Amendment approved

at a meeting of the Academic Board of University Geomedi LLC
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Rector, Professor _____ Marina Pirtskhalava

Instructions for the Preparation, Submission, and Assessment of Master's Theses

I. General Provisions

1.1. A master's thesis is a mandatory research component of a master's educational program. Its purpose is to develop the student's ability to conduct critical analysis, synthesize information in innovative ways, and undertake independent research using current methods and approaches.

1.2. The master's thesis must demonstrate that the student's knowledge and research skills meet the requirements of the master's program. It provides an opportunity to present independent conclusions, arguments, and research findings to academic and professional audiences while observing the principles of academic integrity and ethical standards.

1.3. A master's student is eligible for the thesis defense after earning the credits required for the compulsory courses in the relevant specialty under the master's program.

1.4. Assessment of the master's thesis is conducted in accordance with the University's assessment regulations and the criteria established by the master's program.

II. Master's Thesis Topic

2.1. The master's thesis topic is selected from a list of proposed topics provided by the thesis supervisor or supervisors, through consultation and agreement between the student and the supervisor.

2.2. The master's thesis topic must be relevant, research-oriented, and aligned with current scientific directions in the field covered by the master's educational program.

2.3. The Faculty Council approves the list of master's thesis topics upon submission by the relevant Program Director.

III. Master's Thesis Supervisor

3.1. A thesis supervisor is appointed for each master's student from among the University's academic or invited staff with appropriate qualifications in the relevant field. Depending on the research topic, preference may be given to the supervisor's scientific and/or practical experience, as well as the relevance and quality of theses previously completed under their supervision. A supervisor may supervise a maximum of three master's students with active student status at any given time.

3.2. Based on a decision of the Faculty Council, the Rector issues an order approving the master's thesis supervisor.

3.3. The supervisor is required to:

a) Assist the student in selecting the topic, preparing the work plan, and reviewing relevant literature;
b) Regularly monitor progress on the thesis, provide feedback, and offer appropriate guidance;
c) Explain the student's rights and responsibilities and require compliance with them;
d) Advise the student on preparing an individual work plan and monitor its implementation;
e) Prepare a written evaluation upon completion of the thesis, covering:

- Title of the thesis;
- Identity of the master's student;
- A brief overview of the thesis, including its strengths and weaknesses;
- Student's academic and research abilities;
- Overall evaluation of the thesis (without a numerical score);
- Alignment of the thesis content with the approved master's thesis topic;
- A recommendation on whether the student should be admitted to the public defense of the thesis.

3.4. A master's thesis supervisor may request to withdraw from supervision. In such cases, the supervisor must submit a written request stating the reasons for withdrawal to the Faculty Council. The Council reviews the request, selects a replacement supervisor, and submits the proposed supervisor to the Rector for approval.

IV. Submission of the Master's Thesis for Public Defense

4.1. The completed thesis is submitted to the Master's Program Director together with the supervisor's written evaluation, certified by the supervisor's signature and the faculty seal;

4.2. The Master's Program Director ensures that the thesis is checked using the plagiarism detection system in accordance with the Rules for the Detection and Response to Plagiarism.

4.3. Upon receiving a positive recommendation from the Master's Program Director, the student is admitted to a preliminary review of the thesis before a Committee approved by the Faculty Council.

4.4. One copy of the master's thesis must be submitted to the Committee three days before the preliminary review.

4.5. If the Master's Program Director does not recommend the thesis for approval, the student must take the feedback into account, revise the thesis accordingly, and resubmit it to the Program Director within one week of receiving the feedback. The Program Director reviews the revised thesis and decides whether to admit it to preliminary review.

4.6. The master's thesis must undergo a preliminary review before its public defense.

V. Reviewer

5.1. The Master's Program Director selects a reviewer, whose appointment is formalized by a resolution of the Faculty Council.

5.2. The reviewer may be either a University employee or an external expert;

5.3. The reviewer must hold a doctoral degree in the relevant field;

5.4. The reviewer submits a written review/evaluation of the thesis;

5.5. The review must include:

- Title of the thesis;
- Identity of the master's student;
- An overview of the thesis (length, structure, language, formatting, etc.);
- Strengths and weaknesses of the thesis, including comments and recommendations;
- Alignment of the master's thesis with the approved research topic;
- Relevance of the master's thesis to the qualification to be awarded.

5.6. The reviewer must provide the student with written feedback and an evaluation of the thesis at least one week before the public defense;

5.7. The reviewer's attendance at the public defense is not mandatory; however, the Committee or the student may invite the reviewer to attend the meeting.

VI. Thesis Defense Procedure

6.1. The master's student submits the completed thesis to the supervisor, who returns it to the student with comments, if any.

6.2. The student incorporates the supervisor's comments, prepares the final version of the thesis, and resubmits it to the supervisor for a written evaluation;

6.3. The thesis, together with the supervisor's evaluation, is submitted to the Master's Program Director. Upon receiving a positive recommendation from the Program Director, the student is admitted to preliminary review. A bound copy is not required for the preliminary review.

6.4. The Master's Program Director checks the completed thesis, including its electronic version, for plagiarism no later than one week before the public defense. Where necessary, a revised version of the thesis is screened for plagiarism again.

6.5. One properly formatted, bound, and covered copy of the reviewed thesis, together with its electronic version, is submitted to the relevant faculty for public defense before the Master's Thesis Defense Committee;

6.6. The public defense of the master's thesis takes place before a Master's Thesis Defense Committee composed of academic and/or invited staff in the relevant specialty.

6.7. The Faculty Council elects the Chair and Secretary of the Master's Thesis Defense Committee from among its members. The Chair must hold a doctoral degree in the relevant field or an equivalent academic degree recognized by law.

6.8. Specialists in the relevant field, including employers, may be invited to attend the public defense of the master's thesis.

6.9. The Committee must consist of three members. The proceedings and outcomes of the Committee meeting are recorded in the official minutes.

6.8. Public Defense of the Thesis:

6.8.1. At the public defense, the Secretary of the Master's Thesis Defense Committee introduces the student's biographical information, academic performance, thesis title, and the names of the supervisor and reviewer to those attending;

6.8.2. The time allocated for the master's thesis presentation is 15 minutes.

6.8.3. The student's presentation must briefly outline the research aim and objectives, existing views on the research problems and their analysis, the conclusions, and the theoretical and practical value of the thesis;

6.8.4. Following the presentation, Committee members and then other attendees may ask the student questions with the permission of the Committee Chair. The student must respond to each question in turn;

6.8.5. The reviewer is then invited to speak, if present. Otherwise, the Committee Secretary reads the review aloud. The student responds to the reviewer's comments;

6.8.6. The student's supervisor is then invited to speak and provide an assessment of the student;

6.8.7. Following the supervisor's remarks, Committee members discuss the submitted thesis together with invited specialists, if any;

6.8.8. The student is given an opportunity to make a closing statement.

VII. Assessment of the Master's Thesis

7.1. The master's thesis is assessed on a 100-point scale.

The assessment system provides for:

a) Five positive grades:

a.a) (A) Excellent — 91–100 points;
a.b) (B) Very Good — 81–90 points;
a.c) (C) Good — 71–80 points;
a.d) (D) Satisfactory — 61–70 points;
a.e) (E) Sufficient — 51–60 points.

b) Two negative grades:

b.a) (FX) Fail — 41–50 points. This means that the student needs to undertake additional work and is entitled to one additional examination after independent preparation;

b.b) (F) Fail — 40 points or fewer. This means that the student's work is insufficient and the student must repeat the course/subject.

The public defense of the master's thesis takes place in Week 21 and is assessed according to the following components. Each component has its own minimum competency threshold:

- Relevance and Presentation of the Research Topic — 15 points (minimum competency threshold: 8 points);
- Alignment of Research Objectives and Methods — 15 points (minimum competency threshold: 8 points);
- Relevance and Reliability of References — 10 points (minimum competency threshold: 5 points);

- Citation Accuracy and Formatting — 5 points (minimum competency threshold: 3 points);
- Presentation Techniques and Technology — 5 points (minimum competency threshold: 2 points);
- Discussion and Critical Analysis Skills — 15 points (minimum competency threshold: 8 points);
- Conclusions and Recommendations — 10 points (minimum competency threshold: 5 points);
- Research Planning and Implementation — 15 points (minimum competency threshold: 8 points);
- Structure of the Thesis — 5 points (minimum competency threshold: 2 points);
- Compliance with Presentation Time Limits — 5 points (minimum competency threshold: 2 points).

Master's Thesis Defense Committee Assessment

1. Novelty, Relevance, and Presentation of the Research Topic — maximum 15 points
(Minimum competency threshold: 8 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

15 points — The topic is current and innovative. Its relevance is presented clearly and logically, the topic is aligned with the research aims, and the findings have theoretical and practical significance.

13–14 points — The topic is current, its relevance is clearly stated and supported by arguments, the thesis aims are well defined, and the research topic has considerable practical significance.

11–12 points — The topic is current. Its relevance is presented logically but lacks some clarity. The topic is aligned with the research aims, and the findings have some practical significance.

9–10 points — The topic is relevant and its significance is adequately presented, but contextual factors are not fully considered. The topic is aligned with the research aims.

8 points — The topic is generally relevant, its relevance is supported by arguments, and it is aligned with the research aims.

7 points — The topic has limited relevance, the research problem is presented ambiguously, and the arguments are only partly aligned with the research aims.

4–6 points — The relevance of the topic is poorly explained, the research problem is presented ambiguously, and the arguments are only partly aligned with the research aims.

1–3 points — The relevance of the topic is described only in general terms. The research problem is not clearly defined, and the need for the research is not justified. The theoretical and practical significance of the findings is only partly apparent and is not adequately supported.

0 points — The relevance of the topic, the research problem, and the need for the research are not presented. Neither the theoretical nor the practical significance of the findings is demonstrated.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total

2. Alignment of Research Objectives and Methods — maximum 15 points

(Minimum competency threshold: 8 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

15 points — The relevance of the topic is clearly and logically explained. The stated objectives and conclusions are clearly linked to the research questions. Current methods and approaches appropriate to the problem have been selected, and their use is fully justified.

13–14 points — The stated objectives are clearly linked to the research questions. Current methods and approaches appropriate to the problem have been selected, and their use is fully justified.

11–12 points — Most objectives are well aligned with the research questions. The selected methods and approaches can produce specific results, although some are not fully up to date. Their use is well justified.

9–10 points — The stated objectives are related to the research questions. The selected methods and approaches can produce specific results but are outdated, and their use is poorly justified.

8 points — Minor errors occur in linking the objectives to the research questions. The objectives generally address the questions raised in the thesis. Some methods and approaches are outdated but remain relevant to the problem.

7 points — Errors occur in linking the objectives to the research questions. The objectives address the questions only partly. The selected methods and approaches are outdated and can produce specific results only to a limited extent.

4–6 points — Significant errors occur in linking the objectives to the research questions. The selected methods and approaches are not relevant to the research problem, and their use is not justified.

2–3 points — The objectives are unclear, and the selected research methods and approaches are not appropriate to the problem and cannot produce specific results.

0–1 points — The research aim and objectives are substantially inconsistent with the research problem. The methods and approaches are not justified, preventing the study from achieving its objectives or obtaining valid and reliable results.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total

3. Diversity and Validity of Sources Used — maximum 10 points

(Minimum competency threshold: 5 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

10 points — The sources are highly relevant and up to date, consisting of high-quality original scientific publications, including foreign-language works, and specialized monographs. The student demonstrates the ability to critically analyze and synthesize the sources.

8–9 points — The sources are relevant and recent and, with few exceptions, consist of peer-reviewed scientific publications and specialized monographs. The student demonstrates a critical approach and an ability to synthesize the sources.

6–7 points — The sources are mostly relevant and recent and include peer-reviewed scientific publications and specialized monographs. The student demonstrates a critical approach and an ability to synthesize the sources.

5 points — The sources are partly relevant and recent and, with few exceptions, consist of peer-reviewed scientific publications and specialized monographs. The student demonstrates a critical approach and an ability to synthesize the sources.

4 points — The primary and secondary sources identified contain relatively few scientific publications and show limited relevance to the research question. The literature analysis is weak, incomplete, and lacks critical evaluation.

1–3 points — The list of sources is limited and only partly relevant; it contains almost no scientific publications. The student does not demonstrate an ability to synthesize the sources, and the analysis is unclear or absent.

0 points — No sources are presented, or the sources do not correspond to the research topic.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total

4. Citation Accuracy and Formatting — maximum 5 points

(Minimum competency threshold: 3 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

5 points — The materials used, including foreign-language sources, are relevant and consist exclusively of peer-reviewed publications and specialized monographs (without textbooks). The citation index is high.

4 points — The materials are relevant and consist mainly of peer-reviewed publications and specialized monographs (textbooks are used in some cases). The citation index is satisfactory.

3 points — A substantial proportion of the materials consists of peer-reviewed publications and specialized monographs, but lower-quality publications and textbooks are also used. Relevance is sometimes moderate, and the citation index is low.

2 points — Only a very small proportion of the materials consists of peer-reviewed publications. Much of the material comprises low-quality publications and textbooks, and relevance is often limited.

1 point — The materials consist of low-quality publications and textbooks and are often of limited relevance.

0 points — The materials used are not relevant to the research topic.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total

5. Presentation Techniques and Technology — maximum 5 points

(Minimum competency threshold: 2 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

5 points — The presentation is of high quality and the technology used meets the required standards. The history of research on the topic is clearly presented, analyzed, and evaluated in depth.

4 points — The presentation is well prepared and the technology used meets the required standards. The history of research on the topic is clearly described, although the analysis and evaluation lack depth.

3 points — The presentation is well prepared and the technology used partly meets the required standards. The history of research on the topic is adequately described and largely analyzed and evaluated.

2 points — The presentation is satisfactory. The history of research on the topic is partly described, analyzed, and evaluated.

1 point — The presentation is poorly prepared and contains errors. The history of research on the topic is inadequately described and is not analyzed or evaluated.

0 points — No presentation has been prepared, and the history of research on the topic is not presented.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total

6. Structure of the Master's Thesis — maximum 5 points

(Minimum competency threshold: 2 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

5 points — The thesis structure meets the required standard, academic writing conventions are fully observed, chapter and section headings accurately reflect their content, and references are cited appropriately.

4 points — The thesis structure meets the required standard, academic writing conventions are observed, chapter and section headings accurately reflect their content, and references are cited appropriately.

3 points — The language and style are generally appropriate and academic. Chapter and section headings adequately reflect their content, and references are cited appropriately.

2 points — The language and style are appropriate and academic. Chapter and section headings generally reflect their content, and references are mostly cited appropriately.

1 point — The language and style contain numerous errors, chapter and section headings do not correspond to their content, and references are cited inappropriately.

0 points — The thesis does not meet the established formatting requirements.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total

7. Discussion and Critical Analysis Skills — maximum 15 points

(Minimum competency threshold: 8 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

15 points — The student demonstrates excellent command of professional terminology and participates effectively in discussion. The argument is highly objective and demonstrates strong critical analysis skills. The topic is explained comprehensively.

13–14 points — The student demonstrates full command of professional terminology. Participation in discussion and argumentation are objective and coherent, the topic is presented fully, and the student demonstrates critical analysis skills.

11–12 points — The student demonstrates good command of professional terminology. Participation in discussion and argumentation are generally coherent and demonstrate critical analysis skills. The topic is presented satisfactorily.

9–10 points — The student demonstrates generally good command of professional terminology. Participation in discussion and argumentation show objectivity and an ability to analyze critically.

8 points — The student demonstrates satisfactory command of professional terminology. Participation in discussion and argumentation are objective and show some ability to analyze critically.

7 points — The student demonstrates inadequate command of professional terminology. Discussion and argumentation do not demonstrate critical analysis skills, and the topic is presented unsatisfactorily.

4–6 points — The student does not demonstrate command of professional terminology. The argument is incomplete and unconvincing, critical analysis skills are not demonstrated, and the topic is presented unsatisfactorily.

1–3 points — The student does not demonstrate command of professional terminology or critical analysis skills. Discussion of the topic is unsatisfactory.

0 points — The student cannot use or explain the basic professional terms and concepts relevant to the topic, understand or analyze the issues presented in the thesis, demonstrate reasoned critical argumentation, or answer substantive questions about the thesis content.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total
Total for All Components					

8. Conclusions and Recommendations — maximum 10 points

(Minimum competency threshold: 5 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

10 points — Original and relevant conclusions and recommendations have been developed. The research aims are fully achieved, and knowledge and research findings are synthesized in an innovative manner. Conclusions are presented professionally on the basis of critical research analysis, and research ethics standards are observed.

8–9 points — The conclusions and recommendations are novel and original, and their interpretation addresses the research aims. They are described and analyzed coherently and supported by valid data. The research uses relevant methods and complies with research ethics standards.

6–7 points — The conclusions and recommendations are sound, and their interpretation addresses the research aims. They are described and analyzed coherently and supported by valid data. The research largely uses relevant methods and complies with research ethics standards.

5 points — The conclusions and recommendations demonstrate that the research aims have largely been achieved. Knowledge and research findings have been synthesized satisfactorily, and research ethics standards are observed.

4 points — The findings achieve only a small part of the research aims. The synthesis of knowledge and findings is fragmented and incomplete, and the conclusions are superficial.

1–3 points — The research aims have not been achieved. The conclusions are weak and superficial, and there is no evident synthesis of knowledge and research findings.

0 points — The research aims have not been achieved, and the conclusions are not relevant to the findings of the research topic.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total
Total for All Components					

9. Research Planning and Implementation — maximum 15 points

(Minimum competency threshold: 8 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

15 points — Independent planning and implementation of the research fully comply with the established schedule. The student demonstrates a high degree of responsibility, and all stages of the research are coordinated with the supervisor fully and on time.

13–14 points — Independent planning and implementation of the research comply with the established schedule. The student demonstrates responsibility, and the stages of the research are coordinated with the supervisor.

11–12 points — Independent planning and implementation of the research comply with the established schedule. The student demonstrates responsibility and coordinates the research stages with the supervisor, although minor delays occur in some cases.

9–10 points — Independent planning and implementation of the research largely comply with the established schedule. The student demonstrates responsibility and coordinates the research stages with the supervisor, with minor delays.

8 points — Independent planning and implementation of the research partly comply with the established schedule. The student demonstrates responsibility and coordinates the stages with the supervisor, although deadlines are missed. Overall, the thesis largely meets the requirements for independent research planning and implementation.

7 points — Independent planning and implementation do not comply with the approved research plan. The student demonstrates a lack of responsibility, completes research stages late and without consulting the supervisor, and only partly meets the relevant requirements.

4–6 points — Independent planning and implementation fall outside the established schedule and are carried out without consulting the supervisor. The student demonstrates a lack of responsibility and does not meet the requirements for this assessment component.

1–3 points — Independent research planning and implementation do not follow the established schedule and are carried out without consulting the supervisor. The student demonstrates a serious lack of responsibility and fails to meet the requirements for this assessment component.

0 points — The student has not met any of the requirements for this component, and there is no evidence of independent participation in the research process. The component is therefore entirely unfulfilled.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total
Total for All Components					

10. Compliance with Presentation Time Limits — maximum 5 points

(Minimum competency threshold: 2 points)

Each Committee member assesses the thesis according to the following criteria:

5 points — The student fully complies with the time limits and rules established for the presentation.

4 points — The student observes the presentation time limit, with only minor deviations from the rules.

3 points — The student observes the presentation time limit and partially complies with the rules.

2 points — The student exceeds the presentation time limit and breaches most of the applicable rules.

1 point — The student exceeds the allotted presentation time and significantly breaches the rules.

0 points — The student does not comply with the established presentation rules.

Committee Member No. 1	Committee Member No. 2	Committee Member No. 3	Committee Member No. 4	Committee Member No. 5	Total
Total for All Components (Minimum competency threshold: 51 points)					

7.2. A master's thesis is considered successfully completed if the student earns at least 51 points.

7.3. If the thesis receives 41–50 points, the student is entitled to submit a revised master's thesis during the following semester.

7.4. If the thesis receives 0–40 points, the student loses the right to resubmit the same thesis.

7.5. Members of the Master's Thesis Defense Committee must attend the thesis defenses, participate actively in discussions, and, after the defense, review and assess each thesis by open vote at a closed meeting of the Committee.

7.6. The Committee prepares official minutes of the master's thesis assessment and makes the final decision on awarding the master's degree. The minutes must be accompanied by the reviews and the final assessment record prepared by the Committee and signed by its members.

7.7. If a master's student cannot attend the thesis defense at the scheduled time for a valid reason, the Master's Program Director must review the circumstances and submit an appropriate recommendation to the Faculty Council for consideration.

VIII. Formatting Requirements for Master's Theses

8.1. The structure of the master's thesis is developed together with the supervisor, taking into account the research topic, and includes the following components:

8.1.1. Title page, prepared in accordance with the established requirements. The name of the higher education institution — University Geomedi LLC — appears at the top of the page. The student's full given name and surname appear 2–3 cm below. The title of the master's thesis is placed in the middle of the page in 16 pt font. This is followed by the name of the master's specialty and the master's degree sought through the thesis defense. The supervisor's given name, surname, academic degree, and academic position appear toward the right side of the title page. The city where the thesis was prepared and the year of submission appear at the bottom (see Annexes 1a and 1b).

8.1.2. Abstract, no longer than half a page and containing at least 150 words, briefly describing the relevance of the topic, the research aim, and the main novel findings. The abstract must be written in Georgian and English. Both abstracts must appear on one page, bound immediately after the title page.

8.1.3. Table of contents, listing the exact titles of all chapters and sections of the thesis in order, with the page number on which each begins aligned to the right.

8.1.4. Introduction, which is the general section of the thesis and must be no longer than 2–3 pages.

It must justify the relevance of the topic and state the research aim and objectives. It must also identify the subject and object of research, the methods used, and the material and technical resources available for the research.

8.1.5. Main body, divided into chapters and sections. Chapter and section headings are developed together with the supervisor according to the subject matter.

8.1.6. Conclusion, summarizing the main research findings and providing concise and specific answers to all the objectives presented by the student at the public defense.

8.1.7. References, consisting of the list of sources used and formatted in accordance with the established requirements.

8.1.8. All sections of the completed master's thesis must be bound together in the following order:
Title page, abstract, table of contents, introduction, chapters (main body), conclusion, references, and annexes.

8.2. A master's thesis submitted for defense before the Examination Committee must meet the following formal requirements:

8.2.1. The master's thesis must contain at least 50 pages, including
all pages bound into the completed thesis;

8.2.2. The thesis must be printed on A4 paper using Sylfaen font, 12 pt for the main text and 14–16 pt for headings and subheadings. Line spacing must be 1.5; the text must be justified; the first line of each paragraph must be indented by 1.27 cm (five spaces). Margins must be 3.0 cm on the left and 1.60 cm on the top, bottom, and right.

8.3. The master's thesis must be written in Georgian in accordance with the applicable spelling and stylistic standards.

8.4. All pages of the thesis must be numbered consecutively; omitted or blank pages and repeated page numbers are not permitted. Page numbers must be placed in the bottom-right corner in 10 pt Arabic numerals,

1.3 cm from the bottom edge and 2.0 cm from the right edge. The title page is not numbered but is included in the total page count.

8.5. Titles of all chapters and subsections must appear in the table of contents. Each chapter must begin on a new page, while subsections continue on the same page.

8.6. Structural headings (such as 'Table of Contents,' 'Introduction,' 'Conclusion,' 'References,' and 'Annexes') and individual chapter titles must be centered in 14 pt font, without a full stop or underlining. The spacing between a heading and the text, and between a main heading and a subheading, must be 1.5 lines.

8.7. Chapters, sections, and subsections must be numbered using Arabic numerals. Chapters in the main body are numbered consecutively, followed by a full stop. Sections and subsections use combinations of Arabic numerals (for example, 1.2. denotes the second section of Chapter 1). Where necessary, another digit separated by a full stop identifies a subsection.

8.8. Any abbreviations of words or phrases used in the thesis must be included in a list of abbreviations or explained in parentheses when first used in the text.

8.9. The master's thesis must cite the literature sources used. The reference list must be formatted in accordance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition (APA 7). References must be arranged alphabetically, with Georgian-language sources listed first, followed by foreign-language sources.

Sources cited in the main text must also be indicated by Arabic numerals in square brackets corresponding to their numbered entries in the reference list. Where appropriate, the relevant page number(s) must be included. For example, [7, pp. 13–14] refers to pages 13–14 of source No. 7 in the reference list. Square brackets are used for in-text source references, while entries in the bibliography are formatted in accordance with the established rules.

8.10. The reference list must appear at the end of the thesis in alphabetical order. Each entry must comply with APA 7 requirements, including the author's surname and initials, title of the work, journal or publication title, year, volume, issue, page numbers, and, where applicable, DOI or electronic link. For a book or monograph, the entry must include the author's surname and initials, year of publication, title, and publisher. Punctuation, order of information, italics, and all other formatting elements must follow APA 7 rules.

8.10.1. When citing a book or monograph, indicate:

- Author's or authors' surname(s) and initials;
- Title of the book;
- City of publication;
- Year of publication;
- Total number of pages;

8.10.2. When citing a scientific article, indicate the author's or authors':

- Surnames and initials;
- Title of the article;
- Journal abbreviation;
- Year of publication;
- Volume;
- Issue;

- First and last pages of the article.

8.10.3. When using online materials, indicate:

- Author of the material;
- Author or owner of the website;
- Title of the material with a hyperlink;
- Website address;
- Date accessed.

8.10.4. When using government and regulatory documents, indicate:

- Country;
- Name of the authority to which the document belongs;
- Year of the publication in which the document was located;
- Type of document (order, instruction, law);
- Title of the document, including its identification number and year;
- Place of publication where the document was located;
- Title of the publication in which the document was located.

IX. Timelines for the Selection, Preparation, Preliminary Review, Peer Review, and Defense of Master's Theses

9.1. The Faculty Council approves the list of master's thesis topics before the beginning of the fourth semester. Each student's thesis topic and supervisor are approved by the end of Week 4 of the fourth semester.

9.2. Completion of the master's thesis and plagiarism screening — Week 17 of Semester IV;

9.3. The master's thesis reviewer is appointed in Week 18, after submission of the final version of the thesis;

9.4. Preliminary review of the master's thesis — Week 18 of Semester IV;

9.5. Submission of the review — Week 20 of Semester IV;

9.6. Public defense of the master's thesis — Week 21 of Semester IV.