Guide How to Write a Master's Thesis

Master's research paper

The master's research paper is a consistent part of the scientific research project provided for in the master's study programme, an independent analytical research work which investigates the chosen specific scientific or practical problem of the branch or discipline of the communication and information sciences field. Depending on the duration of studies, master degree students have to write two or three research papers (hereinafter referred to as the research paper).

Writing research papers is a consistent stage in the preparation of a master thesis; therefore, the topics of research papers of the second and subsequent semesters have to correspond to the preliminary topic of the thesis. Their continuity and correlation to the master thesis determine the non-applied nature of these papers (except for methodological papers).
Research papers may be grouped into *historiographical*, *theoretical* and *methodological* papers:

· *Historiographical* research papers analyse and evaluate the most important historical material of the specific branch, discipline, scientific or practical problem of the communication and information sciences field (sources and historiography); present new empirical data, independently collected, processed and analysed by the student; newly interpret consistent patterns, causalities, etc. of the development of the branch, discipline, problem, or object.

· *Theoretical* research papers discuss, analyse and evaluate the most important scientific literature and scientific concepts of the specific branch, discipline, scientific or practical problem of the communication and information sciences field; suggest new interpretation of scientific theories, concepts, constructions, models, etc.; supplement theory with new data or present new empirical data, independently collected, processed and analysed by the student; conduct secondary data analysis (theoretical empirical papers).

· *Methodological* research papers discuss, analyse and evaluate general methodology of the scientific cognition process of the specific branch of communication and information sciences; scientific literature and sources of scientific research methods and techniques of the discipline, scientific or practical problem; analyse the scientific cognition process of the specific branch of communication and information sciences and its individual elements, stages, etc.; analyse and evaluate the most important scientific

research and its methodology; suggest new research methods, newly apply and interpret the existing methods; scientific research methods complement scientific theories, concepts, models with new data and newly interpret this data; present new empirical data obtained through the application of the existing and new research methods and independently collected, processed and analysed by the student.

The purpose of a research paper is to broaden and deepen knowledge of certain branches, areas, disciplines of communication and information sciences; develop competences to evaluate research works of the respective field; solve both theoretical and practical scientific problems; and conduct scientific research of certain areas of communication and information sciences.

The length of a research paper. The length of a research paper is 20–25 pages (60,000–70,000 printing characters), excluding appendices.

The typical structure of a research paper:
- Title page
- Abstract page
- Table of contents
- List of abbreviations (if necessary)
- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusions
- Bibliography
- Appendices (if necessary)

Requirements for the structural parts of a research paper:

The abstract page contains a bibliographical description of a paper, keywords and an abstract. A bibliographical description of a research paper differs from the bibliographical entry used in bibliography. The length of an abstract (in one language) is about 1,000 printing characters.

The table of contents gives a detailed structure of a paper by providing an outline of titles and page numbers. All structural parts of a paper – sections, subsections, paragraphs – must have headings (titles) which are indicated in the table of contents. The headings must be brief, clear and correspond to the matter of the topic and the content of the structural part. The headings cannot contain any abbreviations. The structural parts of a paper – sections, subsections, paragraphs – must be numbered in Arabic numerals. The list of abbreviations (if necessary), the introduction, the conclusions and recommendations, the bibliography and appendices are indicated as independent structural parts, but not numbered.

The list of abbreviations gives the abbreviations used in the paper (arbitrary signs and symbols, units and terms) and their decoding. Foreign abbreviations are decoded in both the original and Lithuanian languages. The list of abbreviations is not required, where the total number of abbreviations does not exceed 20 and each of them does not repeat in the text more than three times. In this case, the abbreviation is decoded when it is first used in the text.

The introduction states the relevance of the topic under discussion, indicates the object, aim and objectives as well as methods of the research, gives a general discussion of references and reveals the structure of a paper.

The body lays down all accumulated material according to the objectives formulated in the introduction. This structural part is divided into sections, subsections and paragraphs. Every section is ended with a generalisation.

The conclusions part formulates the most important conclusions of the paper, without reiterating section generalisations. They have to be based on the analysed material and concisely formulated with regard to the objectives defined in the introduction.

Bibliography presents bibliographical entries of quoted, rephrased, referred to and indicated printed, manuscript and electronic documents and scientific literature, keeping to the relevant requirements.

The appendices present valuable additional material which supplements the paper (publications from important sources, directive and regulatory documents, comprehensive tables, illustrations, questionnaire samples, interview material, etc.).

Assessment criteria of a research paper:
- structural arrangement of theoretical, empirical and methodological components of the research object, exhaustiveness of analysis;

- qualified analysis, reference, rephrasing, interpretation of the most important scientific literature and sources (if necessary);

· exhaustive analysis of the research object, interpretation of research data;

· formulation of logically consistent and independent conclusions of the topic under discussion, based on the data of the scientific analysis of the research object;

· competences of scientific communication (presentation of the paper, defence of propositions) (if the paper is defended).

Preparation of a research paper

The list of topics for research papers is approved in the sittings of branch academic units of the Faculty of Communication (department, institutes, centre) held in August and publicly announced to students ***by 15 September***. The student may (is recommended to) write a research paper on his/her suggested topic; however, in this case the topic must be coordinated with the supervisor ***by 15 September***. If the sitting of a branch academic unit of the Faculty of Communication adopts a decision that students independently choose (suggest) the topics for research papers and master theses, the extract from the minutes of the sitting of a branch academic unit of the Faculty of Communication is publicly announced to students ***by 15 September.***

The topics of research papers written in the second and subsequent semesters must correspond to the preliminary topic of a master thesis.

Topics and assignments of research papers must be coordinated with the supervisor of a research paper ***by 1 October*** / ***1 March*** (the latter date applies to research papers written in the second semester). The topic is considered coordinated having submitted a request on behalf of the director (head) of a branch academic unit of the Faculty of Communication (department, institutes). The request must contain the supervisor's consent to supervise a research paper and be signed.

When writing a research paper, the student must keep to the schedule arranged with the supervisor, regularly (at least once a month) consult with the supervisor during the supervisor's reception hours in Vilnius University. Regular consultations are necessary, because they not only foster consistent writing of a paper and improve its quality, but also enable the supervisor to evaluate independent student's work.

During consultations, the student must inform the supervisor about the course of writing a research paper and arising problems and submit the text (in sections and subsections). The supervisor reads the text of a research paper submitted during consultations and provides observations and instructions during his/her reception hours in Vilnius University not later than within two weeks from the submission of the text.

One copy of a written, properly finalised and bound research paper is submitted to the supervisor on the appointed date. The research paper is submitted to the supervisor and entered into the information system of electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) of Vilnius University not later than in the second week of the session of the respective semester:

· during the winter exam session – not later than by 15 January,
· during the spring exam session – not later than by 15 June.

If the student does not keep to the schedule, ignores the observations and suggestions of the supervisor, the paper is assessed only after it is defended. The date of defence of research papers is announced and the commission is set up by the supervisor. The commission for the defence of research papers is comprised of at least three persons employed at VU Faculty of Communication. If the student does not appear in the defence, the paper is not assessed at all.

Assessment of a research paper

In each semester, a master's research paper is assessed according to a ten-point grading system, having regard to the quality of content, conformity to the requirements, presentation and defence (if necessary) of a research paper:

· *positive* (5–10 points) evaluation is given to independent, original papers of high quality content (corresponding to the task of the research, void of subject-specific mistakes, etc.), meeting structural requirements;

· *negative* (1–4 points) evaluation is given to non-original papers with obvious subject-specific mistakes, not corresponding to the formulated task and not meeting structural requirements.

Final master thesis

The final research paper – master thesis – is written in the final study year. Master theses are defended in public; the text of the paper submitted for public defence provides the basis of assessment.

The assessment of the final paper is determined not only by the final paper submitted for defence, but also by the ability of the author to present the key propositions of the paper during defence, explain and reason methodology employed and provide competent answers to the questions of commission members.

The Faculty of Communication seeks that the final papers be analytical and knowledge transforming, rather than descriptive and knowledge telling.

Final papers need all knowledge acquired during studies; they reveal research skills gained while studying, key and special competences; therefore, the Faculty of Communication focuses on the independent aspect of final papers. This aspect is ensured through the regulation of rights and duties of the supervisor and the author, seeking the status of the supervisor-consultant, adviser.

The final master thesis (hereinafter referred to as the master thesis) is a qualifying analytical independent original research work of the specific branch of communication and information sciences.
Master theses may be grouped into *historiographical*, *theoretical* and *methodological* theses:

· *Historiographical* master theses analyse and evaluate the most important historical material of the specific branch, discipline, scientific or practical problem of the communication and information sciences field (sources and historiography); present new empirical data, independently collected, processed and analysed by the student; newly interpret consistent patterns, causalities, etc. of the development of the branch, discipline, problem, or object.

· *Theoretical* master theses discuss, analyse and evaluate the most important scientific literature and scientific concepts of the specific branch, discipline, scientific or practical problem of the communication and information sciences field; suggest new interpretation of scientific theories, concepts, constructions, models, etc.; supplement theory with new data or present new empirical data, independently collected, processed and analysed by the student; conduct secondary data analysis (theoretical empirical theses).

· *Methodological* master theses discuss, analyse and evaluate general methodology of the scientific cognition process of the specific branch of communication and information sciences; scientific literature and sources of scientific research methods and techniques of the discipline, scientific or practical problem; analyse the scientific cognition process of the specific branch of communication and information sciences and its individual elements, stages, etc.; analyse and evaluate the most important scientific research and its methodology; suggest new research methods, newly apply the existing methods and they are interpreted through the presentation of scientific research methods and techniques; scientific theories, concepts, models are complemented with new data and are newly interpreted; present new empirical data obtained through the application of the existing and new research methods and independently collected, processed and analysed by the student.

The master thesis cannot be descriptive and reviewing. It has to be analytical, based on independent scientific or applied research. Research may have different aims: either to supplement scientific knowledge of the communication and information sciences field (basic research) or to help answer the questions arising in practice (applied research).

The master thesis must correspond to the current level of science; it has to conform to the mandatory requirement of **novelty** (it has to investigate new factors, phenomena, consistent patterns and generalise existing propositions through the application of different scientific positions and approaches, etc.).

The research object of a master thesis – an individual scientific study – must be related to the theory and practice of the specific branch of the communication and information sciences field; therefore, it is recommended that the topic of the thesis correspond to the study programme of the author.

The master thesis is prepared systematically, by conducting research during all study years (writing research papers every semester).

The purpose of a master thesis is to broaden and deepen knowledge of individual branches, areas, disciplines of communication and information sciences; develop competences to independently perform the search of scientific literatures and sources; develop competences to evaluate research works of the respective field; solve both theoretical and practical scientific problems; conduct scientific research of individual areas of communication and information sciences, properly describe it, clearly and argumentatively formulate research conclusions; develop competences of scientific discussion, argumentation and communication.

The length of a master thesis is 50–70 pages (120 000-150 000 printing characters), excluding appendices. **Theses of a shorter length shall not qualify for defence.**

The structure of a master thesis:
· Title page
· Procedural particulars

- Abstract page
- Table of contents
- List of abbreviations
- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusions
- Summary in English
- Bibliography
- Appendices

Requirements for the structural parts of a master thesis:
Title page.
Procedural particulars.

The abstract page contains a bibliographical description of a master thesis (this description differs from the bibliographical entry used in bibliography), keywords (in the order of priority) and an abstract.

The table of contents gives a detailed structure of a paper by providing an outline of titles and page numbers. All structural parts of a paper – sections, subsections, paragraphs – must have headings (titles) which are indicated in the table of contents. The headings must be brief, clear and correspond to the matter of the topic and the content of the structural part. The headings cannot contain any abbreviations. The structural parts of a master thesis – sections, subsections, paragraphs – must be numbered in Arabic numerals. The list of abbreviations (if necessary), the introduction, the conclusions and recommendations, the bibliography and appendices are indicated as independent structural parts, but not numbered.

The list of abbreviations gives the abbreviations used in the paper (arbitrary signs and symbols, units and terms) and their decoding. Foreign abbreviations are decoded in both the original and Lithuanian languages. The list of abbreviations is not required, where the total number of abbreviations does not exceed 20 and/or each of them does not repeat in the text more than three times. In this case, the abbreviation is decoded when it is first used in the text.

The introduction gives substantiation of the relevance and novelty of the topic, discusses topic historiography, presents the hypothesis of a scientific research or defended propositions, research object, aim, objectives, methods, the structure of a thesis as well as its scientific and practical value.

Relevance of the topic and research is substantiated through the discussion of the topic, presentation of the research problem, the level of cognition of the research object, the need of science and practice for the purposeful cognition and research of the object.

Basing on the concepts of the area of communication and information sciences as well as the concepts and methods of other sciences, the final papers of the second cycle communication and information studies explore the *problems* of these sciences or their disciplines. The problems substantiate the necessity of a scientific research and indicate its relevance and benefit. Relevance of a scientific research may be evaluated in different aspects: social, practical, research-oriented, etc.

Novelty of the topic and research is manifested through the theoretical level of cognition of the topic and practical relevance. *Topic historiography* indicates the most important scientific works for the exploration of the topic and refers to their subject matter. In the event that there are no scientific works directly related to the topic of the thesis, the works that are most related to the topic are discussed.

Hypothesis or defended propositions are an important element of the introduction. The hypothesis is a scientific assumption which presents the probability of scientifically grounded, yet unproven and untested presence of new rules, causalities, objects, their composition, properties, the impact of environment or individual factors, etc. The hypothesis must explain the problem under discussion. Hypotheses are created basing on facts; they cannot contain unsubstantiated propositions. They show the direction of the research and narrow the topic. Hypotheses may be different: descriptive (revealing possible relationships of phenomena, objects, processes, etc. under investigation; they answer the question 'How?'), explanatory (explaining the reasons that determine relationships between phenomena, objects, processes, etc.; they answer the question 'Why?'), etc. The hypothesis defines the research object and determines adequate methodology. *The research object* narrows the topic as the specific phenomenon, object, process, etc. under discussion is defined.

The *aim of the research* must be formulated in relation to the topic and hypothesis of the paper. The aim shows the purposefulness of the entire research and the expected outcome – the solution of the analysed problem, presentation of new data, etc.

Objectives of the research reveal the ways of achieving the aim; they are means to achieving it. Objectives that are not related to the topic and not relevant for the achievement of the aim should not be formulated. The

objectives of the research should be presented on different lines; they may be numbered.

When describing the *methods* of the master thesis as a scientific research, research methodology is presented – the choice of research methods is explained, the methods applied for the collection and evaluation of information as well as theoretical and empirical research methods are discussed, the most important analysed sources or scientific works related to the topic under discussion are presented. Research papers require the choice of the methods that are adequate for the investigation and solution of the problem. Theory and methodology are the means to solve the problem in every research paper. A range of various theoretical methods is recommended in final papers. For example, *deduction* (reasoning based on logic, when a new proposition is constructed from a set of premises), *induction* (reasoning based on logic, when repetition of attributes leads to an inference that an object with the same attributes is categorised under the specific class of objects), *analogy* (reasoning based on logic, when sufficient coincidence of two attributes of the object leads to an inference that other attributes of the objects also coincide), *extrapolation* (reasoning based on logic, when conclusions of the investigation of one part of the object are applied to explain the other part of the object), *comparison* (reasoning based on logic, when two objects are contrasted to reveal their similarities and differences), etc. If empirical methods of a scientific research are chosen, the sources of factual material (opinions, conduct, activity and its results, etc.) must be evaluated and research methods, the strategic type and time-frame must be purposefully chosen with regard to the aim and circumstances of the specific research and researcher's capabilities. When choosing empirical methods of a scientific research, *validity* (what is measured), *objectivity* (whether the researcher does not influence the procedure and results of the research), *reliability* (degree of research precision), *representativeness* (argumentation of extrapolation of probability sample data into the general set) should be evaluated. Final theses may also employ various qualitative and quantitative empirical research methods; for example, case study, ethnography, content analysis (analysis of the content of texts, photos, etc.), interview, focus group, questionnaire, document analysis, observation, experiment, quasi-experiment, sociometry, statistical methods, etc. It should be noted that a case study requires more than one research method to be employed.

Description of the *paper structure* briefly presents the content of sections of the paper and generalises the problems explored in different sections.

The *theoretical and practical significance of the research* highlights novelty of the research, its practical application, and informs about practical verification of research results and conclusions.

The body presents and analyses historical, theoretical and factual material according to the defined objectives. The body consists of sections, subsections and paragraphs. Each section is ended in a brief generalisation. The body of the master thesis presents scientific investigation of the problem under discussion (discusses the most important works of Lithuanian and foreign scholars related to the topic; if not present – the works closest to the topic).

The research conducted by the author and its results must be described in a separate section of the master thesis, by providing arguments for the correlation of the author's research to the theoretical or methodological part of the paper. The first subsection of this section presents the type of research conducted by the author (e.g. exploratory, descriptive, analytical, etc., cross-sectional, longitudinal, etc., quantitative, qualitative, etc.), the problem, object, subject of the research, the aim and objectives, the key concepts of the research and their interpretations (if necessary), research hypotheses (if necessary), gives argumentation for the method of the research (its choice and adequacy) and the choice of the research object – discusses the method of sampling, the sample (research set), representativeness, etc., indicates the time-frame of the research. The use of text visualisation means (tables, diagrams, etc.) is recommended when describing the findings of the research and carrying out quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The results of the research must be interpreted and their relation to theory evaluated; the conclusions and suggestions must be formulated.

Research material (questionnaires, stenographs, etc.) are given in the appendices. If this material is abundant, it is bound, put into an envelope or arranged otherwise and attached to the paper.

The conclusions part formulates the most important conclusions and recommendations of the paper, without reiterating section generalisations. The conclusions must be based on the analysed material, the data of the research conducted by the author and must be concisely formulated in a coherent and cohesive manner with regard to the objectives defined in the introduction. The abstract of the paper cannot be used as the conclusions.

Bibliography presents bibliographical entries of quoted, rephrased, referred to and indicated printed, manuscript and electronic documents and scientific literature, keeping to the relevant requirements.

The appendices present additional material which supplements the paper (publications from important sources, directive documents, questionnaire samples, comprehensive tables, illustrations, etc.).

The summary in English contains the following particulars: the title of the master thesis, the name and surname of the author, the word "summary" and a concise summary of the master thesis (about 3,000 printing

characters/one page) revealing its topicality, the object, aim and objectives, methods and results of the research.

Assessment criteria of a master thesis:

- novelty of a scientific research;
- relevance, theoretical level, practical benefit (if feasible) of a scientific research;
- choice and analysis, reference, rephrasing, interpretation of scientific literature;
- analysis of the chosen aspect of the research object (conformity of content to the topic, formulation of the aim and objectives of the thesis, adequacy of objectives to achieve the aim and reveal the topic);
- organisation and structural arrangement of the text (achievement of the aim of the thesis, implementation of objectives, optimality of paper structure);
- qualified performance and description of the research, interpretation of research data (relation of the research conducted by the author to the theoretical part, implementation of the aim and objectives of the research, selection of adequate methodology, substantiation, description and application of research methodology, description of the course of the research, reasoned conclusions of the research);
- formulation of the conclusions (related to the aim of the research, logically consistent, based on research material) and formulation of insights from the perspective of application;
- competences of scientific communication (presentation of the thesis, defence of propositions, correct academic discourse, adequate terminology).

Public defence of final theses

Defence of final theses is public and held at the sitting of the Thesis Defence Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Commission) appointed by the order of the Rector of Vilnius University.

Final Thesis Commissions of the Faculty of Communication of Vilnius University follow these methodical instructions and the Procedure for the Preparation, Defence and Storage of Final Theses (approved at the sitting of the VU Senate Commission on 02.06.2005, Minutes No. SK-2005-9).

Defence of final theses is considered lawful if at least 2/3 of Commission members are present. Defence is headed by the Chairman of the Commission.

The assistant of the unit, responsible for respective study programmes, acts as a secretary at the sittings of the Thesis Defence Commission concerning the study programmes that fall within the competence of the unit:

- on the date of defence submits to the Chairman of the Thesis Defence Commission the theses to be defended that day, reviewers' remarks and assessment;
- keeps the minutes of the sitting of the Thesis Defence Commission and draws their extracts;
- performs other functions related to thesis defence and carries out assignments of the Chairman of the Commission.

Upon a respective endorsement of the head of the unit, the final thesis the results whereof are not to be publicised is defended in a closed sitting of the Thesis Defence Commission. In such a case, the Commission announces the part of the sitting closed. Closed defence of the thesis is organised in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Procedure for the Preparation, Defence and Storage of Final Theses (approved at the sitting of the VU Senate Commission on 02.06.2005, Minutes No. SK-2005-9).

Public defence of final theses starts with a word from the Chairman of the Commission, introducing the Thesis Defence Commission and Thesis Defence Regulations and announcing the start of the sitting.

The Chairman of the Commission announces the author of the thesis to be defended, and the author takes the floor. The author of the final thesis presents the paper and defends it.

Up to 30 minutes are allotted for the defence of a bachelor thesis, of which 10 minutes are allotted for presenting the thesis. Up to 40 minutes are allotted for the defence of a master thesis, of which 15 minutes are allotted for presenting the thesis. Demonstration of visual material is also included into the time of presentation.

Presentation of the thesis. When presenting the thesis, the author should:

- reveal the relevance, originality (for bachelor and master theses) and novelty (for master thesis) of the thesis;
- indicate the aim and objectives of the thesis;
- briefly present the content of the thesis;
- briefly present the original research conducted by the author and its findings;
- present the key conclusions and recommendations of the thesis.

It is recommended to speak during the public defence, instead of reading the presentation text prepared in advance or reading the text from the slides. The presentation should not include elementary facts that are not the result of the thesis (scientific research).

The slide presentation should be of high quality (the slides should not contain a lot of text; the font should not be very small; one slide should not contain many graphs or tables, etc.).
The presentation of the thesis *must* comply with the rules of procedure. If the time allotted for the presentation is exceeded, the Chairman of the Commission is entitled to terminate the presentation after one warning.
Defence of the thesis. After the thesis is presented, the Chairman of the Commission gives the floor to the reviewer. The reviewer presents the review of the defended thesis. If the reviewer cannot participate in the defence of the thesis due to important reasons, the review is read out by the Chairman or any other member of the Commission. After the review is read out, the author of the thesis answers the reviewer's questions and remarks. The author is recommended to answer all questions clearly, precisely, politely, keeping to the standards of academic ethics. The Chairman of the Commission then gives the floor to the reviewer and asks whether he/she is satisfied with the author's answers. Afterwards, the Chairman gives the floor to other members of the Commission. They also ask questions, discuss the thesis with the author and give their remarks. With regard to the reviewer's questions and the author's answers, members of the Commission may not ask the author any questions. After the author of the thesis answers all questions, the Chairman of the Commission gives permission to other persons attending the public defence sitting to ask questions or give remarks. All questions, either asked by the members of the Commission or other persons attending the public defence sitting, must be answered precisely, reasonably, politely and ethically.
After the answers are provided, the reviewer and the supervisor may express their opinion and observations about the work and the author. Afterwards, the Chairman of the Commission gives the final floor to the author (to respond to the observations expressed by the reviewer, the supervisor, members of the Commission and other persons attending the public defence sitting) and announces the end of public defence of this thesis.
The supervisor and the reviewer must attend the public thesis defence sitting. They can be absent from the public thesis defence and assessment sitting only in exceptional cases, having notified the Commission (through the secretary of the sitting) in advance (not later than a working day before the date of defence). The supervisor who cannot attend the defence and assessment of theses submits to the secretary of the sitting a review about his/her supervised thesis and motivated assessment not later than a working day before the date of defence. If the reviewer or the supervisor do not attend the sitting, their reviews are read out by the Chairman of the Commission.
A student who has successfully defended the thesis is granted a bachelor's or master's degree in Communication and Information Sciences.
The students are informed about their thesis assessment individually.
The information regarding other issues related to the defence and assessment of the thesis is orally communicated to the student by the Chairman of the Thesis Defence Commission. The Chairman only informs the student about the decisions of the Thesis Defence Commission (the information about the assessment given by individual members of the Commission and about discussions is not provided).
The decision of the Thesis Defence Commission is final and cannot be appealed.

Assessment of final theses (a ten-point grading system)
The Commission assesses the thesis by giving a mark at a closed sitting, attended only by the members of the Commission and, if necessary, the secretary of the sitting. Upon the decision of the Commission, the supervisor and the reviewer of the thesis may also attend the assessment sitting. In other cases, supervisors and reviewers do not participate in the discussion concerning thesis assessment. However, if a member of the Commission is at the same time the supervisor or reviewer of the thesis, he/she attends the assessment sitting but does not participate in the discussion of this particular thesis as a member of the Commission.
In the first sitting of the Thesis Defence Commission, its members discuss the grading system for the assessment of theses. The grading system for the assessment of theses and the mark of every thesis (4–10 points) require approval from the Commission. Commission approves by voting; the decisions are passed by simple majority.
Upon the decision of the Commission, its members may propose assessment (marks) in writing (by secret voting) at the sitting. At the request of the Chairman of the Commission, a member of the Commission must ground his/her proposed assessment (orally or in writing, as decided by the Commission) in the event that it differs to a great extent from the assessment proposed by other members. In the event of a tie concerning the assessment of the thesis proposed by the members of the Commission, the Chairman of the Commission has the casting vote.
Members of the Commission assess the thesis, its defence, the answers of the author to the questions put by the reviewer, members of the Commission and other persons attending the public defence sitting. Members of the Commission take into account the assessment proposed by the reviewer and motivated assessment proposed by the supervisor.

The following grading system is recommended for the assessment of final theses:

10
Excellent
All thesis assessment criteria are highly met. An outstanding, original, exhaustive, reasoned research of scientific value, which generates new ideas or carries out a consistent, multi-faceted analysis of the specific problem, draws original reasoned conclusions and refers to the latest scientific literature sources. A work of high theoretical level. A duly executed work, written in an impeccable academic language, void of content or form related drawbacks. The presentation of work is clear, illustrative, original; answers to questions are detailed and reasoned.
Concerning the bachelor thesis, the work is suitable for publicising and may be developed and deepened in master degree studies.
Concerning the master thesis, the work is suitable for publicising and may be developed and deepened in doctoral degree studies.

9
Very good
All thesis assessment criteria are highly met; the work is suitable for scientific publication; however, it needs to be supplemented and revised.

8
Good
Not all thesis assessment criteria are met: the analysis of the chosen object is purposeful, the scientific research is above the average, the description of research conducted by the author contains inessential drawbacks. The thesis contains some inessential content related and formal drawbacks.

7
Highly satisfactory
Not all thesis assessment criteria are met. Average scientific research. The work is more descriptive than analytical in nature. The thesis contains analysis, content related and formal drawbacks. The thesis does not have conclusions (the summary is given instead of conclusions) or the conclusions are trivial. Or all thesis assessment criteria are met; however, the author fails to answer the questions put by the reviewer, members of the commission or other persons attending the public defence sitting.

6
Satisfactory
Not all thesis assessment criteria are met. Below average scientific research. The work is descriptive in nature or it is incomplete or it has analysis, subject-specific content related or formal drawbacks. The objectives of the thesis are inadequate for the achievement of the aim, or certain objectives relevant for the achievement of the aim are not fulfilled or are partially fulfilled. Research conducted by the author is not related or is hardly related with the theoretical part. The author fails to answer the questions put by the reviewer, members of the commission or other persons attending the public defence sitting.

5
Sufficient
The work is descriptive in nature. It contains content related mistakes, subject-specific, analysis and formal drawbacks. The thesis does not have a theoretical part or has a small (by content or proportions) theoretical part. Or not all thesis assessment criteria are met and the author fails to answer the questions put by the reviewer, members of the commission or other persons attending the public defence sitting.

4
Insufficient
The thesis is a compilation or it contains elements of plagiarism; the thesis contains essential content related drawbacks (it is misleading, subjective, etc.). The thesis violates the principles of academic and research integrity.