

APPROVED BY

Resolution No. S-2017-12-11 as of 19 December 2017
of the Senate of Vilnius University

REGULATIONS FOR THE PREPARATION, DEFENCE AND STORAGE OF RESEARCH PAPERS OF STUDENTS STUDYING AT VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1. Regulations for the Preparation, Defence and Storage of Research Papers of Students Studying at Vilnius University (hereinafter – University) (hereinafter – Regulations) establish the general principles for the preparation, defence and storage of research papers of first cycle, integrated, second cycle and vocational students and unclassified students (hereinafter – Students) studying at the University.

1.2. Terms used in the Regulations:

1.2.1. **Final Thesis** – a research paper, independently developed by a first cycle, integrated, second cycle or vocational student, compliant with the requirements for university studies witnessing the student's ability to apply the knowledge acquired during the studies, to find the necessary scientific literature and to use it (present, analyse, interpret, etc.), to apply the research methods, to independently cope with the assigned tasks, to provide one's own conclusions (mandatory) and recommendations (preferred), and to accurately describe the research in correct language;

1.2.2. **Research Paper** – a term paper, final thesis or other written work assigned for the field of regulation of these Regulations to be prepared by a student during his/her studies under the resolution of the council of a core academic unit (hereinafter – Unit);

1.2.3. **eLABa** – Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library Information System which stores and provides public access to research and study documents and (or) their metadata;

1.2.4. **Embargo Period** – a period during which public access to the e-document of the Final Thesis is limited.

1.2.5. **Committee** – a Final Theses Defence Committee, formed on the proposal of the head of the unit implementing the study programme and approved by the University Rector or his authorized Pro-Rector, consisting of competent specialists in a relevant study field: researchers and lecturers, practitioners, professionals, social partner representatives or other representatives of science and study institutions whose education or the activity of the represented institution is related to the study field of the defended research papers. The Committee is headed by a chairman. At least one member of the Committee must be a representative of another institution other than the University;

1.2.6. **Unit Administrator** – a staff member of the Unit, appointed by the head of the Unit and responsible for the management of the data related to the studies implemented in the Unit, in Vilnius University Study Information System (hereinafter – VUSIS).

CHAPTER II PREPARATION OF THE PAPER

2.1. In accordance with these Regulations and by considering the specifics of study fields carried out in the Unit, Units shall prepare methodological guidelines for the preparation of research papers (hereinafter – Methodological Guidelines) and (or) procedures for the preparation and defence of the Unit's research papers (hereinafter – Unit Research Paper Procedures), and approve them within the council of the Unit.

2.2. Research papers shall be prepared according to the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures and these Regulations. Research paper storage in VUSIS is regulated by the Description of the Procedure for Administration of Research Papers in Vilnius University Study Information System (hereinafter – Description).

2.3. The Research Paper must be written in the grammatically correct Lithuanian language (excluding cases when the study programme is implemented and the Research Paper is written in a foreign language, or the supervisor of the Paper (lecturer, researcher or practitioner) is a foreign national). The Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures may also provide other cases where the Research Paper is permitted to be written in a language other than Lithuanian.

2.4. Students shall prepare their Paper in good faith and independently, in accordance with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Copyright and Related Rights, the Code of Academic Ethics of Vilnius University, the present Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures and other legal acts.

2.5. The Research Paper shall be seen as prepared not independently in the cases when all the text or part of it belong to another author (when the work, or part of it, is copied from other authors without references to them (the authorship is appropriated), and when the rules of quoting laid out in the Republic of Lithuania Law on Copyright and Related Rights and (or) other legal acts are not observed), and when the rights of the third parties' to their own creation or experimental data are infringed. The entire Paper or part of it cannot be used in the assessment of the Student's study achievements in another course unit in the University or other higher education institutions (excluding cases when the Student uses his own works in his Final Thesis, or in cases when several Papers comprise one continuous research with the permission of the supervisor(s)).

2.6. The Student must confirm the fact that the Thesis has been prepared independently, honestly and in accordance with the requirements of these Regulations by completing the Guarantee (annex to the Regulations) and submitting it together with the Thesis when uploading it into the VUSIS.

Amendments to the Paragraph:

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2.7. The Supervisor provides consultancy to the Student on the methodological aspects and the subject matter of the Paper.

2.8. Approval of topics and supervisors for research papers (excluding Final Theses):

2.8.1. The topics of Papers are proposed by the lecturers or researchers of appropriate course units (modules). Students shall also have the right to propose their own topic which must be coordinated with the supervisor of the Research Paper;

2.8.2. The scope of the paper is determined by the lecturer of the course unit (module) if not specified otherwise in the study programme, Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures, or under a separate resolution of the Unit Council;

2.8.3. Topics and supervisors are approved in cases and under procedures established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures.

2.9. Approval of topics and supervisors for Final Theses:

2.9.1. Topics for Final Theses are proposed by the possible Final Thesis supervisors – lecturers or researchers. Students shall also have the right to propose their own Final Thesis topic which must be coordinated with the Final Thesis supervisor. The list of topics is approved and published according to the procedures established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures;

2.9.2. Proposed topics and supervisors of Final Theses are approved under the order of the head of the Unit implementing the relevant study programme.

2.10. Final Thesis topics selected and coordinated by Students (by indicating the Student writing the Final Thesis and its supervisor) are approved by the head of the Unit.

CHAPTER III SUBMISSION OF PAPERS FOR ASSESSMENT AND DEFENCE

3.1. Papers and their metadata are to be uploaded onto VUSIS by following the terms and procedures established in the Description.

3.2. The Student must submit the properly prepared, grammatically correct Paper, as well as the Thesis together with the Guarantee (annex to the Regulations) certified by the Student, via the VUSIS for evaluation or defence.

Amendments to the Paragraph:

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3.3. *Repealed as of 18 November 2020*

Deletion of the Paragraph:

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3.4. Submission of Papers for assessment and defence, excluding Final Theses:

3.4.1. The procedure and deadlines of the submission of papers for assessment are established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures. In cases when the procedure for the submission of papers to the BAU / Unit is not established in the Unit, such a procedure shall be determined by the lecturer of the course unit (module) by informing Students preparing the papers about the procedure.

3.5. Submission of Final Theses of a study programme (major and minor studies) for assessment and defence:

3.5.1. Final theses may be defended only by the Students who have completed the whole study programme. Whether the study programme in terms of a specific Student was completed is determined by the Vice-Dean for Studies of the Unit implementing the study programme / Deputy Director of the Unit;

3.5.2. The Thesis can only be defended if the Thesis Adviser decides that the Thesis has been properly prepared, is grammatically correct, and meets the other requirements for Theses. Before making a decision on whether to allow the Thesis to be defended, the Thesis Adviser must become acquainted with the computer verification report for the Paper and all of the computer verification information for the independence of the Paper (except in the case described in Paragraphs 4.5–4.7). The Student shall be informed of the decision on whether to allow the Thesis to be defended in accordance with the time frame and procedure established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) the Unit's procedure for written work. The decision of the Thesis Adviser to allow the Thesis to be defended is approved in the VUSIS.

Amendments to the Paragraph:

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3.6. In case the supervisor decides that the Thesis was prepared inappropriately and may not be defended, or if he refuses to accept the Thesis because it was prepared without his participation, the student shall have the right to apply to the Committee with a request to be permitted to defend the Thesis. The request and the Final Thesis are to be submitted by the Student according to the deadlines and procedures established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures, but no later than within 2 working days after the Student was informed about the decision of his supervisor not to permit the defence or the refusal to accept the Thesis. Upon having considered the Student's arguments, the Committee decides whether the Student shall be permitted to defend his Final Thesis.

3.7. The head of Unit shall by his order permit the defence of Final Theses that meet the following conditions:

3.7.1. The student completed the entire study programme;

3.7.2. The final thesis was uploaded onto VUSIS (excluding the case described in Paragraphs 4.5–4.7);

3.7.3. *Repealed as of 18 November 2020*

Deletion of the Paragraph:

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3.7.4. The supervisor of the Final Thesis or the Committee permitted the defence of

the Final Thesis.

3.8. According to the procedures and deadline established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures, but no later than 5 (five) working days before the defence of the Final Thesis, the Final Thesis shall be handed to a reviewer. Employees of other Units or other institutions, or social partner representatives may be invited to review the Final Theses.

3.9. The reviewer shall submit a review of the Thesis and the conclusion whether it complies with the requirements laid out in the course unit description or Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures according to the procedures and deadline established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures, but no later than on the day of defence of the Final Thesis. The review of the Student's Final Thesis must be sent to the e-mail address provided by the University for the Student no later than 24 (twenty four) hours before the beginning of the meeting of the Committee where the Final Thesis will be defended.

CHAPTER IV DEFENCE AND ASSESSMENT OF THESES

4.1. Before the Thesis is assessed, a computer check is carried out for independence by following the terms and procedures provided in the Description.

4.2. Criteria established in the description of an appropriate course unit (module) of the study programme, Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures, and the procedure for recognition of learning outcomes of studies at the University shall be followed when assessing the Paper.

4.3. Defence and assessment of Papers, excluding Final Theses:

4.3.1. The Paper shall be assessed by its supervisor according to the procedures established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures. The Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures may provide cases where the defence of Research Papers is carried out in the Committee;

4.3.2. In cases when the Paper must be defended in the Committee, the defence and assessment of the Research Paper is carried out according to the procedures established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures; if such cases are not provided, the Paper defence and assessment procedure *mutatis mutandis* shall be subject to Paragraph 4.4 of these Regulations;

4.3.3. The Paper must be assessed / defended by following the deadlines established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures. If the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures do not provide a deadline, then the student shall follow the dates specified by the supervisor.

4.4. Defence and assessment of Final Theses:

4.4.1. The defence of the Thesis shall take place at an open (except in the case described in Paragraphs 4.5–4.7) meeting of the Commission, which may be conducted in person, remotely or both, in accordance with the procedure established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) the Unit's procedure for written work;

Amendments to the Paragraph:

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4.4.2. The BAU/Unit shall submit the Thesis and the reviewer's feedback to the Commission according to the terms and procedure established in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) the Unit's procedure for written work, but no later than one day before the defence of the Thesis.

Amendments to the Paragraph:

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4.5. Upon the request of the supervisor of the thesis, head of BAU or chairman of the study programme committee, the Final Thesis whose results are not made public may be defended during a closed meeting of the Committee. In that case, the Committee shall announce a closed part

of the meeting.

4.6. Closed defence of a Final Thesis may also be organised at the request of an institution where the Thesis was prepared, in case the thesis contains sensitive (secret) data. An institution that requests closed defence shall apply to the head of an appropriate Unit in writing no later than 1 (one) month prior to the beginning of the Final Theses defence set for the relevant study programme.

4.7. Upon agreement with the head of the Unit and the chairman of the Committee, the permission to have closed defence is formalized by the order of the head of the Unit. In that case, at the request of the institution that wishes closed defence, the composition of the defence Committee and the reviewer shall be agreed upon. At least half of the closed defence Committee members shall consist of the University staff. The defence meeting, except for the Committee members and the Student, may be attended by the supervisor of the thesis and its reviewer. Whenever necessary, the participants of the closed defence shall sign a confidentiality agreement.

4.8. During the defence, the author of the Final Thesis shall briefly present the paper, identify its problem, aim and objectives, shortly characterize the research object, disclose the findings, the applied methods, introduce the conclusions and justify them, provide possible recommendations, and answer the questions of the Committee members and other persons participating in the public defence of the Final Thesis. During the defence, the topic of the final thesis approved according to the procedures established in Paragraph 2.8 of these Regulations shall not be questioned.

4.9. After the Student's presentation and answers to questions, the reviewer shall present his opinion about the Thesis. In case the reviewer is not able to attend the defence meeting, his written review shall be read. The Student shall be given the opportunity to reply to the reviewer's comments and answer his questions.

4.10. The Committee shall follow the Committee's Rules of Procedure approved by the Unit Council. If the supervisor of the Final Thesis is a member of the Committee, he may not vote when the Committee makes a decision on the final grade for the Thesis advised by the supervisor.

4.11. In the first meeting of the Committee, its members shall discuss the procedures for the assessment of the Final Theses. During the assessment of the Final Thesis, the members shall take into account the review of the Final Thesis, the Thesis defence itself, the answers of the author of the Thesis to the questions of the reviewer, the members of the Committee, and other people who attended the public defence of the Final Thesis, the correctness of the language of the Thesis, as well as other assessment criteria provided in the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures, and the description of an appropriate course unit.

4.12. The Committee shall make a collegial decision regarding the assessment of the final thesis. If the Committee cannot agree on a grade, members of the Committee shall decide on the final grade by vote, and the decision shall be taken by a simple majority. Provided the members are equally divided in opinion as to the grade for the Final Thesis, it shall be finally determined by the assessment proposed by the chairman of the Committee. In cases when the chairman of the Committee cannot vote due to the fact that the Final Thesis is supervised by him, and the members of the Committee are equally divided in opinion as to the grade for the Final Thesis, the grade shall be determined by the assessment proposed by the deputy chairman of the Committee elected by vote between members of the Committee.

4.13. Two (of major and minor study programmes) Committees must be formed for the defence of Final Theses of Students who wish to be awarded a double qualification degree, i.e. who study in the main field and the minor study field. A Committee for the minor study programme is formed from at least 3 (three) members of the study programme committee or BAU.

4.14. Upon successful defence of the Final Thesis, a special sheet is filled out according to the requirements provided in the Description, by specifying the grade for the Thesis, the status of access to its storage in the eLABa system, and the applied Embargo period (whenever applicable). The sheet shall be signed by all the members of the Committee. Based on the sheet, a

Final Thesis defence protocol is prepared in VUSIS by which the student is awarded a respective degree and (or) qualification, if it is provided for in the study programme description.

4.15. The decision of the Committee on the grade for the Final Thesis shall not be open to appeal. For procedural violations in the defence of the Final Thesis that could have affected the grade of the Thesis, the student shall have the right to apply to the Unit's dispute settlement commission no later than on the next day after defence, by filing an appeal according to the procedures established in the regulations of the dispute settlement commission of the core academic unit of the University. The appeal shall name a specific violation in the Final Thesis defence procedure and indicate the circumstances that confirm the fact of violation.

4.16. Student who failed to defend his Final Thesis on time shall be expelled from the University for academic failure.

4.17. The student shall be allowed to defend his Thesis for a second time only after resuming the studies not earlier than the next semester, and in case the defence of the Final Theses in the Unit is not provided for in the next semester, in the following academic year.

4.18. In case the Final Thesis prepared on the same topic fails to be defended for the second time, a new Final Thesis shall be written (on another topic).

CHAPTER V PUBLISHING OF FINAL THESES

5.1. All the defended Final Theses must be published on eLABa, excluding cases when the Committee decides not to publish a Final Thesis on eLABa. Based on the request of the student, the Committee shall make a decision on whether not to publish the paper on eLABa. A decision can be made not to publish the Final Thesis on eLABa, if:

5.1.1. The Final Thesis contains confidential information as defined by the procedures of the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania;

5.1.2. The rights of the author(s), eLABa manager(s) or other copyright holders would be violated after publishing the Final Thesis and (or) uploading it onto the system.

5.1.3. The rights of personal data subjects to the inviolability of private life would be violated after publishing the Final Thesis and (or) uploading it onto the system.

5.1.4. Students request to set an Embargo period in the Warranty (appendix to the Regulations).

CHAPTER VI FINAL PROVISIONS

6.1. After the Regulations or their amendments come into effect, the Units must prepare or update the Methodological Guidelines and (or) Unit Research Paper Procedures, approved by the Unit's council, which provide more details and do not conflict with the aforesaid Regulations.

**Vilniaus universiteto studijuojančiojo, teikiančio
baigiamąjį darbą,
GARANTIJA**

**WARRANTY
of Vilnius University Student Thesis**

Vardas, pavardė:
Padalinys:
Studijų programa:
Darbo pavadinimas:
Darbo tipas:

Name, Surname:
Faculty:
Study programme:
Thesis topic:
Thesis type:

Garantuojau, kad mano baigiamasis darbas yra parengtas sąžiningai ir savarankiškai, kitų asmenų indėlio į parengtą darbą nėra. Jokių neteisėtų mokėjimų už šį darbą niekam nesu mokėjęs.

I guarantee that my thesis is prepared in good faith and independently, there is no contribution to this work from other individuals. I have not made any illegal payments related to this work.

Šiame darbe tiesiogiai ar netiesiogiai panaudotos kitų šaltinių citatos yra pažymėtos literatūros nuorodose.

Quotes from other sources directly or indirectly used in this thesis, are indicated in literature references.

Aš, [Vardas Pavardė], patvirtinu (pažymėti)
I, [Name Surname], confirm (check)

Patvirtinu, kad baigiamasis darbas yra pateiktas į Vilniaus universiteto studijų informacinę sistemą.
I declare that this thesis is submitted to the Vilnius University Study Information System.

(vardas, pavardė / name, surname)

(parašas / signature)

(data / date)

Embargo laikotarpis / Embargo period

Prašau nustatyti šiam baigiamajam darbui toliau nurodytos trukmės embargo laikotarpį:

I am requesting an embargo of this thesis for the period indicated below:

_____ mėnesių / months [embargo laikotarpis negali viršyti 60 mėn. / an embargo period shall not exceed 60 months].

Embargo laikotarpis nereikalingas / no embargo requested.

Embargo laikotarpio nustatymo priežastis / reason for embargo period:

.....

(vardas, pavardė / name, surname)

(parašas / signature)

(data / date)

Kamieninio akademinio padalinio (šakinio akademinio padalinio) patvirtinimas, kad atspausdintas baigiamasis darbas buvo pateiktas ir užregistruotas:

(vardas, pavardė)

(parašas)

(data)