

GUIDELINES

FOR THE ELABORATION OF THE BACHELOR / DISSERTATION

The guide of good practices in research, on the segment of the elaboration of the bachelor's/master's thesis, is based on the requirements of the regulations in the field, namely: the *National Education Law (Law no. 1/2011)* and the *Regulation on the organization and conduct of examinations for the completion of bachelor's and master's studies*¹.

A BA/BSc thesis is a scientific research, i.e. a rational analysis of facts, realities, texts, events, based on one or more scientific theories, starting from one or more working hypotheses.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Bachelor's/Dissertation thesis (hereafter the *thesis*) is to highlight the degree to which students possess the following knowledge and skills:

- ✓ Ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories, models, approaches specific to the topic of the thesis;
- ✓ Ability to collect, analyse, synthesise and present critically, logically and coherently information and data from literature or practice specific to the field under analysis;
- ✓ The ability to contribute in an original way to the field of knowledge;
- ✓ Ability to prepare and write a scientific paper.

THEME AND TITLE:

The topic and title of the bachelor's/master's thesis must be in line with the topics covered in the courses included in the

the degree/diploma programme and reflect the specialisation of the degree programme. Title of the thesis should reflect its content as closely as possible. Vague, generic titles should be avoided in favour of simple but suggestive, concise and attractive titles. Titles can be accompanied by subtitles. The theme is proposed by tenured teachers in the faculty's areas of specialization and the final title of the bachelor's/doctoral thesis is determined by the student/student in agreement with the coordinating teacher approved by the Dean faculty.

STRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that *the structure of the completion work* is as follows:

- **Inside cover of the work**
- **The table of contents**
- **Introduction**

¹ [http://mefc.ase.ro/Media/Default/baza%20legislativa/regulamentfinalizare2016.pdf\(*\)](http://mefc.ase.ro/Media/Default/baza%20legislativa/regulamentfinalizare2016.pdf(*))

(*) The Guide will be updated according to the changes made in the Regulation.

- **State of knowledge in the field / review of the literature consulted for the theoretical support of the work**
- **Presentation of the research methodology, the application/practice/case study part and the results obtained.**
- **Conclusions and recommendations**
- **Bibliographic references**
- **Annexes** (optional).

RULES FOR WRITING THE THESIS:

The work, except for the annexes, must contain:

- maximum of 40 A4 pages², for undergraduate work,
- 50 pages for dissertations³ (excluding appendices and bibliography),

The paper must be written in Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1.5 lines. Papers should be written with diacritics. Page margins: 2.5 cm left, 2 cm right; 0.5 cm paragraphs using the 'left-right' option (Justify). Tab numbering starts from the first page of the paper (title page), even if the page number is not printed on the title page. The bachelor thesis should be listed on A4 (21 x 29.7 cm) of minimum 80 g/m², double-sided or single-sided (as indicated by the bachelor coordinator); very large annexes may be listed on folded A3 sheets. The bachelor thesis may be spiral bound or bound (glued or screwed covers) according to the coordinator's instructions.

- **Note:** This structure is indicative and may undergo changes/adaptations depending on the specifics of the thesis topic and the recommendations of the coordinating professor or faculty. Structuring the thesis into parts, chapters and sub-chapters is at the discretion of the student and the coordinating teacher.

CONTENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

The inside cover will contain the title of the thesis, the teaching grade, the name and surname of the scientific coordinator and the name and surname of the graduate.

The table of contents of the final paper should indicate the pages containing the chapters and sub-chapters of the paper (including Introduction, Conclusions and Recommendations, References and Appendices). Each chapter will start on a new page.

In the Introduction the following can be stated:

- the importance of the topic and the motivation for conducting the research;
- the aim and objectives of the research, the expected results and relevance;
- a short presentation of the thesis.

² **Art. 11(1)** of the Regulation: *Undergraduate papers can be a maximum of 40 A4 pages, according to a guide developed at each faculty.*

³ **Art.24.(1)** of the Regulation: *dissertation papers can have a maximum of 50 A4 pages.*

In this section, the author gives details on: the reasons why he decided to tackle such a topic; the analytical hypotheses from which he started; the research objectives he proposed, the analytical or narrative methodology used, the main methodological and structural aspects related to the work.

The introduction should answer the following questions: what is the economic issue being studied, why is it important and who is interested in it? The introduction also presents results on which there is already a consensus in the literature. It is very important to explain in the introduction how one relates one's own results to those obtained in other studies: whether they are consistent or whether they differ, etc. The persons who contributed directly or indirectly to the research can also be mentioned.

In the introduction, the original elements of the work can be highlighted, a brief reference can be made to the way of investigating the researched problem and a brief review of the content of the following sections can be made.

The state of knowledge in the field (which may be presented in a separate chapter or within each chapter, as appropriate, with separate sub-chapters) represents a synthesis of the literature in the field of the thesis topic. In this section of the thesis, the author should provide a critical overview of the literature by highlighting other research that has been undertaken in the field of interest and by outlining the main views/approaches/theories of established authors in the field. By achieving the stage of knowledge, the student will show that he/she has knowledge of the studies carried out to date on the topic addressed in the dissertation. The presentation should be concise and refer to at least 4-5 studies relevant to the problem studied. For the identification of relevant references it is recommended to use reference databases such as JStor, ProQuest, Science Direct or working paper collections such as NBER, REPEC, SSRN.

A balanced selection of contributions (theoretical vs. empirical literature, recent vs. established literature, local vs. foreign literature) should be considered. The literature consulted expresses the extent of the documentation of the topic researched and is the foundation for its application.

The presentation of the state of knowledge should be done in a critical manner, commenting on the relevance, level of value, advantages and limitations of the cited studies. It is not recommended to include as references articles from non-academic publications, such as newspapers and popular magazines, even if their subject matter is economic or financial.

Presentation of the research methodology, the application/practice/case study part and the results obtained

(one or more chapters, with related sub-chapters) is the author's own contribution to the thesis and constitutes the main part of the thesis. This part involves establishing the research hypotheses, as answers to the researched problem, identifying the most appropriate tools (document analysis, case study, interview, focus group, questionnaire, secondary data analysis, etc.) for testing the hypotheses, and justifying the choices made for those research tools. Also in this section, clarifications can be made about the source of the data, how the data was collected, etc., as well as the limitations of the research methods chosen.

It is therefore recommended to contain the following elements:

- research methodology (the student will present what methodology he/she will use in order to carry out the study) - how to set up the database (the student will specify what data he/she will use in order to carry out the case study)

if a case study based on data analysis is made). Data that can be presented in this part include: data from the financial and tax statements of entities, data relating to macroeconomic indicators, exchange rates, stock exchange quotations, data on the basis of which a market analysis can be made, etc.

- data analysis and interpretation of the results obtained by applying the methodology proposed by the student (comparisons can be made here with the results of other research presented in the theoretical part of the thesis)
- conclusions, comments, observations and personal views on the results of the study.

Conclusions and recommendations are the final part of a research paper and are intended to review again the main issues dealt with/discussed, providing an answer to the research question posed in the introduction. This last section refers to the applicability of the results, the limitations of the research and possible future research directions or recommendations.

This part is also important as it concludes the result of the research and analysis carried out by the student. Conclusions and recommendations should be relevant, follow from the analysis shown in the paper and be accompanied by relevant arguments.

Bibliographical references will contain the bibliographical resources used by the graduate for the purpose of the thesis. They represent the list of works that have been cited in the content of the thesis, as well as works read from which no citations have been made, in alphabetical order. It is recommended to group the bibliography by source category: sources, theoretical literature, empirical literature, legislation, websites, etc.

Annexes may contain tables, graphs, program listings, more elaborate demonstrations of formulas used throughout the work, figures, diagrams, completed financial documents, images, maps, etc. In the case of work involving data processing by various computer programs, it is recommended that various intermediate statements be presented in the annexes, and that only the centralising elements that are relevant to the analysis be included in the chapters.

The sequence of chapters (and their sub-chapters) must follow a logical presentation of information.

CITATION REQUIREMENTS OR REFERENCES TO INFORMATION PROVIDED BY BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Quotation of phrases from material used as bibliographic sources will be done by enclosing them in quotation marks and footnoting the source.

The taking of ideas from other authors will be done with the indication of the bibliographical source (either in the footer of the page, or by mentioning in the text of the paper the author(s)⁴ from where the idea was taken, or by another international citation system, such as Harvard, Chicago, etc.).

WARNING!

According to art.11.(2) and art.2016.(2) of the Regulation on the organization and conduct of the examinations for the completion of bachelor and master studies: "Bachelor/Dissertation papers must have the following content

⁴The author(s) and their referenced work will also be found under References.

original. If plagiarism or falsification of authorship of the work by purchase/trading is found, the graduate will be rejected from the examination and will lose the right to take the subsequent bachelor's/master's degree examination at ASE".

Also, according to para. (3) of the same articles: "The scientific supervisors of the undergraduate/doctoral works are jointly and severally responsible with their authors for ensuring the originality of their content".

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

In the *Bibliographical References*, the materials used for the completion of the thesis must be numbered and their inclusion in the bibliographical list will be based on the alphabetical order of the first author. Works without an author (such as legislation or other sources of information) will be listed at the end of the bibliographical references. We recommend the following as a way of presenting information on the bibliography:

Books - Atkinson, M. J., & Jones, M. G. (1991). *The financial markets* (4th ed.). New York: Wiley.

Articles - Mason, C. K., Rao, R. P., & Steven, R. S. (1992). Limit moves and price resolution: A reply. *The Journal of Markets*, 12, 361-363.

Articles/chapters published in books - Black, F. M., & Light, O. B. (1993). Heteroscedasticity. In A. C. Gail (Ed.), *Econometrics* (pp. 517-552). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Papers presented at communications sessions and unpublished: Black, L., & Lennon, J. (1998, February). The inside traders. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Finance Association, Munich, Germany.

Papers published in conference proceedings: McCartney, C. B., Elf, S., Embrach, T. H., & Nesta, K. (1997). Monetary policy. In W. W. Hart & Z. Rubinstein (Eds.), *American Econometric Association Proceedings No. 512* (pp. 1-25). Washington, DC: American University Press.

PhD Theses - Svensson, A. (2001) *Analyses of American companies in the late 1990s*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Georgetown University, Washington, DC.

Legislation - * * * Law no. 571/2003 on the Fiscal Code, published in M.Of. no. 927/2003, with subsequent amendments and additions

Regulations of professional bodies - ANEVAR - Standard No. or NBR - Bulletin no.

REQUIREMENTS FOR TABLES, GRAPHS, FIGURES

The tables will be numbered (numbering will start from 1 for the tables of each chapter) according to the following scheme: the first digit will be the chapter number and the next digit(s) will identify the table number within the chapter.

Each table will have a suggestive title for the items it contains. If the table contains data, the source of the data shall be listed under the table, and if the data in the table is the result of own processing, this shall be specified.

Charts will be numbered (numbering will start from 1 for charts within each chapter) according to the following scheme: the first digit will be the chapter number and the next digit(s) will identify the chart number within the chapter.

Each graph will have a suggestive title for the elements contained in it and the source of the data.

If the graphical representation is as a result of the student's analysis based on data presented in a table or taken from elsewhere, the source should be written *Based on data from table no. or processing based on data from the website... or processing based on data from the publication...page...*

The figures will be numbered (numbering will start from 1 for the figures in each chapter) according to the following scheme: the first digit will be the chapter number and the next digit(s) will identify the figure number within the chapter.

Each figure will have a title suggestive of its content.

IMPORTANT! In the coordination activity for the preparation of the final thesis, the provisions of *the Methodology on the organisation and conduct of the final examinations for bachelor's and master's degrees* will be applied.

OPTIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY ON HOW TO PRODUCE THE FINAL PAPER

- Brătianu, C., Dima, A.M., Vasilache, S., Guide to Writing Undergraduate and Master's Theses, ASE Publishing, Bucharest, 2015
- o Hart, Chris, Doing Your Master Dissertation, SAGE Essential Study Skills, London 2012
- o Hart, Chris, Doing a Literature Review, SAGE Study Skills, London, 2011
- o Wallace, Mike, Wray, Alison, Critical Reading and Writing for Postgraduates, SAGE Study Skills, London, 2011
- Davies, Martin Brett, Doing a Successful Research Project Using Qualitative or Quantitative Methods, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2007
- Chelcea, S. (2007) Methodology of sociological research. Quantitative and qualitative methods, 3rd edition, Bucharest: Editura Economică, chap. XVI.
- Effective Learning Service, Foundations for Good Research, Bradford University School of Management, [online] at <http://www.brad.ac.uk/management/media/management/els/Foundations>
- Gillet, A., Hammond, A. and Martala, M. (2009) Successful Academic Writing, Harlow: Pearson Education.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- The final work involves many hours of work, so it needs to be started early.
- The final paper can be approached through an intellectual approach from the general to the particular.
- Personal experience in the field of research can be useful, but not personal involvement.

- The choice of topic is very important and should be correlated with each author's ability to identify and research the related bibliographic sources. The lack of this correlation affects the final paper and implies difficulties for the author. A first step would be to research the databases where the work has been listed and the number of citations. Google Scholars or Google Academics can be good starts. Type the chosen topic into the search engine first, then the keywords. Links to about seven databases of articles and books can be found on the ASE website, www.ase.ro, at the Central Library. Some also have indexed citation numbers. Even without citations, the first references displayed are the most representative. The facility provided by ASE works only from computers in ASE buildings.

In this way key works are identified.

- Be careful when choosing your topic, in terms of complexity and scope.
- Pay attention to the precise framing of the theme in time.
- As far as possible, it should also have a spatial definition. Analyses and comparisons can be made, and these conceptual limits add rigour to the structure of the work.
- Particular attention should be paid to punctuation and, in general, to the rigours of the Romanian language.
- The public presentation of the work is done using a power-point presentation, possibly integrating media (video images). For a 10-minute presentation, the number of slides or projected images should be 12-15. A slide should be no longer than 8-10 lines, expressing 4-5 ideas.

These ideas will be the support for the presenter's speech and not a text to be read.