MOSCOW STATE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (UNIVERSITY) OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGH AFFAIRS OF RUSSIA

SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE AND POLITICS

DEPARTMENT OF WORLD POLITICS

MASTER THESIS PREPARATION GUIDE

41.04.05 International Relations

Master Program
«External Relations of Regions»

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GENERAL PROVISIONS

The final qualification paper of a Master's student (Master thesis) is a written work performed by the student that demonstrates the level of preparedness of the graduate for independent professional activity.

Objectives:

- deepening, consolidation and systematization of theoretical and practical knowledge, skills and abilities;

- demonstration of the skills of conducting independent analysis, creative thinking, formulating conclusions when considering political, socio-economic, legal and other problems of an interdisciplinary nature;

- identifying the degree of preparedness of graduates for independent professional activities in the field of International Relations.

The structure of the Master thesis should meet the criteria of integrity, consistency, coherence and professional thinking.

STRUCTURE

The structure of the Master thesis includes the following main elements:

- title page;
- Contents;
- Introduction;
- the main part divided at least into 3 Chapters each divided into paragraphs:

  Chapter 1. TITLE

  1.1. Title

  1.2. Title

  Chapter 2…

  Chapter 3…
- Conclusion;
- Bibliography;
- Appendix (if any);
- Index (if needed).

Title page (*see Sample in Appendix 1 to the Guide*) is the first page of the Master thesis, serves as a source of information necessary for processing and searching for a document. The following information is given on the title page:

• University;

• Faculty and Department;

• Degree (Master Thesis);

• Title of the Master thesis;

• Name and Surname, course;

• Name and Surname of an Academic Advisor, academic degree and academic position;

• place and year of writing the Master thesis.

Contents is a list including all main parts of the Master thesis with an indication of the pages on which they are placed. The "Contents" reflects the structure of the work and should be presented on a separate sheet of paper. Each chapter consists of paragraphs. Chapters and paragraphs are numbered in Arabic numerals and should have appropriate titles that characterize the issues discussed in them.

Introduction includes:

- Justification of the choice of the research topic, including its relevance, scientific novelty and / or practical significance.
- The main aim and objectives of the study.
- Research question (hypothesis also can be formulated if needed).
- Theoretical and methodological foundations and research methods.
- Analysis of coverage and elaboration of the chosen topic in existing academic literature.
- Brief description of sources used in the work.
- Determination of the territorial-chronological framework of the study.

Main body of Master thesis consists of several chapters divided into paragraphs. Each chapter should correspond to the main aim of the work and corresponding objectives, defined in the Introduction. There must be a logical connection between the chapters. The number of chapters cannot be less than three. At the end of each chapter, a brief summary of should be given.

In Chapters the author usually analyzes theoretical and practical dimensions of the topic, the existing points of view of various authors on the issue, substantiates the author's position on the issue; the features of solving this problem in practice are analyzed, development trends are substantiated; forecast estimates could also be presented. If necessary it is advisable to process and summarize quantitative data in tables, diagrams or other types of information presentation.

Tables, graphs, diagrams are an important part of the work, so it is advisable to place them in the text, making appropriate comments and conclusions. Each table, picture of diagram must have a title and reference in the text, for example: (*see Table 1*). Vast and additional data should be placed in the Appendix. Mandatory for all works is the presence of *page-by-page footnotes*.

In **Conclusion**, main findings and proposals arising from the content of the thesis are formulated. Conclusion is not a continuation of the text of the work; it should not contain new points that were not considered in the main part. In the final part, the author formulates the main conclusions on the work as a whole, gives his assessments of the prospects for the development of the studied problem, formulates practical recommendations arising from the work on the topic.

Bibliography, that includes all sources and literature used in the work, is also a mandatory part of the master thesis. The author is responsible for analyzing and citing relevant literature including that published recently.

Bibliography is divided into several groups, usually: 1. Official sources and documents; 2. Academic literature; 3. Internet sources. The final composition of the bibliography is composed by a student together with a scientific advisor.

The samples for composing Bibliography are also presented at MGIMO official page: https://mgimo.ru/library/scientific-library/docs/list/

For books it is necessary to indicate the surname and name of the author, the title, the place of publication, the publisher, the year of publication and the number of pages.

Example: Lebedeva M.M. Russian Public Diplomacy. From USSR to the Russian Federation. London, New-York: Routledge, 2021. 66 p.

For articles from academic journals or newspapers – the surname and name of the author, the title, the title of the journal, the year of issue, the number of the publication, the pages on which the article is published.

Example: Grenier F., Hagmann J., Biersteker T., Lebedeva M., Nikiyina Yu., Koldunova E. The Institutional «Hinge»: How the End of the Cold War Conditioned Canadian, Russian, and Swiss IR

Scholarship. International Studies Perspectives. 2020. No 2. P. 198-217.

The list of literature is given in alphabetical order: in English, than in Russian (if needed), than in other languages.

Appendices provide additional material that is of an auxiliary, explanatory or reference nature. Appendices consist of tables, diagrams, graphs and possible comments to them. The appendices are presented strictly in the order in which they are considered in the text. Each application must have a title and reference in the text, for example: (*see Appendix 1*).

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

1. One-side printing on A4 white paper.
2. Font color – black.
3. Font – Times New Roman, font size – 14 pt, interval – 1,5.
4. The text should be organized in accordance to the following margins: right – 10 mm, top and bottom – 20 mm, left – 30 mm.
5. Paragraph indent – 1.25 cm.
6. The text is aligned to the width of the typing strip.
7. The headings of the structural parts are located are centered. Headings are printed in Times New Roman, font size 14 pt, boldface.
8. Each Chapter begins with a new page. Paragraphs follow each other without placing a new paragraph on a new page.
9. The page number is put in the middle of the top margin of the page. The page number is not indicated on the Title page, but it is included in the general numbering of the work. Pages should be numerated with Arabic numerals, with continuous numbering throughout the text. Continuous (automatic) numbering of footnotes is recommended throughout the work.
10. For footnotes – the font Times New Roman, the font size – 12 pt.
11. Mater thesis must be edited and proofread. The presence of typos, as well as spelling, punctuation, grammatical, stylistic mistakes might decrease the grade.

DEFENCE PROCEDURE

Master thesis must be printed out as two identical hardcover copies and submitted to the Department in accordance with the deadline set by the Dean Office. .doc or .docx version is also submitted to the Department.

After the completion of the preparation of the Master thesis, an Academic Advisor and Official Reviewer prepare written reviewes of the student's work in accordance with the deadlines set by the Dean Office.

The review of an Academic Advisor is a legal basis for admitting a graduate to the defense of Master thesis. A review from an Official Reviewer is also required. The reviewer analyzes the work, notes its advantages and disadvantages. Students should get the reviews no later than 3 calendar days before the defense.

The supervisor checks the work for borrowings. The minimum of originality of the text is 75%. Plagiarism is not allowed. All sources must be referenced.

A student who has violated the deadlines for submitting documents is not allowed to defend the thesis.

The defense takes place at an open meeting of the State Examination Commission. Up to 20 minutes are allotted for the defense of one work, including 5-7 minutes for a student's report.

Defense procedure:

The secretary of the Commission invites the student to defense and announces his name and the topic of the thesis. A student delivers 5-7 minutes report on the results of the work, paying special attention to the methodology and conclusions. Then the members of the Commission ask questions on the subject. The Head of the Commission or the Secretary reads out loud the opinions of a Academic Advisor and a Reviewer. The student responds to the comments noted by a Academic Advisor and a Reviewer. After answering the questions, the student thanks the commission and leaves the room.

Decisions of the State Examination Commission are made at a closed meeting by a simple majority of votes of the members of the Commissions

participating in the meeting. At the end of the meeting and voting on the final results, students are invited by the secretary of the commission to the audience to announce the results. The result of the exam is announced by the Head of the Commission. Students have the right to appeal the results in special appeal commission. A graduate student who does not defend a Master thesis is expelled from the University.

The Commission assesses all stages of thesis defense – presentation of work results, answers, the ability to conduct a scientific discussion, the general level of the student's preparedness, demonstrated during the defense. The commission takes into account the participation of the master's student in scientific conferences and publication activity during the entire period of study.

The main criteria for evaluating the Master thesis are:

1. relevance and degree of elaboration of the topic of the work;

2. academic novelty of the work;

3. practical relevance;

4. correspondence of the topic of the thesis to the master's program;

5. creative approach to the study;

6. the validity of the conclusions and proposals made by the author;

7. correspondence of the content of the work to the topic, aim and objectives formulated by the author;

8. substantiation of author’s own approach to solving debatable problems of theory and practice, substantiation of the theoretical and methodological foundations of the study, validity and representativeness, originality of the sources used, completeness and consistency of the proposals made on the problem under consideration, the independent and scientifically grounded formulation of conclusions based on the research results, solution of the objectives set in the work;

9. the depth of the disclosure of the topic and the interdisciplinarity of the approach to the consideration of the problem (the presence in the content of the work of analyzing the problem from the standpoint of historical, political,

economic, legal and other sciences);

10. competent presentation style;

11. the correctness of the design and completeness of the list of used literature and scientific reference material,

12. use of literature in foreign languages;

13. students overall performance.

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of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

School of Governance and Politics

Department of World Politics

MASTER PROGRAM
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«External Relations of Regions»

MASTER THESIS

«XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX»

Master Student:
Name Surname

Academic Advisor:
Name Surname
PhD, Associate Professor

Moscow
2022