

Free Academy of Tbilisi



Magistracy Provision

Article 1. Scope of Regulation

1.1. This regulation was developed in accordance with the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education" and regulates the procedure for the implementation of magistracy (master's level) and master's educational programmes in the Free Academy of Tbilisi (hereinafter "the Academy"), as well as the minimum standard necessary for awarding the academic degree of master.

Article 2. Goals of the Magistracy

2.1. Magistracy is the second level of academic higher education, a set of study programme / programmes that contains elements of scientific research;

2.2. Magistracy aims to prepare a specialist or researcher at the post-bachelor level and prepares a person for work with the obtained qualification;

2.3. The goal of the magistracy is to create the necessary theoretical foundations and develop general skills to continue studying at the doctoral level.

Article 3. Admission to the master's programme

3.1. According to the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education", the right to continue studying at the master's educational program is only for those master's degree candidates who have successfully passed the general master's exam and the exam/examinations determined by the higher educational institution, as well as the minimum competence limit determined by the higher educational institution, which is established by the legislation of Georgia;

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

3.3. A candidate is exempted from the English language test, 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;

3.4. According to the Order N10/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia dated February 4, 2010 "Rules for transferring from a higher educational institution to another higher educational institution", it is possible to enroll in a master's educational program on a mobility basis twice a year, within the deadlines established by the Ministry, following the mandatory procedures and rules established by the higher educational institutions;

3.5. Master's degree candidates/students have the right to study at a master's educational program without passing common master's exams according to the order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia dated

December 29, 2011 N224 "Rules for submission and review of documents by master's degree candidates/students who have the right to study in a higher educational institution without passing common master's exams" .

Article 4. Master thesis

- 4.1. The master's thesis is a mandatory research component of the educational programme;
- 4.2. Completion of the mandatory research component of the master's programme is confirmed by the submission and defense of the master's thesis (presentation, discussion);
- 4.3. The master's thesis is a research work performed by a master's student within the framework of the master's educational programme, which summarizes the master's research skills, demonstrates the student's ability to conduct research independently, draft a thesis, publicly present it 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 conduct research independently, present the results of the studies achieved, and communicate his/her reasoning in a publicly in an argumentative manner;
- 4.5. The topic of the master's thesis must correspond to the specifics of the master's educational programme and the current scientific direction;
- 4.6. The master's thesis is completed in compliance with the general requirements established by this regulation and the additional requirements stipulated by the master's thesis syllabus of the relevant programme;
- 4.7. The supervisor and topic of the master's thesis are chosen by the master's 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 student individually, taking into account the instructions of the supervisor;
- 4.9. The mandatory research component of the master's thesis can be performed only by those students who meet the conditions stipulated by the educational component of the master's programme and accumulate the relevant credits before defending the master's thesis;
- 4.10. The master's thesis is defended by the master's student before the commission created by the order of the academy rector.

Article 5. Choosing the Topic and Supervisor of the Master's Thesis

- 5.1. The topics of master's theses are approved by the relevant school board;
- 5.2. The supervisor and topic of the master's thesis are chosen by the master's student at the beginning of the fourth semester of study, during the academic registration period;

Article 6. Master thesis supervisor

6.1. The supervisor of the master's thesis guides the work of the master's student, helps him/her in processing the master's research project/prospectus and bibliography, finding/selection of sources, formulating the research problem, forming research questions and hypotheses, gives general instructions on the current challenges of the field and the implementation of research in the relevant direction;

6.2. The duty of the supervisor of the master's thesis is to guide and give direction to the student for the successful implementation of the master's thesis;

6.3. The supervisor of the master's thesis is obliged to check the process of work on the topic step by step, to express remarks, recommendations, give advice and help the master's student to conduct the research correctly, familiarize with the prospectus and confirm that the master's student has developed a correct plan to continue working on the master's topic. After completing the work, the supervisor should prepare a conclusion that includes the following information:

- Student's name, surname;
- Title of the paper;
- A brief overview of the paper, highlighting strengths and weaknesses;
- Recommendation to present the work before the commission.

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. A maximum of 5 (five) master's theses can be supervised by one academic/invited staff at the same time;

6.6. The supervisor has the right to refuse to supervise a specific paper during the work process and to address the dean of the school with appropriate arguments. In this case, the time factor should be taken into account so that the master's student and the head of the programme can respond in time;

Article 7. Master thesis reviewer

7.1. The purpose of reviewing a master's thesis is an objective assessment of its research value by a representative of a relevant or adjacent field;

7.2. The reviewer of the master's thesis can be:

- Professor/professors involved in the programme;
- An invited person who has a doctorate or master's degree or an equivalent academic degree in the relevant direction or field and experience in researching relevant/adjacent issues;
- An invited person who has a doctorate or master's degree or an equivalent academic degree in the relevant direction or field and practical experience (not less than 5 years);

7.3. The relevant school will identify the reviewer and notify the student of the reviewer's identity;

7.4. The reviewer sends a written review with the evaluation 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 research project/prospectus

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

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

8.3. Master research project/prospectus should include:

- Relevance of the research topic;
- Research methods;
- Practical importance and/or scientific novelty;
- Research hypothesis;
- Probable conclusions;
- Initial list of bibliography;
- Prospectus design;
- Using the calendar plan/time rationally;
- Determination of main research issues;
- Expected results of the study.

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 written on A4 format paper, font - Sylfaen, size 12, margins (all sides) 2 cm. The minimum font size for page numbers and footnotes is 10, the distance between lines is 1.5 cm.

Master's research project/prospectus should be printed on a single page of paper and all pages of the prospectus should be numbered sequentially in the lower right corner.

8.6. The master's research project/prospectus must be submitted to the supervisor of the master's thesis no later than 14 calendar days after the approval of the topic, where the master's student presents a completed and properly executed project/prospectus. The head of the master's topic evaluates the submitted project/prospectus in accordance with the established criteria. The final version is returned to the student for further work;

8.7. In case of receiving a negative evaluation and/or not delivering the paper, the master's student is given the right to additional work on the master's research project/prospectus for a period of 7 (seven) calendar days;

8.8. In case of non-use of the additional term for the master's project/prospectus, failure to deliver or repeated negative evaluation of the reworked version, the master's student loses the right to defend the master's thesis in the current semester.

Article 9. Evaluation of master's thesis

9.1. The finished master's thesis is submitted to the supervisor of the master's thesis no later than the 15th week of the fourth semester of study in order to present the conclusion;

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

- Relevance of the research topic;
- Research objective;
- Research tasks;
- Research subject;
- Research object;
- Determination of research methodology;
- Research tool development;
- Conducting theoretical and empirical research;
- Development of conclusions and recommendations;
- References.

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

9.4. The master's thesis is checked with the electronic program "Turnitin";

9.5. The supervisor of the master's thesis is authorized to return the thesis to the master's student once if plagiarism is detected and give recommendations;

9.6. Similarity up to 10% 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 does not have the right to rework and submit the same thesis;

9.8. In case of a positive assessment of the master's thesis, the supervisor writes a conclusion about the completion of the thesis and the thesis is handed over to the reviewer for review;

9.9. The assessment of the master's thesis is determined based on the conclusions of the supervisor and the reviewer;

9.10. The final evaluation of the thesis is based on the summary of evaluations of all members of the Master's Thesis Defense Commission;

9.11. The Master's Thesis Defense Commission evaluates the thesis in accordance with the established criteria once (the final evaluation);

9.12. The evaluation of the defense of the master's thesis is determined by the arithmetic average of the obtained points, which is determined individually by the members of the commission for the defense of the master's thesis (the sum of the received points divided by the number of members of the commission);

9.13. Credit can be obtained only with one of the positive evaluations stipulated by the legislation;

9.14. The master's student's achievements are evaluated with a 100-point system;

9.15. The rating system allows five types of positive ratings:

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

A. Five types of positive assessment:

a.a) (A) Excellent - 91 -100;

a.b) (B) Very good - 81-90;

a.c) (C) Good - 71-80;

a.d) (D) Satisfactory - 61-70;

a.e) (E) Sufficient - 51-60.

B. Two types of negative assessment:

b.a) (FX) Unsatisfactory (could not pass) - 41-50 points from maximum grading points, meaning that the student needs considerable more further work to pass and he/she is allowed to take the additional exam once in the current semester.

b.b) (F) Failed - 40 points and less from maximum grading points, meaning that the work performed by the student is not sufficient and further work is required to learn the subject over again.

9.16. Positive assessment of master's thesis

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

b. A diploma confirming the academic degree of Master is issued by the institution. Diploma and the diploma supplement will be drawn up in accordance with the procedures established in the institution.

The master's degree is signed by the dean and rector of the respective school.

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

- a) Failure to appear for public defense for an illegitimate reason;
- b) Refusal to protect master's thesis after presenting for public protection;
- c) Detection of academic integrity/plagiarism;
- d) Attempting to get an assessment by bullying the examiner, cheating, and/or using other unacceptable methods for the student.

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

10.1. The assessment of the master's thesis is multi-component. The evaluation includes the intermediate evaluation directly by the supervisor of the thesis and the final evaluation of the defense of the master's thesis by the commission;

10.2. The evaluation components and criteria of the Master's Thesis are detailed in the Master's Thesis Syllabus.

Article 11. Master thesis defense

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

11.2. The commission consists of specialists in the relevant field (at least 3 and not more than 7 members). A member of the commission can be an invited specialist. 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's members are present at the defense of the relevant master's thesis;

11.4. The member of the commission cannot be the supervisor of the relevant master's thesis;

11.5. The master's topic is defended 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 done in Power Point);

11.6. Master's thesis defense is public. The supervisor of the master's programme must be present at the public defense;

11.7. The results of the defense of the master's thesis are reflected in the form of a protocol, which is signed by the chairman and the secretary of the commission;

11.8. Each member of the commission evaluates the master's thesis defense in the relevant components immediately after the defense, the grade received for the defense is calculated by calculating the average arithmetic score of the commission members' evaluations;

11.9. The final assessment of the master's thesis is notified to the master's student no later than the next day after the commission's decision.

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

12.1. A master's student is entitled to complete a master's thesis in the graduating semester;

12.2. The student has the right to postpone the date of defense of the diploma thesis if there is a valid reason (state of health, death of a close relative, other objective circumstance that makes it impossible to fulfill the relevant requirements) once, for one week, for which he/she must apply in writing to the relevant school;

12.3. The school considers the student's application for postponement and makes a decision to postpone/not postpone the deadline;

12.4. The student has the opportunity to study according to the individual programme. He/she has the right to apply to the school for this purpose and justify the validity and adequacy of the scheme chosen. When drawing up an individual programme, the Learning Process Regulation Rule of the Academy should 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 choose a master's thesis during the academic registration period loses the opportunity to work on the master's thesis component in the current semester;

12.7. In case of accumulation of at least 120 credits and meeting the requirements of the relevant master's programme, the student is awarded the academic degree of Master;

Article 13. Appeal

13.1. The student has the right to write an appeal application to challenge the results of the evaluation no later than 5 (five) calendar days after being informed of the evaluation of the master's thesis;

13.2. The student is obliged to indicate in the application in which evaluation criterion/component does not agree with the received evaluation;

13.3. The student's substantiated application on the assessment appeal is submitted to the school board;

13.4. By the appropriate order of the rector, an appeals commission is formed with 3 (three) members, none of whom participated in the student's initial assessment;

13.5. During the consideration of the issue by the appeal commission, the student has the right to attend the session and present opinions and evidence;

13.6. The Appeals Commission makes a decision on the appointment or rejection of re-defense of the work;

13.7. The results of the appeal will be communicated to the applicant the following day.

Article 14. Rules for drawing up the master's thesis

14.1. Basic requirements:

- The volume of the master's thesis should be at least 60 and at most 80 pages of A4 size;
- Font – sylfaen;
- Font size of the text - 12, size of headings and sub-headings - 16 - 14, distance between lines - 1.5 cm. , margins (on all sides) 2 cm.

Master's thesis should be bound in the following order:

- Title page
- Table of contents
- Annotation (in Georgian and English languages)
- Introduction
- Main part
- Conclusion
- References (bibliography)
- Appendix (tables, graphs, pictures, manuscripts, etc.)

14.4. **Title page** - The paper begins with the title page, on which the following information should be placed: the title of the thesis, the name and surname of the student, the type of the work (master's thesis); Name of the school or programme, name, surname and academic degree of the scientific supervisor, name of the higher educational institution, place and year of presentation of the thesis. The header is not numbered, and the data is written centered, in the following order and font settings:

- Full name of the higher educational institution - font size 14, bold;
- Name of school and educational programme - font size 14, bold;
- Student's name and surname - font size 14, bold;
- Master's thesis title - font size 16, bold;
- Name, surname, scientific degree, academic position of master's thesis supervisor - font size 14 without bolding;

- Place (city) and year (without the word "year") of the master's thesis - font size: 14 without bolding.

14.5. Table of contents - The master's thesis must contain a table of contents. It should reflect all necessary parts of the paper - annotation, introduction, title of chapter and sub-chapter, bibliography/referenced literature and appendices with page numbers. Page numbers should be placed in the lower right corner. When separating chapters and sub-chapters, it must be taken into account that the chapter should consist of at least two sub-chapters. Their titles should be selected with special attention and should accurately reflect the content discussed in a specific chapter.

14.6. Annotation - In the annotation the summary of the master's thesis is reflected. The annotation is written in two languages (Georgian and English). The total volume of both annotations should not exceed 2 pages.

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

- Relevance of the topic;
- The goal and objectives of the master's thesis;
- The main conclusions obtained as a result of the master's thesis;
- Volume and structure of the master's thesis.

14.8. The main part of the work - The main text should be divided into chapters and sub-chapters. Chapters and subchapters are numbered consecutively. The title of the chapter is written in 16 size font. The work can include 2 - 3 chapters, and each chapter 2 - 3 subchapters. Introduction, each new chapter of the paper, conclusion and references (bibliography) should start on a new page, and sub-chapters should follow the relevant 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 based on theoretical and/or empirical research. The main part of the paper describes the course of the research: what sources were analyzed, what was interpreted, what data were obtained and how they were evaluated. To fulfill these components, it is necessary to use the following techniques of academic work:

- Finding sources;
- Argumentation;
- Quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing;
- Use and verification of sources.

14.9. დასკვნა - The purpose of the conclusion is to formulate an answer to the research question and show how the research objective was achieved. This part should summarize specific results, in particular, describe what was determined as a result of the description, research, analysis, interpretation.

The conclusion does not raise a new topic and discuss issues that were not discussed in the main part of the paper. The conclusion should be concise and short and should represent no more than 10% of the paper. The conclusion does not include: sections that are already described in the introduction or main parts of the paper, theoretical overview or description of the context, quotation and paraphrase, because only the results of the research should be presented in the conclusion. When formulating conclusions according to the mentioned principle, the following words can be used: revealed, discovered, substantiated, shown, given, presented, opened, developed, offered, classified, systematized or: introduced, substantiated, shown, etc. However, it should be noted that the text should start in the first (plural) or third person (not mixed).

14.10. References (bibliography) - References (bibliography) is the structural unit of the work, in which all the sources discussed, processed and cited in the work are listed. Literature review should not exceed 1/3 of the total volume of the work;

The procedure for compiling and formatting the bibliography is regulated by the document "Academic Work Performance Manual", which details the procedure for citing sources (according to Chicago or APA style, taking into account the specifics of the field and in agreement with the supervisor).

14.11. Appendix - Data and facts that are necessary to understand the paper or support the author's reasoning can 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 indicated data are so comprehensive that their reference in the main text would make the reading of the text difficult. Such materials represent the details of the research and their examples are: questionnaires for interviews, tables, graphs, pictures, drawings, manuscripts, etc. If the paper has more than one appendices, they should be numbered, and the appendices must be authenticated using the authentication format included in the text.

Article 15. Protection of the principle of confidentiality and anonymity of information obtained within the scope of 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 the information received from the respondent within the framework of the research, the author of the master's thesis ensures the preparation of the letter of informed consent (Appendix 1).

15.3. The letter of informed consent describes the research problem and the purpose of the research and defines the responsibility of the author of the master's thesis regarding the protection of anonymity and confidentiality of the information received from the respondent participating in the research and also confirms the consent of the respondent participating in the research regarding 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 the information received from the respondent within the framework of a specific study only for the purposes of the research presented to the respondent, the observance of the principle of anonymity and confidentiality by signing the informed consent.

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

