's thesis is public. The public defense of the master's thesis must be attended by the supervisor of the master's program;
- 11.7. The results of the defense of the master's thesis are drawn up in the form of a protocol, which is signed by the chairman and secretary of the commission;
- 11.8. Upon completion of the defense, each member of the commission evaluates the master's thesis in the relevant components. The assessment received at the defense is calculated by calculating the arithmetic average score of the evaluations of the commission members;
- 11.9. The final assessment of the master's thesis is notified to the master's thesis no later than the next day after the commission makes a decision.

Article 12. Rights and obligations of the master's student

- 12.1. A master's program student is entitled to complete the master's thesis in the final semester;
- 12.2. The student has the right to postpone the date of the defense of the diploma thesis in the event of a valid reason (health condition, death of a close relative, other objective circumstances that make it impossible to fulfill the relevant requirements independently of the student) once, for one week, for which he must apply in writing to the relevant school;
- 12.3. The student's application for a postponement is considered by the school and makes a decision on the postponement/non-postponement of the deadline for submitting the relevant stage;
- 12.4. The student has the opportunity to study under an individual program. He has the right to apply to the relevant school for this purpose and substantiate the validity and adequacy of the scheme chosen by him. When drawing up an individual program, the rules regulating the educational process of the university must be taken into account.

- 12.5. The student is obliged to attend and defend the master's thesis before the defense commission;
- 12.6. A student who does not select a master's thesis during the academic registration period loses the opportunity to complete the master's thesis component in the current semester;
- 12.7. Upon accumulating at least 120 credits and meeting the requirements of the relevant master's program, the student is awarded a master's academic degree.

Article 13. Appeal

- 13.1. A student is entitled to file an appeal application to appeal the assessment results no later than 5 (five) calendar days after becoming familiar with the assessment of the master's thesis;
- 13.2. The student is obliged to indicate in the application in which assessment criterion/component he/she disagrees with the received assessment;
- 13.3. The student's substantiated application on the appeal of the assessment shall be submitted to the School Council;
- 13.4. An appeal commission consisting of 3 (three) members, none of whom participated in the student's initial assessment, shall be established by the relevant order of the Rector;
- 13.5. During the consideration of the issue by the appeal commission, the student shall be entitled to attend the session and present his/her own opinions and evidence;
- 13.6. The Appeals Commission makes a decision on the appointment or refusal of the re-defense of the thesis;
- 13.7. The results of the appeal are notified to the applicant the next day.

Article 14. Rules for the design/binding of the master's thesis

14.1. Basic requirements:

- The volume of the master's thesis must be at least 60 and a maximum of 80 pages of A4 size;
- Font – syllabuses;
- Text font size - 12, chapter headings and subtitles size - 16 - 14, line spacing - 1.5 cm., margins (on all sides) 2 cm.

The master's thesis must be bound in the following order:

- Title page (header)
- Contents (table of contents);

- Annotation (in Georgian and English);
- Introduction;
- Main part;
- Conclusion;
- References (bibliography);
- Appendix (tables, graphs, pictures, manuscripts, etc.)

14.2. Title page (title page) - the work begins with a title page, the so-called title page, on which the following information should be placed: title of the work, student's name and surname, type of work (master's thesis); name of the school or program, name, surname and academic degree of the scientific supervisor, name of the higher educational institution, place and year of submission of the work. The title page is not numbered, but the data is written centered, in the following sequence and font settings:

- Full name of the higher educational institution - font size 14, bold;
- Name of the school and educational program - font size 14, bold;
- Name and surname of the student - font size 14, bold;
- Title of the master's thesis - font size 16, bold;
- Name, surname, scientific degree, academic position of the master's thesis supervisor - font size 14 without bold;
- Place (city) and year of completion of the master's thesis (without the word "year") - font size: 14 without bold.

14.3. Contents (Table of Contents) - The master's thesis must include a table of contents. It must reflect all the necessary parts of the work - annotation, introduction, title of the chapter and subsection, bibliography/references and appendices with page numbers. Page numbers must be placed in the right margin. When separating chapters and subsections, it must be taken into account that a chapter must consist of at least two subsections. Their titles must be selected with special care and must accurately reflect the content discussed in a particular chapter;

14.4. Annotation - The annotation reflects a brief summary of the master's thesis. The annotation is completed in two languages (Georgian and English). The total volume of both annotations must not exceed 2 pages;

14.5. Introduction - The introduction is the general part of the work, which should reflect:

- The relevance of the topic;
- The goal and objectives of the master's thesis;
- The main findings obtained as a result of the master's thesis;

- The volume and structure of the master's thesis.

14.6. The main part of the work - the main text should be divided into chapters and subsections. Chapters and subsections are numbered sequentially. The title of the chapter is written in 16-point font. The text may include 2-3 chapters, and each chapter 2-3 subsections. The introduction, each new chapter of the work, conclusion and list of used literature should start on a new page, and subsections should be connected to the corresponding text. The purpose of the main part of the master's thesis is to find answers to the research questions posed in the introductory part on the basis of theoretical and/or empirical research. The main part of the thesis describes the course of the research: what sources were analyzed, what was interpreted, what data was obtained and how they were evaluated. In order to fulfill these components, it is necessary to use the following techniques of academic work:

- Finding sources;
- Arguing;
- Citing, paraphrasing and summarizing;
- Using and verifying sources.

14.7. Conclusion - the purpose of the conclusion is to formulate an answer to the research question and demonstrate how the purpose of the research was achieved. This part should summarize the specific results, namely, describe what was determined as a result of the description, research, analysis, interpretation. The conclusion does not raise a new topic or discuss issues that were not discussed in the main part of the paper. The conclusion should be concise and short and represent no more than 10% of the paper. The conclusion should not include: sections that have already been described in the introduction or main parts of the paper, a theoretical overview or description of the context, a quote, and a paraphrase, since only the results of the research should be presented in the conclusion. When formulating conclusions according to the above principle, the following words can be used: revealed, discovered, substantiated, shown, given, presented, opened, developed, proposed, classified, systematized or: we introduce, we substantiate, we show, etc. In addition, it should be taken into account that the text should begin in the first (plural) or third person (and not mixed);

14.8. References (Bibliography) - References (Bibliography) are the structural unit of the work in which all sources discussed, processed and cited in the work are listed. The literature review should not exceed 1/3 of the total volume of the work; The rules for compiling and formatting the bibliography are regulated by the document "Guidelines for the Performance of Academic Papers", which defines in detail the rules for citing sources (in accordance with the Chicago or APA style, taking into account the specifics of the field and in agreement with the supervisor);

14.9. Appendix - data and facts that are necessary for understanding the work or support the author's reasoning may be placed in the appendix. Through it, the reader receives detailed information on a

specific issue. It is reasonable to include an appendix if the data in question is so extensive that their reference in the main text would complicate reading the text. Such materials represent research details and include: interview questionnaires, tables, graphs, images, drawings, manuscripts, etc. If the paper has more than one appendix, they should be numbered, and the appendix should be referenced using the in-text citation format.

Article 15. Protection of the principle of confidentiality and anonymity of information received within the framework of the research

15.1. The author of the master's thesis is responsible for protecting the principle of anonymity and confidentiality regarding the information received from the respondent within the framework of the research;

15.2. In order to protect the principle of confidentiality and anonymity of information received from the respondent within the framework of the research, the author of the master's thesis ensures the preparation of a letter of informed consent (**Appendix 1**);

15.3. The letter of informed consent describes the research problem and the purpose of the research and determines the responsibility of the author of the master's thesis regarding the protection of the anonymity and confidentiality of information received from the respondent participating in the research, and also confirms the consent of the respondent participating in the research to the use of the information provided by him for the purposes of the research;

15.4. The author of the master's thesis confirms the use of information received from the respondent within the framework of a specific study only for the purposes of the specific study, and the observance of the principles of anonymity and confidentiality by signing an informed consent;

15.5. The respondent confirms his consent to the use of information provided within the framework of a specific study for the purposes of the same study by signing an informed consent.

Article 16. Final Provisions

16.1. This provision is approved by the University Senate;

16.2. This provision of the University shall enter into force upon signing;

16.3. The adoption, cancellation, amendment and addition of the provision shall be carried out by the Senate;

16.4. This provision shall cease to be valid in the event of the approval of a new provision.

Informed Consent

Date:

Brief Description of the Study

Research Problem:

Research Objective:

The information obtained from the respondent within the scope of the study will be used only for the purposes of the presented study, will not be transferred to any other party, and the principles of anonymity and confidentiality will be respected.

Researcher's signature:

The respondent agrees that the information provided within the scope of the study will be used for the purposes of the presented study.

Respondent's signature: