

THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN
WESTERN CASPIAN UNIVERSITY

**METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES
ON THE WRITING AND EVALUATION
OF MASTER'S DISSERTATIONS**

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1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

These Regulations have been developed in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Education,” the “Regulations on the Content and Organization of Master’s Degree Programmes and the Conferment of the ‘Master’ Qualification,” approved by Decision No. 88 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 12 May 2010; the “Regulations on the Preparation, Submission, and Defense of Master’s Theses,” approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 20 April 1998; the Statute of the Master’s Division of Western Caspian University (hereinafter referred to as “WCU”); the resolutions adopted by the University Administration and the Academic Council of WCU; and other applicable normative legal instruments.

These Regulations establish the procedures governing the selection of thesis topics and academic supervisors, the preparation and submission of master’s theses for defense, as well as the reporting and evaluation processes related to thesis progress for students enrolled in the master’s level of higher education within the Master’s Division.

The overarching objective of these Regulations is to enhance the quality of master’s theses through the clarification of procedural requirements and to promote transparency and objectivity in the processes of academic assessment and evaluation.

Definitions of Key Terms:

- **Master’s student:** An individual pursuing studies at the master’s level of higher education.
- **Master’s thesis:** An independent scholarly research project prepared by the master’s student under the guidance of an academic supervisor. It is a requisite for the award of the master’s degree and serves as evidence of the student’s preparedness for advanced professional practice and scientific inquiry. The primary aim of the thesis is to cultivate the student’s capacity for independent research, to foster their academic potential, and to demonstrate their proficiency in employing contemporary research methodologies and in synthesizing theoretical and empirical knowledge.

Academic Supervisor: The academic supervisor is an individual who provides essential guidance to the master’s student in the process of selecting the thesis topic, research object and subject, research methods, the information base, and relevant literature. The supervisor also assists in the development of the thesis outline and offers scholarly advice throughout the research process. Furthermore, the academic supervisor is responsible for providing an expert opinion regarding the conformity of the thesis content with established academic and institutional standards.

It is considered appropriate that the supervisor’s field of academic and pedagogical expertise aligns with the topic of the thesis.

Academic supervision of master’s students may be carried out not only by academic staff of Western Caspian University (WCU) who hold an academic degree, but also by individuals external to the university who possess both an academic degree and relevant professional experience in the corresponding field.

Information Provision: Information relating to various aspects of the thesis preparation and evaluation process—such as the selection of the thesis topic and academic supervisor, assessment of progress reports, monitoring procedures, and

other relevant activities—is communicated to both master’s students and academic supervisors through modern communication channels. These include email, SMS, social media platforms, telephone, and officially approved documents posted on the announcement boards of WCU and its academic departments.

2. Selection of the Thesis Topic and Academic Supervisor

2.1. The thesis topics must comply with the following criteria:

2.1.1. The topic must be of significant theoretical and practical relevance.

2.1.2. The topic must address contemporary theoretical, methodological, and practical issues within the specific field of specialization of the master's program.

2.2. The master's student may select their thesis topic and academic supervisor from the list of proposed thesis topics and academic supervisors (hereinafter referred to as the "List"), which is compiled by the relevant academic department (hereinafter referred to as the "Department"). The List, which incorporates the proposals from the relevant departments of Western Caspian University (WCU), shall be presented to the master's students by October 1st of the first academic year, in the format specified in Annex 1 of these Regulations.

2.3. A master's student may propose a thesis topic that is not included in the List.

2.4. The procedure for the selection of the thesis topic and academic supervisor is as follows:

2.4.1. If the student selects a topic from the List, the individual(s) proposed as the academic supervisor(s) for that topic in the List shall be appointed by the Department, with the student's consent, to serve as the academic supervisor.

2.4.2. In the case that the student proposes a topic that is not listed, the Department shall evaluate the compliance of the proposed topic with the criteria set forth in Section 2.1 of these Regulations and make a determination. If the proposed topic fails to meet the established requirements, the Department shall assist the student in selecting an alternative topic. The selection of the same topic by multiple students is strictly prohibited.

2.4.3. If the student proposes an academic supervisor who is not listed, the Department shall verify that the proposed supervisor meets the eligibility criteria set out in Section 1.4.3 of these Regulations. To facilitate this process, the proposed academic supervisor must submit certified copies of their academic qualifications, as well as the contact details of their affiliated institution, including their telephone number and email address. These documents must be submitted by the student or the proposed supervisor to the Department by October 20th of the first academic year. Should the necessary documentation be delayed or incomplete, the proposed individual will not be considered for appointment as the thesis supervisor, and the Department will assist the student in selecting an appropriate supervisor.

2.5. The master's student is required to conduct an in-depth literature review on the proposed thesis topic. This review should include contemporary scientific books, monographs, scholarly articles, conference materials, online resources, research conducted by international organizations, statistical data sources, and other relevant materials. The student must seek the necessary guidance and recommendations from the potential thesis supervisor before finalizing the topic. The student must submit a completed Thesis Proposal Form, as specified in Annex 2 of these Regulations, to the Department by November 1st.

2.6. The final list of approved thesis topics and academic supervisors shall be reviewed and discussed by the Scientific Council of WCU, based on the Department's presentation, by the end of November of the first academic year. The list shall then be submitted to the WCU leadership for formal approval no later than December 10th, in the format outlined in Annex 3 of these Regulations.

2.7. The finalized list of thesis topics and academic supervisors shall be formally approved by an official order of WCU in accordance with the established procedures.

2.8. In exceptional circumstances (such as the death of the academic supervisor, long-term international relocation, or extended illness), the student's thesis topic and/or academic supervisor may be modified in accordance with the established procedures.

3. Duties of the Thesis Supervisor

- 3.1. Assist the student in selecting an appropriate research topic, providing a comprehensive explanation of the positive and negative aspects of the chosen topic.
- 3.2. Aid the student in the development of the thesis outline or plan.
- 3.3. Offer guidance on the structure and content of the thesis and provide recommendations for the study and application of methodological approaches.
- 3.4. Provide advice on relevant sources of information pertaining to the selected topic, as well as guidance on how to process and present these sources effectively.
- 3.5. Oversee the progress of the thesis, ensuring that the work complies with the standards and requirements set forth by Western Caspian University (WCU).
- 3.6. Offer recommendations for the improvement and refinement of the research materials under study.
- 3.7. Conduct consultations with the student at times approved by both the Department and the Dean's Office.
- 3.8. Prepare the student for the thesis defense, evaluating their presentation and rhetorical skills, offering constructive feedback, and suggesting areas for improvement.
- 3.9. Inform the Department Head and Dean's Office regarding the student's progress in relation to the completion of the thesis.

4. Accountability and Evaluation Procedures in the Thesis Writing Process

- 4.1. The master's student is required to submit four progress reports (labeled as Reports I, II, III, and IV) to their academic supervisor during the second year of the master's program, with each report submitted biannually, detailing the work conducted on the thesis.
- 4.2. Each report shall be assessed by the academic supervisor according to the criteria outlined in Annex 4, Annex 5, Annex 6, and Annex 7 of these Regulations. The final grade for each report will be calculated by summing the points awarded across the relevant evaluation criteria. Each criterion will be evaluated on a 10-point scale.
 - 4.2.1. The cumulative grade for Reports I and II will serve as the final grade for the "Research, Communication, and Innovation" criteria, while the cumulative grade for Reports III and IV will reflect the final grade for "Research Methodology and Execution."
 - 4.2.2. Reports must be submitted in a sequential manner. If any prior report is not submitted, the subsequent reports will not be accepted or evaluated by the academic supervisor or the Department.
 - 4.2.3. Failure to submit the reports within the prescribed deadlines or receiving a score lower than 17 points for any individual report, or a score lower than 51 points for any of the courses outlined in Section 3.2.1 of these Regulations, will result in the student incurring academic debt for the respective report or course.
- 4.3. Specific requirements for the reports are as follows:
 - 4.3.1. Reports must be written using a 14-point Times New Roman font, with 1.5 line spacing. Margins should be set to 3 cm on the left, 2 cm at the top and bottom, and 1.5 cm on the right. The reports should be formatted on A4 paper, with page numbers placed in the bottom right corner. The length of each report

should be between 5 and 7 pages.

4.3.2. Report I should be structured as follows:

The initial draft of the thesis plan.

A preliminary list of the literature and sources to be utilized in the research.

An outline of the research methods to be employed.

The student is required to submit Report I to the academic supervisor by October 15th of the second year of their master's program. The academic supervisor must evaluate the report using the criteria specified in Annex 4, sign the report, and submit it to the Department by October 25th.

4.3.3. Report II should be structured as follows:

- Relevance of the Topic
- Problem Statement and Current State of Research
- Aims and Objectives of the Research
- Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Study
- Rationale for the Selection of the Research Methodology
- Anticipated Scientific and Practical Outcomes of the Research
- List of References Utilized for the Development of this Section
- The student is required to submit Report II, along with the corresponding sections of the thesis covered by this report, to the academic supervisor by December 15th of the second year of their master's program.

The academic supervisor is expected to assess Report II in accordance with the criteria outlined in Annex 5 of these Regulations, and to provide an evaluation based on the specified indicators. The supervisor must then sign the report and submit it to the Department by December 25th.

4.3.4. Report III should address the following sections:

- The Information Base for the Application of the Chosen Research Methods
- Analysis Conducted Using the Selected Research Methodology
- Research Limitations
- Results of the Analysis
- List of References Utilized for the Development of this Section
- The student is required to submit Report III and the corresponding sections of the thesis to the academic supervisor by February 15th of the second year of their master's program.

The academic supervisor must evaluate Report III in accordance with the criteria outlined in Annex 6 of these Regulations, complete the evaluation form, sign the report, and submit it to the Department by February 25th.

4.3.5. Report IV should be prepared based on the following structure:

- Key Arguments and Considerations Derived from the Conducted Research
- Proposals and Recommendations for Addressing the Problem Posed in the Thesis
- Scientific and Practical Significance of the Findings
- Potential Areas for the Application of the Results
- List of References Used in the Preparation of This Section

The student is required to submit Report IV, along with the corresponding sections of the

thesis covered by this report, to the academic supervisor by April 10th of the second year of the master's program.

The academic supervisor must evaluate Report IV in accordance with the criteria provided in Annex 7 of these Regulations, complete the evaluation form, sign the report, and submit it to the Department by April 20th.

4.4. The student must submit the relevant report and the corresponding sections of the thesis, as specified in Sections 3.3.2 - 3.3.5 of these Regulations, to the academic supervisor in writing and signed by the specified deadline. The student is required to demonstrate their level of preparation and familiarity with the content of the report and the corresponding sections of the thesis.

4.5. The academic supervisor is responsible for evaluating the reports and providing feedback to the student. When evaluating the reports, the supervisor should consider the following:

4.5.1. The alignment between the report and the corresponding sections of the thesis.

4.5.2. The conformity of the report and the thesis sections with the relevant requirements of these Regulations.

4.5.3. The student's level of preparation and familiarity with the content of the report and the corresponding sections of the thesis.

4.6. If the academic supervisor identifies any inconsistency in at least one of the requirements outlined in Sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 of these Regulations, the student must be informed about this in accordance with the procedure specified in Section 1.4.5 of these Regulations. The student must make the necessary corrections and resubmit the report, along with the corresponding sections of the thesis, within the specific timeframe (3-5 days) designated by the academic supervisor.

If the student fails to make the required corrections and resubmit the report and corresponding sections of the thesis within the given timeframe, or if the corrections and additions made are unsatisfactory, and if the requirements outlined in Section 3.5.3 of these Regulations are not met, the report will be graded as "0" by the academic supervisor.

4.7. To improve the quality of master's theses and ensure objectivity in the process of preparing and evaluating theses, the Department may conduct monitoring of the submitted reports.

4.7.1. For the purpose of monitoring, based on a proposal from the Department, the decision of the Academic Council of the Graduate School will establish Monitoring Commissions under the leadership of subject area supervisors, taking into account relevant specializations and sub-specializations.

4.7.2. The submitted reports will be reviewed by the Monitoring Commissions, which will identify reports considered to be higher risk and compile a list of students whose reports will be subjected to monitoring.

4.7.3. A student may be subject to monitoring for one or more reports.

4.7.4. Monitoring will be conducted in the form of interviews.

4.7.5. The student has the right to be informed about the location and time of the monitoring for each of their reports.

4.7.6. Monitoring for each report will be conducted within 15 working days after the deadline for submission of the report to the Department (October 25th for Report I, December 25th for Report II, February 25th for Report III, and April 20th for Report IV). The Department will compile the monitoring schedule within 3 working days after the submission deadline and inform the students and their academic supervisors about it. The schedule will include the list of students invited for monitoring, the location, date, and time of the monitoring.

4.7.7. The student's responsibilities regarding the monitoring are as follows:

4.7.7.1. To apply to the Department by the deadline specified in the second paragraph of Section 3.7.6 of these Regulations in order to obtain information about the location and time of the monitoring for each report.

4.7.7.2. To submit a printed version of the relevant report and the corresponding sections of the thesis to the Monitoring Commission.

4.7.7.3. To demonstrate their preparedness and familiarity with the content of the report and the corresponding sections of the thesis.

4.7.8. During monitoring, if discrepancies are found between the content of the report and the corresponding sections of the thesis with respect to the requirements specified in Section 3.5 of these Regulations and the evaluation criteria provided by the academic supervisor, the Monitoring Commission will conduct a re-evaluation of the report and prepare a corresponding act. The final grade, as confirmed by the Monitoring Commission, will be accepted as the final grade for the report.

The participation of academic supervisors in the monitoring process is recommended.

4.7.9. If a student does not attend the monitoring on the scheduled date for valid reasons, a repeat monitoring will be scheduled within 7 working days from the original monitoring date, and the student and their academic supervisor will be informed about the new time and location.

4.7.10. If a student fails to attend the initial monitoring or the repeat monitoring scheduled in accordance with Section 3.7.9 of these Regulations without a valid reason, the evaluation results for the corresponding report provided by the academic supervisor will be annulled by the Monitoring Commission, and the student will incur academic debt for the relevant subject.

4.8. The submission of the thesis to the Department will be carried out according to the following procedure:

4.8.1. A student without any academic debts, as defined in Section 3.2.1 of these Regulations, must submit a written copy of the thesis, prepared in accordance with these Regulations, and a summary of the thesis to the academic supervisor by April 20th.

4.8.2. The academic supervisor must familiarize themselves with the full content of the thesis, evaluate it in accordance with the criteria outlined in Annex 16 of these Regulations, and provide a recommendation regarding the defense. The supervisor will submit one copy of the evaluation form to the Department by April 30th and give the other copy to the student.

4.8.3. The student must submit the bound thesis, along with an electronic version (on CD), signed by the academic supervisor, and the corresponding evaluation form to the Department by April 30th.

4.8.4. If necessary, the Department may accept the thesis according to a schedule within 10 working days after April 30th.

4.8.5. Theses submitted after the dates specified in Sections 3.8.3 and 3.8.4 will be subject to plagiarism checks and the defense will be postponed to the following semesters in accordance with the relevant regulations.

5. Preparation of the Master's Thesis

5.1.1. The text of the thesis should be written in the Azerbaijani language using the Latin alphabet, in Russian using the Cyrillic alphabet, and in English using the English (US) alphabet, in A4 format with the following margins: 30 mm on the left, 10 mm on the right, and 20 mm at the top and bottom. The font should be "Times New Roman" size 14, with a line spacing of 1.5, and printed in black ink.

5.1.2. The titles of the structural sections of the thesis should be written in uppercase letters in bold black color.

5.1.3. Figures, tables, and graphs in the thesis can be in color and formatted in A3 (297 mm x 420 mm). Each A3-sized page will be counted as one page.

5.1.4. The title page of the thesis is not numbered, and the numbering of subsequent pages begins from the number “2.” All pages, including structural sections, the list of references, and appendices, are numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals.

5.1.5. The page number of the thesis should be placed at the bottom of each page, on the right side of the margin.

5.1.6. The thesis should be written in A4 format and contain 110,000 to 130,000 characters (excluding figures, tables, graphs, appendices, and the reference list). For theses in the humanities, the volume can exceed this limit by up to 20%, while for natural sciences and exact sciences, it may be 20% less.

5.1.7. When it is not possible to determine the exact number of characters per page using a computer, one page of text is considered to contain 2,000 characters.

5.1.8. The candidate must provide references to the sources and authors of the materials used in the thesis. After a citation, the reference number from the list of references, the volume (for multi-volume works), and the corresponding page(s) should be provided in square brackets, for example, [54, p.162], [155, vol.2, p.82-83], [54, p.162; p.23], etc.

5.1.9. It is recommended that each result obtained by the candidate in the thesis be referenced to the work in which it was previously published.

5.1.10. Sentences, tables, figures, diagrams, formulas, and other expressions included in the thesis, taken from the literature or other information sources without any changes, are considered direct references. If the content of the direct reference is fewer than 40 words, it is written in quotation marks (“ ”). For references longer than 40 words, the quotation is written in 12-point italic font, in a separate paragraph. This paragraph should be 1 cm shorter than the main text on both sides. If parts of the quotation are omitted, ellipses (...) should be used in the place of the omission.

5.1.11. Indirect references are those where the candidate paraphrases the information from a source using their own words. In indirect references, quotation marks and indented paragraphs are not used.

5.1.12. The candidate must be able to present the opinions of the authors cited in the thesis in a discussion style. The reader should be able to trace the beginning and end of each citation.

5.1.13. All information in the thesis must be clearly visible and legible.

5.1.14. The thesis is bound and presented with a hardcover.

5.2. Structure of the Thesis

When preparing the thesis, the following sequence should be observed in its structure:

- Title page (see Appendix 8);
- Table of Contents;
- Introduction;
- Main content of the thesis (chapters, paragraphs, sections);
- Conclusion;
- List of References;
- Appendices;
- List of abbreviations and symbols (if any in the thesis).

5.3. Title Page

The title page should be prepared in accordance with the instructions provided in Appendix 8.

5.4. Table of Contents

5.2.1. The term "Table of Contents" is used as the heading and is not numbered.

5.2.2. The Table of Contents should reflect the titles of the dissertation's structural sections and the page numbers where each section begins.

5.2.3. In multi-volume dissertations, the Table of Contents is provided in the first volume.

5.2.4. The titles of the structural sections in the Table of Contents must be identical to those used in the text of the dissertation.

5.5. Introduction

5.5.1. The term "Introduction" is used as the heading and is not numbered.

5.5.2. In the introduction of the dissertation, the following subheadings should be written in bold black font and start with a new paragraph:

- Relevance of the topic and its degree of development;
- The aims and objectives of the research;
- Research methods;
- Scientific novelty of the research;
- Theoretical and practical significance of the research;
- Appropriations and applications;
- The name of the organization where the dissertation work was carried out;
- The total volume of the dissertation, including the separate volume of each structural section, marked accordingly.

5.6. Main Content of the Dissertation (Chapter, Paragraph, Section)

5.6.1. The main content of the dissertation is divided into chapters and paragraphs. The paragraphs in the dissertation may also be divided into sections.

5.6.2. Each chapter of the dissertation is numbered with Roman numerals. For example, Chapter I; Chapter II, etc.

5.6.3. Chapters of the dissertation should begin on a new page.

5.6.4. Within chapters, paragraphs are numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals. The paragraph number consists of the chapter number and the paragraph number, separated by a dot. A period is placed at the end of the number. For example, 2.5 – meaning the fifth paragraph of the second chapter.

5.6.5. If there are sections within a paragraph, they are consecutively numbered with Arabic numerals. The section number consists of the chapter number, paragraph number, and section number, separated by dots. A period is placed at the end of the number. For example, 2.5.1 – meaning the first section of the fifth paragraph of the second chapter.

5.6.6. The chapter titles are separated from the text by three line spaces, while paragraph titles are separated by two line spaces.

5.6.7. The titles of the chapters should be written symmetrically, in capital letters, in bold black font. The titles of the paragraphs should be written in the form of regular text, in lowercase letters (except for the first letter), also in bold black font.

5.6.8. Words in the chapter titles should not be broken into syllables or carried over to the next line. Underlining and placing a period at the end of chapter and paragraph titles is not permitted.

5.6.9. If the title of a chapter or paragraph consists of two or more sentences, a period should be placed between them.

5.7. Conclusion

5.7.1. The word “Conclusion” should be used as a heading and is not numbered.

5.7.2. In the conclusion, the main scientific innovations should be presented, with an explanation of their significance.

5.7.3. In dissertations with practical significance, information about the application of the scientific results obtained by the candidate in practice should be provided. In theoretical dissertations, recommendations regarding the use of scientific results should be given.

5.8. List of References

5.8.1. The phrase “List of References” should be used as a heading and is not numbered.

5.8.2. In the list of references, sources in Azerbaijani should be listed first, followed by sources in Turkish, Russian, English, French, German, Arabic, etc., in alphabetical order according to each language, and consecutively numbered.

5.8.3. The list of references should mainly include literature published in the last 10 years.

5.8.4. Bibliographic information should be provided in alphabetical order by the author’s last name, first name, patronymic, or the title of the publication.

5.8.5. In the bibliographic description of the sources used in the dissertation, the following symbolic marks should be used:

- Period: .
- Comma: ,
- Hyphen: –
- Colon: :
- Quotation marks: “ ”
- Slash: /
- Double slash: //
- Parentheses: ()
- Square brackets: []

5.8.6. The bibliographic description of the literature in the used literature list should be formatted in accordance with the examples provided in Annex 13 of this Regulation.

5.9. Appendices

5.9.1. The word "Appendices" should be used as the title in the appendices and should not be numbered.

5.9.2. Appendices must be paginated as part of the overall work.

5.9.3. Appendices can also be provided as a separate volume. When the appendices are a separate volume, a title page must be included, and it should be numbered separately.

5.9.4. Appendices are written in "Times New Roman" font, size 12, with a 1.0 line spacing interval.

5.9.5. All appendices in the dissertation must be referenced within the text.

5.10. Figures

5.10.1. Figures should be provided in the dissertation where they are first referenced, on the following page, or in the appendices.

5.10.2. Figures must be positioned in such a way that they can be viewed comfortably without rotating the dissertation or turning it clockwise.

5.10.3. Figures are numbered consecutively in the dissertation.

5.10.4. When there is only one figure in the dissertation, it should not be numbered. The word "Figure" and the title of the figure should be written.

5.10.5. The word "Figure," its number, and its title should be written below the figure. The word "Figure" and its title should be in uppercase letters (except for the first letter) and in bold black font, without an underline. The figure number should consist of the chapter, paragraph, and consecutive figure numbers separated by periods. For example, Figure 1.2.3 – meaning the third figure of the second paragraph of the first chapter.

5.10.6. Figures included in the dissertation must be of high quality.

5.10.7. Computer graphics and original photographs may be used for figures in the dissertation.

5.10.8. Photos smaller than A4 size must be pasted onto a standard white sheet of paper.

5.10.9. Figures with non-standard dimensions must be resized to conform to A4 format after being folded.

5.10.10. Every figure in the dissertation text must be properly cited and referenced.

5.11. Tables

5.11.1. Tables may be presented in the dissertation text where they are first referenced, on the subsequent page, or in the appendices.

5.11.2. Tables must be positioned such that they can be easily read without rotating the

dissertation or turning it clockwise.

5.11.3. Tables are numbered sequentially throughout the dissertation.

5.11.4. When there is only a single table in the dissertation, it should not be numbered.

Instead, the word "Table" followed by the table's title should be provided.

5.11.5. The word "Table," its number, and its title should be positioned in the upper right-hand corner of the table. The word "Table" and the title should be written in uppercase letters (with the exception of the first letter) in bold black font, and no underlining should be applied. The table number should consist of the chapter number, paragraph number, and the consecutive table number, separated by periods. For example, Table 1.2.3 – indicating the third table in the second paragraph of the first chapter.

5.11.6. In the case that a table spans two or more pages, the word "Table," its number, and its title should appear once in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the table. The word "continuation" should then be written in the corresponding place on subsequent pages. When multiple tables are included in the dissertation, the word "continuation" should be followed by the table number. For example, continuation of Table 1.2.3.

5.11.7. The text within the table must be formatted in 12-point font, with a line spacing of 1.0.

5.11.8. When tables contain numerous rows and columns and are divided across multiple pages, the integrity of the rows must be preserved.

5.11.9. Each table referenced within the dissertation must be cited. The source of the data included in the table should be indicated below the table. If the data in the table results from the author's own research, the source should be noted as "author's calculations."

5.12. Graphs

5.12.1. Graphs may be presented in the dissertation text where they are first referenced, on the following page, or in the appendices.

5.12.2. Graphs must be positioned in such a manner that they can be viewed comfortably without rotating the dissertation or turning it clockwise.

5.12.3. Graphs are numbered sequentially throughout the dissertation.

5.12.4. When there is only a single graph in the dissertation, it should not be numbered. Instead, the word "Graph" followed by the title of the graph should be provided.

5.12.5. The word "Graph," its number, and its title should be written beneath the graph. The word "Graph" and its title should be written in uppercase letters (except for the first letter) in bold black font, and without an underline. The numbering of the graphs consists of the chapter number, paragraph number, and the consecutive number of the graph, separated by periods. For example, Graph 1.2.3 – meaning the third graph in the second paragraph of the first chapter.

5.12.6. Every graph included in the dissertation text must be referenced.

5.13. Formulas (Equations)

5.13.1. If there are multiple formulas (equations) in the dissertation text, they must be numbered sequentially.

5.13.2. The numbering of formulas (equations) consists of the chapter number, paragraph number, and the consecutive number of the formula, separated by periods.

5.13.3. The formula (equation) number should be placed on the right side of the page within parentheses at the same level as the formula itself. For example, (3.1.2) – meaning the second formula (equation) in the first paragraph of the third chapter.

5.13.4. The meanings of the symbols used in formulas (equations) and the explanations of

any numerical coefficients should be provided either immediately after the formula (equation) or directly beneath it, taking into account the sequence of their appearance in the formula (equation). The first line of the explanation should begin with the word "Here." The explanation of each symbol and numerical coefficient should be placed on a new line.

5.13.5. Formulas (equations) must be separated from the text by spacing. One line of spacing should be left above and below each formula, and, if necessary, two lines of spacing may be used. If the formula (equation) does not fit on one line, it should continue to the next line after an equal sign (=), plus (+), minus (-), multiplication (x), or division (:) operator. In such cases, the relevant operator should be repeated at the beginning of the next line.

5.14. Abbreviations and Conventional Symbols

5.14.1. When using uncommon abbreviations, conventional symbols, specific terms, new symbols, etc., in the dissertation, a list of explanations for these terms must be provided.

5.14.2. The list should be written in column format, with the abbreviations, conventional symbols, specific terms, and symbols on the left-hand side of the column in alphabetical order, and their exact definitions and meanings on the right-hand side.

5.14.3. If specific abbreviations, conventional symbols, specific terms, and symbols are used fewer than three times in the dissertation, no list should be created. Instead, their full definitions and meanings should be given the first time they appear in the text.

6. Preparation and Evaluation of the Dissertation for Defense

6.1. The student must prepare a summary of the dissertation reflecting its core content, which must be signed by them. The summary should be written in the language of the dissertation, on A4-sized paper, using Times New Roman font size 12, with a 1.5 line spacing, and must not exceed three pages in length.

6.2. The initial defense of the dissertation is conducted in a preliminary defense group formed by the Department, according to a schedule prepared by the Department. The Department informs the students about the schedule of the preliminary defense. The purpose of the preliminary defense is to verify whether the content and formatting of the dissertation and the accompanying documents comply with the established requirements, as well as to support the student's preparation for the final defense. The student must submit the following documents to the Department at least three days prior to the preliminary defense:

- Application (Annex 14);
- Evaluation form of the Master's dissertation by the scientific supervisor;
- One copy of the Master's dissertation (to be retained by the Department after the defense);
- One copy of the summary, printed in as many copies as there are members of the Specialized Council, with one copy retained by the Department after the defense;
- A copy of the student's individual work plan (Annex 15);
- Copies of scientific articles published by the student related to the dissertation (articles may be published in journals listed on the official website of the AAK in the field of economics or in international scientific journals. For articles or abstracts published in materials of international or local scientific conferences, the original participation certificate approved by the organizers must also be attached). Dissertations recommended by the Department for defense are submitted to the Master's Department, along with an extract from the Department meeting and other relevant documents, for review.

If the Master's Department considers it impossible to allow the dissertation for defense, the issue will be reviewed in the presence of the department head, program director, and scientific supervisor, and a decision will be made in accordance with the requirements of the relevant regulatory acts.

6.3. Dissertations approved for defense are sent to the official reviewer by the Department at least 15 days prior to the defense.

The official reviewer can be selected from among the employees of the institution holding an academic degree or title at the WCU, as well as from other higher education and research institutions, state bodies, and other organizations employing leading specialists with an academic degree. The official reviewer's scientific-pedagogical or professional activity must align with the field of specialization of the graduate student.

6.4. Within 10 days of receiving the dissertation, the official reviewer must evaluate the dissertation based on the criteria outlined in Annex 17 of these Regulations, using the "Official Reviewer's Evaluation Form for the Master's Dissertation" and submit one copy of the evaluation form to the student and the other to the Department.

6.5. The graduate student must submit the official reviewer's evaluation of the dissertation, prepared in accordance with Annex 17, to the Department at least 3 days prior to the defense.

6.6. The responsible personnel of the Department will review the documents listed in Section 6.2 of these Regulations, and upon acceptance, will forward these documents to the secretaries of the relevant Specialized Councils for the purpose of organizing the defense.

6.7. If the required documents are not submitted by the student due to valid reasons, the defense date may be rescheduled in accordance with the requirements of the relevant normative and legal acts.

6.8. A schedule for the defenses is prepared by the Master's Department and the time and place of the defenses conducted by the relevant Specialized Councils are communicated to the members of the Council and the graduate students.

6.9. The meeting of the Specialized Council is considered authorized if at least two-thirds of the members of the approved composition are present.

6.10. The public defense of the Master's dissertation must be conducted as a scientific discussion, characterized by high standards, principledness, and adherence to the rules of academic ethics. During the defense, all results, scientific, and practical proposals within the dissertation must be thoroughly analyzed for their accuracy and justification.

The Specialized Council shall allocate a minimum of 45 minutes for the defense of each Master's dissertation, with 15 to 20 minutes designated for the student's presentation.

6.11. The evaluation of the dissertation defense within the Specialized Council shall be carried out based on the criteria outlined in Annex 18 of these Regulations, as specified in the "Master's Dissertation Evaluation Form for the Specialized Council."

The evaluation shall be conducted on a 10-point scale for each criterion, and the final evaluation for each Council member shall be the sum of the points assigned to the criteria. The final score for the Master's defense will be calculated by dividing the total points

awarded by the number of members of the Council who participated in the evaluation. If the graduate student's final score for the dissertation defense is 51 points or higher, the Specialized Council may award the Master's degree.

6.12. If the final evaluation score for the dissertation defense by the Specialized Council is below 51 points, the student will be allowed to defend the dissertation again after addressing the identified shortcomings, but no sooner than one month after the negative decision. If the dissertation receives a negative evaluation upon the second defense, the student may only defend the dissertation on a new topic (no more than twice) during the defense period for the next academic year's graduates.

6.13. This section of the Regulations applies to dissertations that have achieved successful outcomes in the evaluation of reports and plagiarism checks.

6.14. The dissertation shall undergo plagiarism checks in accordance with the Plagiarism Regulations of WCU.