



**MA THESIS POLICY & STYLE MANUAL**

**FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS**

**2016-2017 ACADEMIC YEAR**

## **IMPORTANT DATES!**

SUBMISSION OF AN  
ELECTRONIC  
COPY OF A THESIS  
**20 November, 2017, 5.00 pm**

EVALUATION OF A THESIS  
**21 Nov–3 Dec, 2017**

FORMATTING  
CORRECTIONS,  
SUBMISSION OF HARD  
COPIES OF A THESIS  
**10–14 December, 2017**

ANNOUNCEMENT OF  
FINAL GRADES  
**15 December, 2017**

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## I.INTRODUCTION

Writing a Master's thesis is an important stage of your study at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek. The aim of this manual is to present you the Academy's requirements and rules on writing MA thesis and guide you on formatting, style and submission processes. All students are expected to follow this manual precisely and failure to comply with it will incur penalties.

MA thesis demonstrates one's ability to conduct original research and report the results formally. The process of researching and writing the thesis improves students' research, analytical, and writing skills. Thesis must reflect a student's independent work, deep understanding of the subject investigated, appropriate research methods used, and it should be written in a clear and precise manner with logical internal presentation.

## II.GENERAL RULES

### **Language**

The working language of the Academy is English.

### **Length**

The thesis is expected to be **80-100 pages in length** (excluding bibliography and appendixes). If the thesis exceeds the specified maximum length, supervisors and examiners will not read further than the specified limit, and shall therefore not take into account any work beyond the specified limit when grading the thesis. If a thesis is shorter than required, it will not be accepted for evaluation by the Academy.

### **Deadlines**

Official deadline for the submission of a Master's thesis is the date when students submit an **electronic version** of their theses. Deadlines may vary each academic year. An electronic copy (in word format only) and a hard copy of the MA thesis must be submitted to Jazgul Bolot kyzy, Academic Assistant via [j.bolotkyzy@osce-academy.net](mailto:j.bolotkyzy@osce-academy.net)

### **Number of copies**

Students must submit two copies of a Master's thesis: 1) electronic copy 2) a hard copy. Electronic copy must be in *word format only*. Hard copy must be bound and will not be accepted until students meet all the formatting and style requirements set by the Academy.

All parts of the thesis, including the cover page should be printed on a white, Portrait layout A4 size paper. The cover page should be printed on a good quality not-textured thick paper.

### **Penalty**

A thesis submitted later than the specified deadline is subject for a **penalty of 1%** grade reduction off the final thesis grade. This penalty will apply for each day's lateness up to five days. Saturday & Sunday are included in the penalty period. After five days, a thesis is considered as failed. Where a student is aware in advance of special circumstances, which will prevent him/her from submitting assessed work timely, he/she may request in writing an extension of the due date from the OSCE Academy Director and a copy of a request must be sent to the Academic Supervisor. Such an extension, and the length of any extension granted, shall be at the discretion of the OSCE Academy Director. Where such an extension is granted, assessed work submitted within the extended period for submission will not attract a penalty. Where a student fails to submit a request for an extension to the OSCE Academy Director in advance, the student may nonetheless inform the OSCE Academy Director in writing of any special circumstances which prevented him/her from timely submitting assessed work. In such a case, the OSCE Academy Director may at his/her discretion reduce any penalty, which has been applied for late submission in whole or in part. In no circumstances shall any special

circumstances affecting late submission of assessed work be considered after marks have been finalized by the Examiners.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the act of copying or including in one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or *unintentionally*, the work of another, for one's own benefit. It is academically fraudulent and an offence against OSCE Academy rules. Plagiarism, at whatever stage of a student's course, whether discovered before or after graduation, will be investigated and dealt with appropriately by the Academy.

All work submitted for assessment by students is accepted on the understanding that it is the student's own effort without falsification of any kind. Students are expected to offer their own analysis and presentation of information gleaned from research, even when group exercises are carried out. In so far as students rely on sources, they should indicate what these are according to the appropriate convention in their discipline. The innocent misuse or citation of material without formal and proper acknowledgement can constitute plagiarism, even when there is no deliberate intent to cheat. Work may be plagiarised if it consists of close paraphrase or unacknowledged summary of a source, as well as word-for-word transcription. In addition, students are required to acknowledge all help and other assistance that they have received. This should be done both in the formal list of acknowledgements in the thesis and at the appropriate places in the thesis. Examples of such help might include provision of material, assistance with statistics or data processing, and external collaborations. Any failure adequately to acknowledge or properly reference other sources in submitted work and to properly acknowledge help and assistance received will lead to *the total failure to complete a Master degree at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek*.

If an Examiner suspects that a thesis contains evidence of plagiarism, he or she will inform the OSCE Academy Director and Academic Supervisor. Evidence of the suspected plagiarism should be collected together by the Academic Supervisor and a report made to the OSCE Academy Director. On the basis of this report and in consultancy with both the Academic Supervisor and the Examiner, the Director will decide whether the plagiarism is minor or significant. If the plagiarism is minor the Examiner will be advised to take the minor plagiarism into account in determining the academic quality of the work.

If the plagiarism is significant, it will lead to the failure of the Master Thesis and, as a result, of the Master degree in Economic Governance and Development. This decision will be taken by the OSCE Academy Director and the Academic Supervisor in co-operation with the Examiner. The Master Thesis can not be re-submitted and the decision will be final with no

appeal allowed. The report and an official letter will be sent to a student and the Board of Trustees of the OSCE Academy.

If plagiarism or cheating is found to have occurred in the work of a student after the graduation the OSCE Academy has the authority to reduce the classification of a degree conferred, or to revoke a degree and to require the graduate to return the degree scroll.

### **Grading**

The lowest passing grade for MA thesis is C. Each thesis is read by a supervisor and two independent reviewers, who provide written comments. Reviewers also provide grades for each thesis and submit to the State Examination Committee, who will make final decision on grades taking into consideration: 1) student presentation of a thesis (thesis defense); 2) supervisor's comments, and 3) most significantly, reviewers' feedback and grade.

A thesis that is evaluated below C (and therefore failed) can be rewritten only once in the following two years after graduation. Anyone passing the MA thesis, but with a GPA less than 2.00 fails the programme.

### **Thesis corrections**

After the submission of electronic versions of theses, Academic staff will check if the theses submitted are in line with the Academy's formatting requirements. If any formatting corrections are needed, they will let you know before the hard copies are printed. However, it is solely students' responsibility to submit well formatted hard copies. *The Academy has the right to ask students to reprint the hard copy until they satisfy the formatting requirements.*

## III.PARTS OF YOUR THESIS

The following are the parts that your thesis must consist of. All sections are mandatory unless it is indicated *optional*. The order of the sections indicated below must be followed.

### **Prefatory pages:**

- Title Page
- Declaration
- Abstract
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables (if applicable)
- List of Figures (if applicable)
- List of Illustrations (if applicable)
- List of Abbreviations (optional)

## **The body of the thesis**

- Body (text, chapters)
- Bibliography (or References, Works Cited)
- Appendix (or Appendices) (if applicable)

## IV. FORMATTING

### **Margins**

Margins are the white pages surrounding the text. Left margin must be 1, 5 inches. Right, top and bottom margins must be 1 inch (2.54 cm).

### **Page numbers**

Page numbers should appear at the center of the bottom of the page. Use the same font and size that you use for the body of your thesis (Times New Roman, 12).

Prefatory pages: use consecutive lowercase Roman numerals for prefatory pages (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.). Title page, Declaration, Abstract, Acknowledgments (optional) and Table of Contents are all to be numbered and counted in a Roman numerical order (I, ii, iii, iv etc). Start counting from the title page, but the number should not appear on the title page. Thus page numbering starts from the Declaration page, which is counted as page ii.

The body of the thesis: use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4 etc) in the same size and font as the body of the text.

### **Centering**

All chapters should be centered. Headings and subheadings may not be centered.

### **Justification**

All the text, including the prefatory pages should be justified.

### **Spacing**

Regular text (body) must be formatted with 1,5 line spacing. This includes chapters, headings and subheadings. Quotations, data in the tables (figures, illustration etc) are allowed to be single spaced. Endnotes and footnotes must be single spaced. Bibliography must be single spaced with one blank line after each entry and must be formatted according to the Chicago Style.

### **Font**

Times New Roman font must be used for all parts of thesis, including the title page, prefatory pages, headings, bibliography, etc ( exceptions some data in the tables or some texts in the appendices). Times New Roman, 12 points must be used for the body of the thesis, including the bibliography. For headings, titles of figures (tables and illustrations), subheadings etc,

larger points may be used (up to 16 points). Endnotes and footnotes must be formatted with 10 points. Smaller fonts, down to 9 points, may be used for data in the tables.

Bold face and italics may be used in subheadings, tables, figures, and specific words in text, but extensive use should be avoided.

### **Style**

Thesis must be written in the format determined in the Chicago Manuscript Format. If the thesis, including the bibliography, does not comply with the Chicago Manuscript Format, it will not be accepted by the Academy.

### **Color**

Color may be used for illustrative materials. Do not use colors for regular text, including the headings, chapters, titles of tables etc.

### Formatting of specific pages

#### **Title page**

Follow the MA thesis template of the OSCE Academy. Don't change and shift margins, lines, caps letters, font type, font size etc. Make it as close as to the sample (template).

#### **Abstract**

Abstract must not exceed 400 words and should describe the problem of your research, main methods used and the conclusions and results that you have found. Abstract page must not include any of your details (eg. your name, title of your research, page numbers etc, shouldn't not appear on this page).

#### **Declaration**

In this form you take the responsibility for the contents of your thesis and declare that you followed academic honesty procedures. Your signatures in both of the hard copies of your thesis must be original.

#### **Acknowledgements**

Acknowledgements must be written in first-person voice. Here you may acknowledge (thank) people who have assisted you with the thesis or supported you during the process. For example, you may thank your supervisors, professors, experts, any funding sources that supported your research, persons whom you have interviewed and family or friends, who supported you. There are no minimum or maximum word requirements for this part.

#### **Table of Contents**

Do not include the title page, abstract and declaration page in the table of contents.

Do not use range numbers (e.g. 4-12 in indicating page numbers). Only the first page of the chapter (heading, subheading) must be indicated.

You may single or 1,5 space the table of contents. Do not include illustrative materials (tables, pictures, figures) in the table of contents as you need a separate list for each illustrative group.

**Illustrative materials (Figures, Tables, etc)**

Use separate pages for each illustrative group even if you have only one item to display. “LIST OF TABLES”, “LIST OF FIGURES”, “LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS” must follow, not precede the “TABLE OF CONTENTS”. Titles and order of illustrative materials must be displayed in the “LIST OF TABLES”, (or “LIST OF FIGURES”, “LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS) on the prefatory page. Titles and order of illustrative materials indicated in the LIST OF TABLES (LIST OF FIGURES etc) must match with those written in the body.

**The body of your thesis (text)**

Text (body) must be in the Times New Roman font, 12 points. Footnotes must be formatted in the same type font but with 10 points. Footnotes must appear at the bottom of the page and must be numbered in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3). For quotations use 10 points.

**Bibliography**

Bibliography must be in the same font and size as the body of the thesis. It should be single spaced, with one entry in between. Chicago Style must be followed in formatting your bibliography.

**Appendix (Appendices)**

Appendices (if you have any) must be placed after the bibliography. In the Appendix, you may include any information (attachments) that is not directly relevant to your thesis but still worth to mention. If more than one, they have to be written as APPENDIX A, APPENDIX B and each appendix has to be on a separate page. Appendices may be page numbered and included in the table of contents.

**Templates**

Templates (sample pages) that guide you to format your MA thesis can be found under Resources.