

**UNIVERSITY OF GDAŃSK
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS**

**INSTRUCTION FOR PREPARING
MASTER'S THESIS**

Sopot 2018

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CHAPTER 1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1.1. Essence of Master's thesis

The diploma thesis means independently elaborated scientific issue presenting the student's general knowledge and the skills connected with the studies in the given field and the skills of independent analysis and conclusions.

Referring to the Master's thesis it can be said that the Master's thesis confirms the student's abilities of independent acquisition of theoretical and professional knowledge, solving problems and describing in the form accepted in the given field of study in the elaboration that is suitable for wider use. It is the summing up of the university studies during which the author acquired appropriate theoretical and empirical material, analyzed it and interpreted the results properly. It is the basis for receiving the title of Master in the given field. The Master's thesis should consist of the following: the theoretical part, the research, the analytical part and the conclusion. The supervisor is in control of the proper construction and preparation of the thesis.

1.2. Selection of the subject and formulation of the title of the Master's thesis

Master's theses are written in the area of scientific interests of the student and are coincident with the chosen specialty. The essence of these includes the research and editorial activities of the research report. It means the thesis is an attempt of solving the problem in an independent way, which should include an essential problem which requires research, its explanation, the solution and the indication of theoretical and practical applications, and not only the discussion of economic knowledge in the chosen scope. The tasks may result not only from the student's interests and research specialization of the department (institute) and the supervisor, they may correspond to the expectations of business and social practice, from willingness to transfer advanced knowledge to a given subject, for example to Poland from abroad, etc.

The title should be formulated shortly, explicitly, communicatively, with linguistic correctness, so than it reflects the essence of the researched problem.

1.3. Contents of Master's thesis

The contents of the Master's thesis must be in accordance with the title of the work, the objective of the work and its scope, from which the titles of chapters and subchapters, together with their contents, must result directly. The Master's thesis should be based on the current literature of the subject (Polish and foreign) and it should be the independent analysis of an economic phenomenon or a process, economic sector or entity, economic relations based on primary data (own research) or secondary data (statistical materials, reports, etc.). To make the analysis, the review of the literature of the subject is necessary first, which presents the results of theoretical and empirical research in the given scope. The contents of all diploma theses of students of Faculty of Economics are checked by anti-plagiarism software.

1.4. Methodology of Master's theses in Economics

The Master's thesis should be performed with the use of the appropriate method for the type of research and specificity of the explained problem. The Master's thesis is not subjected to all research requirements, as it is not needed that it contributed new elements of knowledge to the existing theories and this is why it does not need to have the character of pure or abstract research (theoretical, modeling). Most frequently, it is the thesis of empirical and mono-disciplinary character, describing and explaining the problem using both, quantitative and qualitative methods, presenting the phenomenon in a various scale.

Considering the kind of Master's thesis the most appropriate types of carried out research are:

- descriptive research – the result may consist of both, directly observed facts (original research), opinions of people about these facts (questionnaire forms, interviews) and results of other descriptive research (historical research, secondary research); descriptive research is an important stage of cognition, as it creates the objective image of the researched subject in its natural conditions,
- explanation research is carried out using such methods, as:
 - a) interpretative,
 - b) analytical,
 - c) co-relational,
 - d) casual,
 - e) comparative.

In the given research project there may be a logical necessity of carrying out all subtypes of explanatory research, sometimes it is enough to restrict to a few or even only to one of them (for example analytical or casual).

The research can be carried out in qualitative or quantitative form. There are problems, the explanation of which has the greatest cognitive value when their quantitative features are precisely determined (concentration, frequency and occurrence probability, structure, dynamics, etc.), but there are also problems which require concentration on qualitative functional features (anatomy, mapping and scenario analysis of processes, effects approached quantitatively, consumer satisfaction, etc.). In the given project, when choosing quantitative or qualitative research (or both of them) it is necessary to gain introductory logical and information insight, which cognitive effects it may have.

Cognitive techniques are the ways of data collection within the framework of the applied method. In economic science the following research techniques are used most frequently:

- desk research
- case study
- interview (free-form, expert, individual, group, by phone)
- questionnaire (general, direct, auditorium, computer, Internet)
- observation
- experiment

CHAPTER 2. STRUCTURE OF MASTER'S THESIS

2.1. General information

The Master's thesis consists of the introduction, most frequently of four chapters, the conclusion and the required additional parts. The chapters are divided into three or four subchapters (one subchapter is not accepted), sometimes points.

Elements of Master's thesis:

- title page,
- contents,
- introduction,
- chapters,
- conclusion,
- list of literature and other used resources,
- list of tables,
- list of figures,
- attachments (numbered) or annex with attachments (numbered),
- declarations.

The range of carried out research and the complexity of the problem have a decisive influence on the final structure of the Master's thesis. The contents of the individual chapters should be a coherent and adequately organized system of arguments explaining the essence, determinants, regularities and effects of a given economic phenomenon. There are no formal requirements determining the volume of the Master's thesis. It depends on the researched subject and the applied methodology. The typical Master's thesis is about 70 – 90 pages of standard A-4 sized computer printout.

2.2. Review of main parts of thesis

2.2.1. Introduction

The final text editing comes after writing the fundamental text, but before the writing is started it is necessary to determine the elements that must be included in the introduction, namely: the problem, the research objective and the research hypothesis.

In the introduction it is necessary to:

- outline the general background of the researched problem,
- indicate the reasons of the selected subject and the essence of carried out research,
- determine the research objective and hypothesis,
- indicate the scope of the thesis,
- present general information about the contents of every chapter,
- indicate research methods, resources and ways of presenting information.

Hints and detailed remarks

- As the thesis is to accomplish the concrete objective it is necessary to formulate it at the beginning of the thesis and comply it with the structure and conclusions. The analysis cannot be the objective – analysis is the method. Verification, identification, determination, checking, etc. can be the objective (‘The objective of the thesis is..... For instance, the identification of barriers....., development determinants....., research of influence....., indicate the relationship....., assessment of condition, efficiency, utilization rate....., indication of the role....., indication of competitive advantage.....’).
- The research hypothesis is presented in the introduction, it is the answer to the essential questions presented by the researcher. It is the reply, which is not certain and, therefore, it needs to be checked in the prepared elaboration, for instance: ‘The presented hypothesis states that, for example, the fundamental barrier in the development of SME is.....; the essential source of competitive advantage is.....; the degree of absorption of the EU funds in Poland is not sufficient/ sufficient; on the market the tendency increases.....; restrictive financial policy leads to.....; models of used discriminant analysis allow/ do not allow.....?’.
- The introduction includes the scope of the thesis (substantive, geographical, subjective, objective, temporal), what the thesis is about, which enterprises, states, economic regions or groups it refers to, which period the analyzed data deal with, etc.
- The introduction contains a short description of each chapter, for example: ‘The contents of the first/second/ third chapter was devoted to the explanation.....(of specific aspect of the researched problem)’ (2-5 sentences about each chapter).

- Methodology of the thesis is presented in the introduction (descriptive analysis, comparative analysis, induction, deduction, synthesis, statistical methods, econometric methods, case study and others), presentation of used resources and indication of figures and tables as a method of data presentation.
- Notes are not used in the introduction.

2.2.2. Theoretical chapters

The Master's thesis contains 1-2 theoretical chapters. The first chapter is to present current research achievements within the scope of the undertaken issues, the general economic background and the place in the system of current science and knowledge. The second chapter should present more detailed issues connected with the subject of the thesis. It should be the theoretical presentation of the most important aspects of the researched problem (the essence, features and significance of the phenomenon, sphere of management or economic process, its structure, dynamics, connections with other development phenomena or processes, factors or barriers).

Hints and detailed remarks

- If the student places the text between the subject of the chapter and subsections it should be in every chapter and there should be a short introduction, which includes the elements of the chapter and its objective.
- The theoretical chapter contains the most important achievements in the scope of the subject of the thesis, it considers the latest theories and research.
- The chapters present, among others, the definitions of terms included in the subject of the thesis.
- All more important notions in the thesis are explained/ defined.
- The theoretical chapter is based on comparative analysis of various literature (the majority of titles should be from the last 10 years), it rather should not be handbooks.
- Foreign scientific articles presenting the key achievements about the subject matter should be among the resources (such bases may be used as: JSTOR(<http://www.jstor.org/>), emeraldinsight (<https://emeraldinsight.com/>), EconPapers (<https://econpapers.repec.org/>), Google Scholar (<https://scholar.google.pl/>)).

- In case of paragraphs, where the thought of the author is not presented, at the end of the paragraph it is necessary to place the reference work at the end of the paragraph in the footnote. Every new thought should start from the new paragraph. The paragraphs should not be too short (one or two sentences). This hint refers also to the whole thesis and not only to the theoretical chapters.
- In the chapters there should be as few cited words of other author as possible (many citations may result in regarding the thesis as plagiarism by plagiarism checker system).
- The theoretical chapter may be finished with a short summing up – the most important conclusions resulting from the carried out literature research .

2.2.3. Empirical chapters

The thesis should include a chapter/chapters devoted to the verification presented at the beginning of the research hypothesis. The fourth and fifth chapter should contain the detailed analysis and assessment of, among others, researched (diagnosed) phenomena carried out using quantitative instruments (indicators) or methods of quantitative analysis, models and scenarios enabling making conclusions or formulating recommendations for economic practice and determining the trends of the phenomena's development. The third chapter often presents the general picture of the situation, for instance in the form of the analysis of the branch or the market, whereas the fourth chapter refers to the concrete economic entities or, for example, to economic relations/ cooperation between specific states, trade policy of selected countries, etc. The fourth chapter should also contain elements of the author's concept of supplementation or modification of the existing theory or the model.

Hints and detailed remarks

- The description of the carried out research starts with the scope of the research (depending on the type of research, for instance the description of the research sample, the research period, the explanation of the choice of research sample) and with the indication of the applied research methods.
- The information presented in the form of figures or tables must be additionally described in the text; it is necessary to refer to them indicating the number of the figure or the table and analyze them. Thus, subchapters cannot finish with a figure or a table without the following commentary.

Data interpretation consists in:

- looking for relations between the achieved results,
 - looking for causes resulting in such effects,
 - discussing the achieved results in the context of earlier presented theories,
 - attempting to foresee how these phenomena will be created in the future, etc.
- The research chapter is usually finished with a short summing up – which most significant conclusions result from the carried out research.
 - All chapters should have a similar number of pages. It is obvious that each of them is a little different in volume, but great disproportions may suggest the improper division of the research material between the chapters.

2.2.4. Conclusion

The most important conclusions from the thesis should be placed here – from the theoretical and the research parts. It is possible to use summaries of considerations included in the individual chapters of the thesis. It is necessary to refer to the research hypothesis presented in the introduction in the context of carried out own research, indicate the determinants which were satisfactory (or not) for the final result of the presented considerations. It is also worth indicating in which degree the conclusions resulting from the Master's thesis can be significant for theory or practice connected with the researched subject matter.

Hints and detailed remarks

- When summing up the subsequent chapters it is necessary to bear in mind the answers to the questions: what most important results were achieved? What could have an influence on them? What results from the research?
- The conclusion should contain the reference to the hypothesis, for example: 'The results of the carried out (literature or empirical) research confirm the hypothesis presented in the thesis'. Otherwise, it can be written that the results did not confirm the presented hypothesis. Such statements that the hypothesis was verified negatively should not be used (formal fallacy).
- Remark: In case of using statistical tests or econometric models during the research – when referring to the tested hypothesis it is necessary to state that it should be rejected or that there are no grounds for rejecting it.

- It also possible to determine what further research could be taken to deepen the problem.

CHAPTER 3. FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1. Language of Master's thesis

The diploma thesis should be written in academic, communicative language with the use of correct spelling. Verbs in the first person should not be used (for instance, instead of 'we see a tendency on the market...' it should be 'there is a tendency on the market...'), colloquialisms should be avoided (for example, a given phenomenon is 'cool' or 'not cool'), as well as corporation jargon (for example, 'event', 'meeting', 'benefits'). Unjustified foreign language borrowings should be avoided (foreign language borrowing is justified when there is no good equivalent in Polish language, and the term is commonly accepted, like *know-how*). Foreign language borrowings are written in italics. In every case when the text of the thesis is the word for word citation it should be taken in inverted commas.

3.2. Editorial requirements

The thesis should be formatted in Microsoft Word program according to the template presented on the website of Faculty of Economics, University of Gdańsk:

- title page in the formats accepted as obligatory at the University of Gdańsk;
- margins: right and left – 3 cm; top and bottom – 2.5 cm;
- page numbers at the bottom, centered;
- main text: *Times New Roman* character font 12 pt, text aligned, line spacing 1.5, lack of additional spacing between paragraphs, every new paragraph starts with 1.25 cm indentation;
- text in footnotes: *Times New Roman* character font 10 pt, text aligned, line spacing 1.0;
- titles of chapters: numbered automatically, *Times New Roman* character font 14 pt, boldfaced, centered, text aligned;
- titles of subchapters: numbered automatically, *Times New Roman* character font 12 pt, boldfaced, text aligned;

- tables and figures: titles of tables – over the tables (*Times New Roman* character font 12 pt, boldfaced, text aligned), titles of figures – under the figures (*Times New Roman* character font 12 pt, boldfaced, text left-aligned); the resource must be under every table and figure (*Times New Roman* character font 10 pt, text aligned; tables and figures are numbered (separate numbering for tables, separate numbering for figures), in the text there the reference should be made to them, for example: ‘Sale in years 2010-2015 was growing.....(Fig. 3)’.
- contents, list of tables and figures – automatically;
- bibliography divided into types of resources (volume form, articles, Internet resources, others, etc., the items in every group are arranged (according to surnames of authors) alphabetically and numbered automatically (separately for every group of sources);
- full stops at the end: **no full stops after titles** (of thesis, chapters, subchapters, tables, figures); **after resources and footnotes – full stop;**
- after finishing writing the thesis it is necessary to eliminate single graphemes at the end of the line by substituting the simple space following the grapheme with the so-called hard space (combination of keys ctrl+shift+space).

Table 1. Table’s title

Resource: own elaboration on the basis of A. Author, *Title*, Publishing House, Place Year, p.125.

1st quarter

2nd quarter

3rd quarter

4th quarter

Fig. 1 Figure’s title

Resource: own elaboration on the basis of date of XYZ Enterprise (access: March 10th 2018).

3.3. Principles of describing resources

All resources used in the thesis (in footnotes, tables, figures) require full bibliographical description. Internet resources cannot be described only by hyperlink, the full description of the resource should be given if possible, especially the title of the material. Wikipedia and similar websites cannot be the resource used in the thesis.

3.3.1. Description of resources in footnotes

- **Volume forms:** initial of name/names, surname, title of work (in italics), publishing house, place, year, page/pages.

B.P. Haynes, N. Nunnington, T. Eccles, *Corporate real estate asset management: strategy and implementation*, Routledge, London, New York 2017, p. 99.

Finanse międzynarodowe: wybrane problemy, ed. M. Markiewicz, U. Mrzygłód, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa 2015, pp 77-78.

- **Articles:** initial of name/names, surname, title of article (in italics), title of journal (inverted commas), year, number (in case of article accessible only online – website with given date of access).

E. Breza, S. Kaur, Y. Shamdasani, *The morale effects of pay inequality*, „The Quarterly Journal of Economics”, 2018, vol. 133, issue 2.

Ł. Hardt, *Prawa ceteris rectis w ekonomii*, „Gospodarka Narodowa”, 2018, no 1.

J. Pieńczykowska, *Zielone certyfikaty: zmiana reguł w trakcie gry. Stawką przyszłość branży OZE*, „Dziennik Gazeta Prawna”, 15 September 2017, no 201.

S.G. Kirdina, *Institutional Matrices and Development in Russia*, Novosibirsk 2001, <http://kirdina.ru/public/summary/index.shtml> (access: 21.04.2018).

- **Internet resources:** name of organization, website, date of access.

OECD Database: <https://data.oecd.org/> (access: 22.12.2017).

International Monetary Fund – International Financial Statistics: <http://data.imf.org/?sk=4C514D48-B6BA-49ED-8AB9-52B0C1A0179B&sId=1409151240976> (access: 18.03.2018).

Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index – rankings: <http://www.bti-project.org/en/data/rankings/>
(access: 01.04.2018).

- **Other resources** (legal acts, reports, internal materials of enterprises, etc.)

Act dated from January 15th 2015 dealing with bonds, unified text, Journal of Laws 2018 item 483, art. 2.

Guidelines on the assessment of horizontal mergers under the Council Regulation on the control of concentrations between undertakings (2004/C 31/03), O.J. EU 31/5 from 5.2.2004.

Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on common rules for access to the international road haulage market(EC) No 1072/2009 from 21 October 2009, O.J. EU L300/72 from 14.11.2009, art. 4.

The Global Competitiveness Report 2009-2010, edited by K. Schwab, World Economic Forum, Geneva 2009.

3.3.2. Principles of abbreviating description of resources

In justified cases the description of the resource should be abbreviated:

- if it was cited in the footnote directly preceding the current footnote:

Ibidem, p. 25.

- if it was quoted in the thesis earlier:

P. Borkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

- when in the thesis more than one title of a given author was cited it is necessary to give the beginning of the title till the word which makes it possible to distinguish the titles:

P. Borkowski, *Metody obiektywizacji oceny...*, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

- when the publication was written by many authors and none of them was indicated as the editor, it is possible not to enumerate all authors, but only the first one and add *et al.* (Latin: and others):

J. de Ree *et al.*, *Double for nothing? Experimental evidence on an unconditional teacher salary increase*

in *Indonesia*, "The Quarterly Journal of Economics", 2018, vol. 133, issue 2.

3.3.3. Description of resources in bibliography

- In the bibliography all publications start with the author's surname, followed by the initial.
- Number of pages is not given in the bibliography.
- All items should be put in alphabetical order and numbered.

Volume form publications

1. Borkowski P., *Metody obiektywizacji oceny ryzyka w inwestycjach infrastrukturalnych w transporcie*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk 2013.
2. *Finanse międzynarodowe: wybrane problemy*, red. M. Markiewicz, U. Mrzyglód, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warsaw 2015.
3. Haynes B.P, Nunnington N., Eccles T., *Corporate real estate asset management: strategy and implementation*, Routledge, London, New York 2017.

Articles

1. Breza E., Kaur S., Shamdasani Y., *The morale effects of pay inequality*, "The Quarterly Journal of Economics", 2018, vol. 133, issue 2.
2. de Ree J., Muralidharan K., Pradhan M., Rogers H., *Double for nothing? Experimental evidence on an unconditional teacher salary increase in Indonesia*, "The Quarterly Journal of Economics", 2018, vol. 133, issue 2.
3. Hardt Ł., *Prawa ceteris rectis w ekonomii*, „Gospodarka Narodowa”, 2018, no 1.
4. Kirdina S.G., *Institutional Matrices and Development in Russia*, Novosibirsk 2001, <http://kirdina.ru/public/summary/index.shtml> (access: 21.04.2018).
5. Pieńczykowska J., *Zielone certyfikaty: zmiana reguł w trakcie gry. Stawką przyszłość branży OZE*, „Dziennik Gazeta Prawna”, 15 September 2017, no 201.

Internet resources

1. Database of OECD, <https://data.oecd.org/> (access: 22.12.2017).
2. Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index – rankings, <http://www.btiproject.org/en/data/rankings/> (access: 01.04.2018).
3. International Monetary Fund – International Financial Statistics, <http://data.imf.org/?sk=4C514D48-B6BA-49ED-8AB9-52B0C1A0179B&sId=1409151240976> (access: 18.03.2018).

Legal acts (Other resources)

1. Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on common rules for access to the international road haulage market (EC) No 1072/2009 from 21 October 2009, O.J. EU L300/72 from 14.11.2009, art. 4.
2. The Global Competitiveness Report 2009-2010, edited by K. Schwab, World Economic Forum, Geneva 2009.
3. Act dated from January 15th 2015 dealing with bonds, unified text, O.J. 2018 item 483, art. 2.
4. Guidelines on the assessment of horizontal mergers under the Council Regulation on the control of concentrations between undertakings (2004/C 31/03), O.J. EU 31/5 from 5.2.2004.

3.4. Procedure of submitting theses and permission for Master's examination

The thesis is to be printed double sided in three copies. One of them is destined for the archive of the University, it should be bound, the other two – according to the recommendations of the supervisor – rather in hardcover. At the end of each copy there must be two declarations signed by the author (that the thesis was written independently and about the conformity of the printed version with the electronic one). CD/DVD with electronic version of the thesis (doc/docx, pdf and version for plagiarism checker¹) together with the text file with the

¹ The details on the website of Faculty of Economics: http://ekonom.ug.edu.pl/web/studenci/index.html?lang=pl&ao=praca_dyplomowa).

description of the diploma thesis generated from: <http://opispracy.ug.edu.pl/>) is to be enclosed to the archive copy.

Every Master's thesis is checked by plagiarism programme and reviewed by the supervisor and the reviewer. The thesis is permitted for the diploma examination after receiving two positive reviews and acceptable result of plagiarism checker. The Master's examination is held before the examination board consisting of: the dean/deputy dean, the reviewer, the supervisor. The student is asked three questions (about the field of study, about specialty and about the thesis). The grade on the diploma consists of: the average of grades obtained during the course of study (0.5), the grade for the thesis (the average of the supervisor's and the reviewer's grades) (0.25) and the diploma examination grade– (0.25).

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1. Check list – Master’s thesis

Part of thesis	Check before you submit your thesis to your supervisor	V
Title page	According to the template placed on the website of Faculty of Economics, University of Gdańsk	
	The title reflects the essence of the researched problem	
Whole thesis	Formatting according to the template (margins, character fonts, line spacing, description of tables and figures, resources under them)	
	Footnotes according to the instruction (punctuation marks, footnote finished with a full stop)	
	Every chapter is started on a new page	
	Unified styles of bullet points, enumerations, etc. in the whole thesis	
	Foreign language borrowings in italics	
	Hard spaces, no empty space in the text	
	Figures and tables on one page, if possible, described in the text	
	Correct language (punctuation, spelling, grammar, style, impersonal constructions)*	
Contents	Automatic and updated	
Introduction	Justification of the selection of the subject	
	Objective of the thesis	
	Research hypothesis	
	Research subject matter and researched period	
	Research methods and tools	
	Description of the structure of the thesis	
	Characteristics of resources	
Research	Described method, choice of research sample	
	Clear presentation of results	
Conclusion	Summing up of considerations and research	

	Reference to the objective of the thesis	
	Conclusions, recommendations, direction of further research, etc.	
List of figures and tables	Automatically	
Bibliography	Differentiated resources (books, articles, databases, legal acts...) and there are foreign publications	
	Publications are divided into groups	
	Publications are put in alphabetical order	
	Every publication is finished with a full stop	
Declarations	Two: about independent preparation of the thesis and about the conformity of the printed version with the electronic one; both declarations are signed	

***Most frequent linguistic mistakes:**

- the term ‘more optimal’ (‘optimal’ is not compared),
- firm is the name of an enterprise, and not a synonym of an enterprise,
- quantity refers to uncountable nouns, number – to countable ones,
- pleonasm, like ‘burning fire’ or ‘black darkness’,
- space at dash used in the form of hyphen between words, for example: ‘social-economic development’, and not ‘social – economic development’ (but when the dash is used as a punctuation mark, then there should be space, just like here.
- doubling space, space before comma, after opening bracket, before the number of footnote, etc.
- placing full stop at the end of the sentence before the number of footnote
- improper inflection of pronouns (Polish language)
- referring to something (Polish language)
- titles of books, titles, dissertations – when the title includes many words only the first one is written in capital letters (Polish language)