

UNIVERSITY OF GDAŃSK – FACULTY OF ECONOMICS

**INSTRUCTION FOR PREPARING
MASTER'S THESIS**

Sopot 2022

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CHAPTER 1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1.1. Essence of the Master's Thesis

The diploma dissertation is an independent study of a scientific issue, demonstrating the student's general knowledge and skills related to studies in a given field of study as well as independent analysis and reasoning skills.

Relating this to the Master's thesis, it can be stated that the Master's thesis confirms the student's ability to independently gather theoretical and professional knowledge, solve problems, and describe this in the form accepted in the given field of study in a paper suitable for wider use. It is a summary of university studies, during which the author collected relevant theoretical and empirical material, analysed it and correctly interpreted the results. It is the basis for obtaining the Master's degree in a given field. The Master's thesis should consist of the following parts: theoretical, research, analytical and conclusion. The correctness of its construction and preparation is supervised by a scientific supervisor.

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

Master's theses are written in the area of the student's scientific interests and coincide with the studied major. The essence of these papers includes research activities and editorial activities of the research report. This means that they are an attempt to independently solve a selected issue, which should involve a significant problem that requires investigation, explanation, solution and indication of theoretical and practical applications, and not just a discussion of economic knowledge in a selected area. The task may result not only from the student's interests and the scientific specialisation of the Department and the supervisor, but may also respond to the needs of economic and social practice, with the intention of transferring advanced knowledge on a given topic e.g. from abroad to Poland, etc.

The title of the thesis should be formulated briefly, unambiguously, communicatively, linguistically correctly, so that it reflects the essence of the researched problem.

1.3. Contents of the Master`s thesis

The contents of the Master's thesis must be in accordance with the thesis title, the aim of the thesis and its scope, from which the titles of chapters and subchapters and their contents must directly derive. The thesis should exhaustively elaborate the scientific problem contained in the thesis title. The Master's thesis should be based on the current literature on the subject and should be an independent analysis of an economic phenomenon or process, economic sector or unit, economic relations on the basis of primary data (own research) or secondary data (statistical materials, reports, etc.). In order to perform this analysis, it is first necessary to review the literature on the subject presenting the results of theoretical and empirical research in the given scope. The content of all diploma theses of students of the Faculty of Economics is subject to checking with anti-plagiarism software.

1.4. Methodology of Master's thesis in economics

The Master's thesis should be carried out by a method adequate to the type of research and the specifics of the problem explained. The Master's thesis is not subjected to all scientific rigours, as it is not required to bring new elements of knowledge to the existing theories, and therefore it does not have to have the character of pure or targeted abstract (theoretical, model) research. It is most often a work of empirical and monodisciplinary character, carried out to describe and explain the problem with the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods on different scales of capturing the phenomena.

Due to the rank of the Master's thesis, the most appropriate types of cognitive activities performed in it are the following types of research:

- descriptive - the result of which may consist of both directly observed facts (original research) and opinions of other people about these facts (surveys, interviews) and results of other descriptive research (historical research, secondary research); descriptive research is an important stage of cognition, because it creates an objective picture of the object of research in its natural conditions,
- explanatory, performed by such methods as:
 - a) interpretive,
 - b) analytical,
 - c) correlative,

- d) causal,
- e) comparative.

In a given research project, it may be logically necessary to conduct all of these subtypes of explanatory research, and sometimes it may be sufficient to limit them to a few selected ones or even to one (for example, analytical or causal).

Research can be conducted in a quantitative or qualitative form. There are problems, the explanation of which has the greatest cognitive value when quantitative features are precisely defined (intensity, frequency and probability of occurrence, structure, dynamics, etc.), but there are also problems which require focusing on qualitative functional features (anatomy, mapping and process scenarios, effects captured qualitatively, consumer satisfaction, etc.). In a given project, when deciding on quantitative or qualitative research (or on both), it is necessary to make a preliminary logical and informative discernment as to what cognitive effects it may produce.

Research techniques are ways of collecting data within the applied method. The following research techniques are most commonly used in economic sciences:

- collection and analysis of secondary data (desk research),
- case study,
- interview (free-form, expert, individual, group, telephone),
- survey (general; direct, auditorium, computer, internet),
- observation,
- experiment.

CHAPTER 2. STRUCTURE OF THE MASTER'S THESIS

2.1. General information

The Master's thesis consists of an introduction, usually four chapters, a conclusion and the required additional parts. Chapters are divided into three or four subchapters (there cannot be one subchapter), sometimes points.

Elements of a Master's thesis:

- title page,
- statements,
- table of contents,
- introduction,
- chapters,
- conclusion,
- bibliography,
- index of tables,
- index of figures,
- appendices (numbered) or annexe with appendices (numbered).

The final structure of the thesis is determined by the scope of the research undertaken and the complexity of the subject matter. The content of individual chapters should be a coherent and appropriately hierarchical arrangement of arguments explaining the essence, conditions, regularities and effects of a given economic phenomenon. There are no formal requirements specifying the volume of the Master's thesis. It depends on the subject of research and the applied methodology of its execution. A typical Master's thesis is 70-90 pages of standard A-4 computer printout.

2.2. Discussion of the main parts of the thesis

2.2.1. Introduction

The final editing of the introduction takes place after the main text has been written; but before starting to write, the elements that must be included in the introduction should be identified, namely: the problem, the research objective and the research hypothesis.

In the introduction it is necessary to:

- outline the general background of the studied problem,
- indicate the rationale for choosing the topic of the thesis and the significance of the research undertaken,
- define the purpose of the thesis,
- identify theses or hypotheses or research questions,
- indicate the scope of the paper,
- provide general information on the content of individual chapters,
- indicate research methods, source basis and ways of presenting information.

Specific guidelines and comments

- Since the thesis pursues a specific aim, it should be clearly formulated at the beginning of the work and the structure and conclusions should be subordinate to it. The aim cannot be analysis - analysis is a method. The aim can be verification, identification, determination, checking, etc. ("The purpose of the thesis is... e.g. to identify barriers..., determinants of development..., to examine the impact..., to demonstrate the relationship..., to assess the condition, effectiveness, degree of exploitation..., to demonstrate the role..., to identify competitive advantages...").
- The introduction formulates the theses or hypotheses or research questions.
- The introduction contains the scope of the work (substantive, geographical, subject, object, time), e.g. what the work is about, which companies, countries, regions or economic groups it concerns, what period the analysed data refer to, etc.
- The introduction contains a short description of each chapter, e.g. "Chapter one presents, analyses, characterizes, etc.", "The content of chapter (one, two, three) is focused on explaining ... (a particular aspect of the problem studied)". (2-5 sentences for each chapter).
- The introduction contains the methodology of the work (descriptive analysis, comparative analysis, induction, deduction, synthesis, statistical methods, econometric methods, case study method, and others), a presentation of the sources used, and an indication of e.g. figures and tables as methods of data presentation.
- In the introduction, footnotes are usually not used.

2.2.2. Theoretical chapters

The Master's thesis contains 1-2 theoretical chapters. The first chapter should present the previous research achievements in the field of the undertaken problem, the general economic background and the place in the system of existing science and knowledge. The second chapter should present more detailed issues related to the topic of the thesis. It should be a theoretical presentation of the most important aspects of the researched issue (the essence, features and significance of the phenomenon, sphere of economy or economic process, its structure, dynamics, links with other phenomena or processes, factors and barriers to development)

Specific guidelines and comments

- The theoretical chapter contains the most important achievements in the field of the thesis topic, takes into account the latest theories, research.
- The chapters present, among others, the definitions of the concepts contained in the title of the work.
- All major terms in the work are explained/defined.
- The theoretical chapter is based on a comparative analysis of diverse literature, taking into account the latest items (most items should be from the last 10 years), preferably these should not be textbooks.
- The sources must include foreign scientific articles, which are key achievements in the field of the given topic. Databases that can be used for this search include: JSTOR (<https://www.jstor.org/>), emeraldinsight (<https://www.emeraldinsight.com/>), EconPapers (<https://econpapers.repec.org/>), Google Scholar (<https://scholar.google.pl/>). A wider list of e-journal and e-book services is available on the UG Library website (<https://www.bg.ug.edu.pl/e-biblioteka>).
- In the case of paragraphs in which the author's own thought is not expressed, a reference and a source footnote should be placed at the end of the paragraph. Each new thought should begin with a new paragraph. Paragraphs should not be too short (one or two sentences) or too long (more than half a page). This guideline applies to the entire paper, not just the theoretical chapters.
- In chapters, it is suggested to use as few verbatim quotations of another author, i.e. citations, as possible. If they are quoted, however, they must be put in inverted commas. The chapter usually ends with a short summary - the most important

conclusions resulting from the research conducted.

2.2.3. Empirical chapters

There should be a chapter/chapters devoted to the verification of the thesis or hypothesis or the research question formulated at the beginning of the study. The third and fourth chapters should include a detailed analysis and evaluation, including, among others, the researched (diagnosed) phenomena, made with the use of quantitative instruments (indicators) or qualitative analysis methods, models and scenarios that make it possible to draw conclusions or formulate recommendations for the entities on the market and define the directions of the phenomenon's development. The third chapter often presents a general picture of the situation, e.g. in the form of an industry or market analysis, while in the fourth chapter the analysis often concerns specific economic entities or, e.g. economic relations/cooperation between specific countries, trade policy of selected countries, etc. The fourth chapter should also contain elements of the author's conception of an addition to or modification of an existing theory or model.

Specific guidelines and comments

- The description of the conducted research begins with the scope of the research (depending on the type of research e.g. description of the research sample, research period, explanation of the research sample selection) and indication of the research methods used.
- All information presented in figures or tables must be additionally described in the text
 - they should be referred to by indicating the figure or table number. Subchapters must not end with a figure, table, specification, bullet or formula.
- Interpretation of data involves:
 - a) looking for relationships between the results obtained,
 - b) looking for reasons which caused these results,
 - c) discussing the results obtained in the light of the theories presented earlier,
 - d) trying to predict how the phenomena will develop in the future, etc.
- The chapter usually ends with a short summary - the most important conclusions resulting from the research conducted.

All chapters should have a similar number of pages. It is obvious that each of them has a slightly different volume, but significant disproportions may be evidence of

inadequate division of the research material between the chapters.

2.2.4. Conclusion

The conclusion should contain the most important findings of the thesis - from the theoretical part and the research part. When preparing them, summaries of reflections contained in individual chapters of the work may be used. They should refer to the theses, hypotheses or research questions formulated in the introduction in the context of the conducted own research; indicate the conditions which determined the successful (or unsuccessful) final result of the presented considerations. It is also worth indicating to what extent the conclusions of the Master's thesis may be important for the theory or practice related to the research topic.

CHAPTER 3. FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1. Language of the thesis

The thesis should be written in a scientific, communicative language, observing the principles of correct spelling. No verbs in the first/second person should be used (e.g. instead of "we can see a tendency on the market ..." - "a tendency can be seen on the market ..."). Colloquialisms should also be avoided (e.g. a given phenomenon is "cool/uncool"). Foreign language borrowings should be indicated in italics. Whenever the content of the paper is a literal quotation, it should be put in inverted commas.

3.2. Editorial requirements

The paper should be formatted in Microsoft Word according to the template posted on the Faculty of Economics website:

- title page with the formats accepted as the template obligatory at UG;
- margins: left and right - 3 cm; top and bottom - 2.5 cm;
- page numbers at the bottom, centred;
- main text: Times New Roman 12 pt, aligned text, spacing 1.5, no additional spacing between paragraphs, each new paragraph started with an indentation of 1.25 cm;
- footnotes: Times New Roman 10 pt, aligned, spacing 1.0;
- titles of chapters: automatically numbered, font Times New Roman 14 pt, bold, text centred;
- titles of subchapters: automatically numbered, font Times New Roman 12 pt, bold, text aligned;
- tables and figures: titles of tables - above tables (Times New Roman 10 pt, bold, centred text), titles of figures - below figures (Times New Roman 10 pt, bold, text aligned to the left); there must be a source under each table and figure (Times New Roman 10 pt, aligned text); tables and figures are numbered (separate numbering for tables, separate for figures), in the text there should be a reference to them, e.g. "Sales between 2015 and 2020 grew... (Figure 3).";
- table of contents, indexes of tables and figures – automatic;
- dots at the end: no dot after titles (of work, chapters, subchapters, tables, figures); dot

- after sources and footnotes;
- once the writing is complete, single and double characters at the end of a line should be eliminated from the text by replacing the normal space following the character with a 'hard space' (ctrl+shift+space).

Table 1. Title of the table

Source: A. Author, *Title*, Publisher, Place and year of publication, p. 125. or own elaboration based on A. Author, *Title*, Publisher, Place and year of publishing, p. 125. or own study. (depending on the author's own contribution)

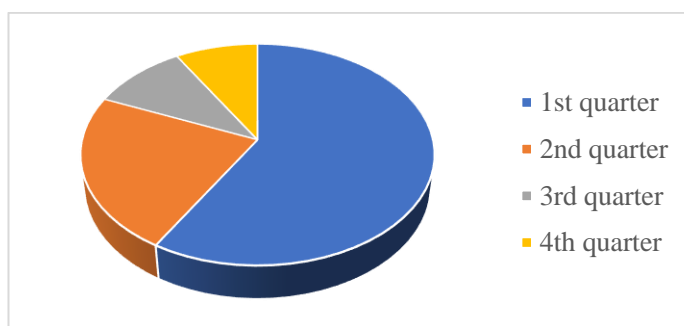


Figure 1. Title of the figure

Source: analogous to the caption under the table.

3.3. Principles of source description

All sources used in the paper (in footnotes, tables, figures) require a full bibliographic description. Internet sources cannot be described only by a hyperlink. Sources used in the paper must not include Wikipedia and similar sites. References are usually written before punctuation marks. This also applies to colons before bullets and enumerations, e.g: "...the following terms appear³".

Note

It is acceptable to use different styles of bibliographic description, such as Harvard style, APA style. In agreement with the supervisor, other styles are also acceptable. However, it is required to maintain a uniform style in the entire work.

It is possible to use tools supporting bibliography creation using the functions of Word software and Mendeley application.

3.3.1. Description of sources in footnotes

Sample descriptions of various sources:

- **volume forms:** initial of name/names, surname, title of work (in italics), publisher, place, year, page(s).

B.P. Haynes, N. Nunnington, T. Eccles, *Corporate Real Estate Asset Management: Strategy and Implementation*, Routledge, London, New York 2017, p. 99

- **edited collective works:** title of the work (in italics), initial of name/names, surname, publisher, place, year, page(s).

Rachunek decyzyjny w logistyce zaopatrzenia, ed. M. Chaberek, Wydawnictwo Gdańskiej Wyższej Szkoły Humanistycznej, Gdańsk 2002, p. 43.

- **articles:** initial of name/names, surname, title of article (in italics), title of journal (in inverted commas), year, issue number (in the case of an article available only online - the address of the website with the date of access), page(s).

E. Breza, S. Kaur, Y. Shamdasani, *The Morale Effects of Pay Inequality*, „The Quarterly Journal of Economics”, 2018, vol. 133, issue 2, p. 625.

Ł. Hardt, *Prawa ceteris rectis w ekonomii*, „Gospodarka Narodowa”, 2018, no. 1, p. 12.

J. Pieńczykowska, *Zielone certyfikaty: zmiana reguł w trakcie gry. Stawką przyszłość branży OZE*, „Dziennik Gazeta Prawna”, 15 September 2017, no. 201, p. c5.

- **book chapters:** initial of name/names, surname of article author, chapter title (italics) [in:] title of collective work (italics), initial of name/names, surname of collective work editor, publishing house, place, year, page(s).

J. Adamska-Mieruszewska, *Bilans płatniczy*, [in:] *Finanse międzynarodowe: wybrane problemy*, ed. M. Markiewicz, U. Mrzygłód, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa 2015, pp. 77-78.

- **websites:** website name, website address, date of access.

OECD database, <https://data.oecd.org/> (accessed 22.02.2021).

International Monetary Fund - International Financial Statistics, <https://data.imf.org/?sk=4C514D48-B6BA-49ED-8AB9-52B0C1A0179B&sl=1409151240976> (accessed 18.03.2021).

Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index - rankings, <https://www.bti-project.org/en/data/rankings/> (accessed 01.04.2018).

- **other sources:** (legislation acts, reports, internal company materials, etc.).

Act of 15 January 2015 on bonds, 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), OJ C 31/5 of 5.2.2004.

Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market, OJ L 300/72 of 14.11.2009, Article 4.

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

- **when citing a passage not directly from the original:** bibliographic description of the original [after:] bibliographic description of the work being used.

K. Gleister, *The Entrepreneur*, Pearson Education, Oxford 1989 [after:] T. Gruszecki, *Przedsiębiorca w teorii ekonomii*, Cedor Sp. z o.o., Warszawa 1994, p. 31.

3.3.2. Principles of abbreviating source descriptions

In justified cases the source description should be abbreviated:

- if the item was cited in a footnote immediately preceding the current footnote:

Ibidem, p. 25.

- if the item was cited earlier in the paper:

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

- when more than one item of a given author is cited in the paper, the beginning of the title of the work should be given up to the word that allows to distinguish the works:

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

- if the item has more than one author and none of them is indicated as the editor, you may not list all the authors, but give the first one and add *et al.*:

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, p. 995.

3.3.3. Description of sources in the bibliography

- In the bibliography, all entries begin with the author's surname, followed by the initials.
- No page numbers are given in the bibliography.
- All entries should be arranged alphabetically and numbered.

Volume form publications

(surname, initial of name/names, *work title*, publishing house, place and year)

1. Adamska-Mieruszevska J., *Bilans płatniczy*, [in:] *Finanse międzynarodowe: wybrane problemy*, ed. M. Markiewicz, U. Mrzygłód, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa 2015
2. Haynes B.P., Nunnington N., Eccles T., *Corporate Real Estate Asset Management: Strategy and Implementation*, Routledge, London, New York 2017
3. Kirdina S.G., *Institutional Matrices and Development in Russia*, Novosibirsk 2001, <http://kirdina.ru/public/summary/index.shtml>.

4. *Rachunek decyzyjny w logistyce zaopatrzenia*, ed. M. Chaberek, Wydawnictwo Gdańskiej Wyższej Szkoły Humanistycznej, Gdańsk 2002.

Articles

(surname, initial of name/names, *title of article*, "title of journal", year, number;
in the case of an article available only online - website address)

1. Breza E., Kaur S., Shamdasani Y., *The Morale Effects of Pay Inequality*, "The Quarterly Journal of Economics", 2018, vol. 133, issue 2.
2. Hardt Ł., *Prawa ceteris rectis w ekonomii*, "Gospodarka Narodowa", 2018, no. 1.
3. Pięńczykowska J., *Zielone certyfikaty: zmiana reguł w trakcie gry. Stawką przyszłość branży OZE*, "Dziennik Gazeta Prawna", 15 September 2017, no. 201.

Websites

(name of homepage, homepage address)

1. IMF, <https://www.imf.org/>.
2. OECD, <https://www.oecd.org/>.

Other sources

(legal acts, reports, internal materials of companies, databases, etc.)

1. *The Act of 15 January 2015 on bonds*, Journal of Laws. 2018 item 483, art. 2.
2. *Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market*, OJ EU L300/72 of 14.11.2009, Article 4.
3. *Guidelines on the assessment of horizontal mergers under the Council Regulation on the control of concentrations between undertakings (2004/C 31/03)*, OJ C 31/5 of 5 February 2004.

3.4. Procedure for the submission of thesis and acceptance for defence

The thesis should be printed in three copies. One, intended for the university's archives, should be printed on both sides, bound, the other two - according to the supervisor's recommendations - preferably in hard cover. On the second page of each copy, there must be three statements signed by the author (on the conformity of the printed version with the electronic one, on the author's independent preparation and on the consent for sharing). The archival copy is accompanied by a CD/DVD with electronic versions of the thesis (*.docx, *.pdf and a version for anti-plagiarism software¹) and a file with the thesis description, generated from the website: <http://opispracy.ug.edu.pl/>.

Each Master's thesis is checked by an anti-plagiarism software and reviewed by a supervisor and a reviewer. The thesis is admitted to the defence after obtaining two positive reviews and an acceptable result of the anti-plagiarism software. Master's thesis defence takes place before a commission composed of: dean/ vicedean, reviewer, supervisor. The student is asked three questions (from the field of study, specialization and thesis). The diploma grade consists of: average grade obtained during the studies - weight 0.5, thesis grade (average of supervisor's and reviewer's grades) - weight 0.25, defence grade - weight 0.25.

¹ Details on the FE website:
<https://ekonom.ug.edu.pl/web/studenci/index.html?lang=en&ao=diploma>

APPENDICES

Annex 1. Checklist - Master's thesis

Part of the thesis	Before you submit your thesis to the Supervisor, check...	√
Title page	In accordance with the template available on the website of the Faculty of Economics of UG	
	The title reflects the essence of the problem studied	
Entire work	Formatting consistent with the template (margins, fonts, line spacing, descriptions of tables and figures, sources under them)	
	Footnotes in accordance with the instructions (punctuation marks after the reference, footnote ending with a full stop)	
	Each chapter beginning on a new page	
	Uniform style of bullets, lists, etc. throughout the text	
	Foreign language borrowings in italics	
	Hard spaces, no blank spaces in the text	
	Figures and tables are placed on one page if possible, referred to and described in the text	
	Correct language (punctuation, spelling, grammar, style, impersonal form)*	
Table of contents	Automatic and updated	
Introduction	Justification of the choice of the topic	
	Aim of the thesis	
	Theses, hypotheses or research questions	
	Object of the study and period covered by the study	
	Research methods and tools	
	Description of the work structure	
Research	Characteristics of sources	
	Described method, research sample selection, time	
Conclusion	Clear presentation of results	
	Summary of considerations and research	
	Reference to the aim of the thesis	
	Reference to theses, hypotheses, research questions	
Bibliography	Conclusions, recommendations, direction of further research, etc.	
	Sources are diverse (volume form sources, articles, websites and other) and include foreign language items	
	Items listed in alphabetical order	
Statements	Each item ended with a dot	
	Three: consistency of printed and electronic versions, independent preparation and permission to share; all signed	
Indexes of figures and tables	Automatic	

***Frequent language errors:**

- the term more optimal ("optimal" is not gradable),
- amount refers to uncountable nouns, number refers to countable nouns (thus not: an amount of companies, but: a number of companies),
- pleonasms such as 'free gift' or 'true fact',
- spaces before and after a hyphen between words, e.g. "socio-economic development", not "socio - economic development" (but when a dash is used as a punctuation mark, a space is put - as here),
- duplication of spaces, putting a space before a comma, after an opening bracket, before a footnote number, etc,
- putting a full stop at the end of a sentence before a footnote number.