



**Ekonomikos ir
verslo administravimo
fakultetas**

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE

FOR THE PREPARATION, DEFENCE, ASSESSMENT AND STORAGE OF STUDENTS' WRITTEN ACADEMIC PAPERS

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Description of the Procedure for the Preparation, Defence, Assessment and Storage of Students' Written Academic Papers of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Vilnius University (hereinafter – VU FEBA) (hereinafter – the Description) establishes the procedures for the preparation, defence, assessment and storage of course papers (research papers), final Bachelor and Master theses that apply to students of all VU FEBA study programmes.
2. The Description has been prepared in accordance with the “Study Regulations of Vilnius University”, approved by Resolution No SK-2012-12-8 of the Senate Commission of Vilnius University of 21 June 2012, version of Resolution No S-2018-5-2 of Vilnius University Senate of 22 May 2018; “Regulation of the Study Programmes of Vilnius University”, approved by Resolution No SK-2012-12-4 of the Senate Commission of Vilnius University of 21 June 2012, version of Resolution No SK-2013-2-3 of the VU Senate Commission of 31 January 2013, version of Resolution No SK-2013-12-14 of the VU Senate Commission of 24 October 2013; “Regulations for the Preparation, Defence and Storage of Written Academic Papers of Vilnius University Students”, approved by Resolution No S-2017-12-11 of the VU Senate of 19 December 2017; “Description of the Procedure for the Administration of Students' Written Academic Papers in the Study Information System of Vilnius University”, approved by Order No R-512 of the VU Vice-Rector for Studies of 22 November 2017; “Procedure for the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes of Vilnius University”, approved by Resolution No SK-2012-20-6 of VU Senate Commission of 13 December 2012, version of Resolution No SPN-1 of VU Senate of 22 January 2019.
3. The terms used in the text and their abbreviations: Study programme committee – SPC, Vilnius University Study Information System – VUSIS, Vilnius University Virtual Learning Environment – VLE, Electronic Plagiarism Recognition System – EPAS, Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library – eLaba.

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURE FOR THE PREPARATION, DEFENCE, ASSESSMENT AND STORAGE OF COURSE PAPERS

4. **Selection and Approval of Topics for Course Papers**
 - 4.1. The course paper shall be written in the study semester specified in the plan of a study programme. The topics of the course papers are offered by the faculty's academic staff and/or researchers working in the field of the study programme. The topics of the course papers are presented in the VUSIS system: the

students who prepare the course paper in the autumn semester select the topic in June, and those who prepare the course paper in the spring semester – in January.

- 4.2. The student may also suggest his/her preferred topic for the course paper. In this case, the student must submit a reasoned application including the consent of the potential supervisor to the SPC during the first week of the semester in which the course paper is written. If the topic proposed by the student is not accepted, the student must choose a topic from the topics offered by the SPC that has not yet been selected by other students.
- 4.3. No later than during the first 2 weeks of the semester in which the course paper is written, students choose the topics of the course paper and supervisors are assigned to them accordingly.
- 4.4. No later than one month before the date of registration of the course paper, students submit to the SPC (branch) administrator the final titles of the course papers, to be entered into VUSIS together with a list of supervisors of course papers (hereinafter – the supervisor), approved by the order of the Dean of VU FEBA.

5. Preparation of Course Papers

- 5.1. Course papers shall be prepared in accordance with this Description and the Methodological Requirements for the Preparation of Course Papers and Bachelor Theses set forth by VU FEBA. These documents are published on the VU FEBA website www.evaf.vu.lt and <https://www.evaf.vu.lt/en/>.
- 5.2. Seminars may be organized to facilitate the preparation of course papers, while methodological material is placed in the VLE.
- 5.3. Students shall write course papers individually.
- 5.4. Course papers shall be written in the standard Lithuanian language, except in cases when the study programme is conducted in English or the supervisor is a foreign lecturer. In terms of the possibility to prepare a course paper in English when the study programme is conducted in Lithuanian, the student must apply to the relevant SPC with a motivated application. The application must be approved by the supervisor assigned to the student. The student will be notified about the decision of the SPC at his/her university e-mail address within 5 working days from the receipt of the application.
- 5.5. Within 2 weeks after choosing the topic of the course paper and after the assignation of the supervisor, the student must contact the assigned supervisor and discuss the progress of writing the course paper. The student shall consult the course paper supervisor on a regular basis according to a mutually agreed schedule. Consultations can also take place remotely using remote means of communication. Consulting hours of supervisors are indicated on the FEBA website <https://tvarkarasciai.vu.lt/ef/>.
- 5.6. The student shall report on each of the stages of course paper preparation in accordance with the procedure established by the supervisor. A draft version of the course paper must be submitted to the supervisor no later than 3 weeks before the day of registration of the course papers.

6. Submission of Course Papers for Evaluation and Defence

- 6.1. The final version of the course paper shall be submitted to the supervisor for evaluation at least 1 week before the last scheduled day of registration of course papers. After the supervisor approves the final version, the student must upload his/her course paper (a *pdf* version) to VUSIS no later than 3 working days before the defence date. The course paper uploaded to VUSIS cannot be edited.
- 6.2. No later than 3 working days before the date of the defence of the course paper, the supervisor checks the course paper in the EPAS system and prepares a Plagiarism Verification Certificate (see Annex 1). If the course paper meets the requirements for it and can be defended, the supervisor signs the printed and bound version of the course paper. The student submits the course paper together with the Plagiarism Verification Certificate to the SPC (branch) administrator.
- 6.3. If the student fails to submit the course paper within the stipulated time or submits the work that does not meet the methodological requirements, the supervisor of the course paper has the right to refuse to evaluate the work. In this case, the student shall not be allowed to defend the course paper, and the supervisor enters “Not allowed to defend” in VUSIS. The student can defend the course paper in the first two weeks of the new semester.
- 6.4. If plagiarism of the course paper is detected, the student is not allowed to defend the course paper, and the supervisor enters “Not allowed to defend” in VUSIS. The supervisor informs the Dean of VU FEBA in

writing or by e-mail, submitting both the summary and the spreadsheet from the EPAS system. The Dean of VU FEBA imposes a penalty on the student provided for in the “Study Regulations of Vilnius University”¹. The student can defend the course paper in the first two weeks of a new semester, but on another topic.

7. Assessment and Defence of Course Papers

- 7.1. The course paper shall be defended at a time mutually agreed between the student and the supervisor, but no later than on the last day of the semester in which the course paper is written.
- 7.2. When evaluating the course paper, the supervisor follows this Description (see Annex 5, Assessment Scale and Criteria for Course Papers and Bachelor theses), the relevant course unit description of the study programme and the criteria set forth in “VU FEBA Methodological Requirements for the Preparation of Course Papers and Bachelor Theses”, and “Procedure for the Assessment of Students’ Learning Outcomes at Vilnius University”².
- 7.3. The attendance of defence by the student who wrote the course paper is necessary, unless he/she is unable to attend due to illness or other reasons. The course paper can also be defended using remote communication tools.
- 7.4. A student who has been unable to defend a tem paper due to illness or who has not been allowed to defend a course paper due to debts and/or academic debts or non-fulfillment of financial obligations may defend the same course paper no later than in one year.

8. Recording of the Defence and Storage of Course Papers

- 8.1. Evaluation (grading) of course papers are entered into the VUSIS by the supervisors of course papers no later than within 5 working days after the defence.
- 8.2. The storage of written academic papers in VUSIS is regulated by the “Description of the Procedure for the Administration of Written Academic Papers in the Study Information System of Vilnius University”. The electronic version of the course paper uploaded to VUSIS is stored in accordance with the deadlines for storing the activity documents provided by VU; the printed version of the course paper shall be stored for 1 year.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE FOR THE PREPARATION, DEFENCE, EVALUATION AND STORAGE OF BACHELOR THESES

9. Selection and Approval of Topics for Bachelor Theses

- 9.1. Bachelor thesis shall be written in the last semester of the study programme.
- 9.2. If the course paper required in the study programme is part of the bachelor thesis, the student further develops the topic of the course paper. The student’s bachelor thesis is assigned to be supervised by the same lecturer who supervised the student’s course paper. No later than the first two weeks of the semester in which the bachelor thesis is written, the student may, for important reasons, request the SPC to change supervisor of the bachelor thesis. In case of such a change, the academic workload of the supervisors shall be taken into account.
- 9.3. If the study programme does not require a course paper or the course paper is not part of the bachelor thesis, no later than within the first two weeks of the semester in which the bachelor thesis is written, the student chooses a topic of bachelor thesis from the topics offered by SPC and the academic staff and/or researchers. Students become familiar with topics of bachelor thesis in the VUSIS system in June if bachelor thesis is written in the autumn semester, and in January if bachelor thesis is written in the spring semester. The student can also suggest a preferred topic of bachelor thesis. In this case, the student must submit a reasoned application including the consent of the potential supervisor to the SPC during the first week of the semester in which the bachelor thesis is written. If the topic proposed by the student is not

¹ https://www.vu.lt/site_files/Reguliaminas/Studij%C5%B3_pasiekim%C5%B3_vertinimo_tvarka_2019-01-22.pdf

² https://www.vu.lt/site_files/Reguliaminas/Studij%C5%B3_pasiekim%C5%B3_vertinimo_tvarka_2019-01-22.pdf

accepted, the student must choose a topic from the topics submitted by the SPC and not yet selected by other students.

- 9.4. No later than one month before the date of bachelor thesis registration, students shall submit to the SPC (branch) administrator the final titles of bachelor theses, which together with the list of supervisors shall be entered into VUSIS and approved by the order of the Dean of VU FEBA.

10. Bachelor Thesis Preparation

- 10.1. Bachelor theses are prepared in accordance with this Description and the “Methodological Requirements for the Preparation of Course papers and Bachelor Theses at VU FEBA”. These documents are published on the VU FEBA website www.evaf.vu.lt ir <https://www.evaf.vu.lt/en/>.
- 10.2. Seminars can be organized to assist the preparation of bachelor theses, and methodological material is placed in the VLE.
- 10.3. Bachelor theses shall be written individually.
- 10.4. Bachelor theses shall be written in the standard Lithuanian language, unless the study programme is conducted in English or the supervisor is a foreign lecturer. For the possibility to prepare bachelor thesis in English, when the study programme is conducted in Lithuanian, the student must apply to the relevant SPC with a motivated application, certified by the signature of the assigned supervisor. The student will be informed about the decision of the SPC by e-mail at the student’s VU email address within 5 working days of receipt of the application.
- 10.5. Within 2 weeks of the approval of the bachelor theses topics and the assignment of the supervisor, the student must contact the designated supervisor and discuss the course of writing the bachelor thesis. The student shall periodically consult the supervisor according to a mutually agreed schedule. Consultations can also take place remotely using remote communication tools. Consulting hours allocated by the supervisor are indicated on the FEBA website <https://tvarkarasciai.vu.lt/ef/>.
- 10.6. The student shall report on each of the stages of the bachelor thesis preparation in accordance with the procedure established by the supervisor. A draft version of the bachelor thesis must be submitted to the supervisor no later than 4 weeks before the date of registration of the bachelor thesis.

11. Submission of Bachelor Theses for Evaluation and Defence.

- 11.1. Students to be allowed to participate in the final stage of studies, must have:
 - 11.1.1. completed the entire study programme and have no outstanding debts and/or academic debts;
 - 11.1.2. fulfilled all financial obligations to the university;
 - 11.1.3. submitted the bachelor thesis by the deadlines.
- 11.2. The final version of the bachelor thesis shall be submitted to the supervisor for assessment at least 15 working days before the date of the defence. After the supervisor confirms that the work is properly prepared and meets the “Methodological Requirements for the Preparation of Course Papers and Bachelor Theses at VU FEBA”, the student must upload the bachelor thesis and its metadata (summaries in Lithuanian and English) to VUSIS no later than 12 working days before the defence of the bachelor thesis. The bachelor thesis not uploaded to VUSIS cannot be registered, defended and evaluated. The bachelor thesis uploaded to VUSIS cannot be edited.
- 11.3. The supervisor checks the thesis in the EPAS system and prepares a Plagiarism Verification Certificate (see Annex 1) within 2 working days before making a decision on the suitability of the bachelor thesis for defence. The supervisor who decides that the bachelor thesis is defensible confirms this by signing on the printed bachelor thesis title page. In the event of the supervisor’s departure or in the event of his/her illness, the bachelor thesis shall be signed by the Chairman of the SPC upon receipt of all information related to the eligibility of bachelor thesis sent by the supervisor.
- 11.4. No later than 10 working days before the defence date, the student shall bring to the SPC (branch) administrator a printed, bound copy of the bachelor thesis signed by the student and his/her supervisor, a Plagiarism Verification Certificate prepared by the supervisor (see Annex 1), and a student-signed Warranty (see Annex 2). Upon receipt of the required documents, the bachelor thesis is registered.

- 11.5. When submitting a bachelor thesis prepared on the basis of an article (see “Methodological Requirements for the Preparation of Course Papers and Bachelor Theses at VU FEBA”), the student must inform the SPC and the Chairman of the Defence Commission and provide evidence that his/her scientific article has been accepted or already published in a peer-reviewed international scientific journal. Such work is reviewed, defended, and evaluated in accordance with the same procedure as other bachelor theses.
- 11.6. If the supervisor decides that the bachelor thesis is improperly prepared and/or prepared without the supervisor’s guidance, therefore cannot be defended, the supervisor submits to the Defence Commission his/her feedback and arguments as to why the student’s work is not defensible. In this case, the student has the right to apply to the Defence Commission for the permission to defend the bachelor thesis without the permission of the supervisor. The application and his/her bachelor thesis must be submitted by the student to the Defence Commission no later than 2 working days from the supervisor’s decision not to allow the defence of the bachelor thesis. After considering the student’s motives, the Defence Commission, no later than 3 working days after the receipt of the student’s application, shall decide whether to allow the student to defend the bachelor thesis. The student will receive an e-mail from the University about the decision of the Defence Commission to the student’s university e-mail address within 1 working day from the receipt of the decision of the Commission.
- 11.7. The Chairman of the SPC and/or the Chairman of the Defence Commission shall provide for reviewers and opponents of the bachelor thesis. No later than 5 working days before the defence date, the SPC (branch) administrator sends the students’ works to the reviewers and opponents who shall carry out the evaluation of bachelor theses. The reviewer submits his/her review to the SPC (branch) administrator no later than within 2 working days before the defence date (see Annex 3). The bachelor thesis review shall be written in the language the study programme is delivered.
- 11.8. The bachelor thesis review shall be sent by the SPC (branch) administrator to the student’s e-mail provided by the university no later than 1 working day before the meeting of the Defence Commission at which the bachelor thesis will be defended.
- 11.9. If a case of plagiarism is identified by the supervisor, reviewer or the Defence Commission, the bachelor thesis may not be defended, assessed and made public, and the student will be given a grade “Not allowed to defend”. The person who detected the plagiarism in writing or by e-mail informs the Dean of VU FEBA accordingly by submitting a summary and a statement from the EPAS system. The student is subject to the penalty provided for in the Study Regulations of Vilnius University³.

12. Defence and Evaluation of Bachelor Theses

- 12.1. The Chairman of the SPC and/or the research departments of the faculty supervising the branches of the study programme set the dates for the defence of the bachelor thesis and form the Defence Commission. The dates of the defence and the composition of the commission are approved by the Rector on the basis of the order of the Dean of VU FEBA. The Defence Commission includes lecturers and/or faculty researchers of the respective field of study, as well as a representative of an external institution/organisation. Students are informed about the bachelor thesis defence dates by the SPC (branch) administrators. Dates for the defence of bachelor theses are also provided in the timetable of VU FEBA.
- 12.2. The defence of the bachelor thesis is public (except closed bachelor thesis defences) and takes place at the meeting of the Defence Commission in accordance with the procedure established in this Description. At the request of the supervisor or the Chairman of the SPC or the institution where the work was prepared, the bachelor thesis may be defended in a closed meeting of the Defence Commission unless the bachelor thesis results are to be made public. An institution requesting a closed defence shall apply in writing to the Dean of VU FEBA no later than one month before the date of the bachelor thesis defence provided for in the respective study programme. The Commission then shall announce part of the meeting as close.
- 12.3. Preparation of presentation for the bachelor thesis defence:
 - 12.3.1. For the bachelor thesis defence, the student must prepare a presentation (e.g. on *MS PowerPoint*). The official University slide template is recommended which can be found here: <https://www.vu.lt/apiemus/vu-atributika> or <https://www.vu.lt/en/about-vu/vu-brand-style-guidelines>.

³ https://www.vu.lt/site_files/VU_studiju_nuostatai_suvestin%C4%97_redakcija_nuo_2018-09-25.pdf;
https://www.vu.lt/site_files/Studies/Study_regulations/Study_regulations_of_VU.pdf

The student must briefly present his/her work: state the problem, aim, objectives, discuss the applied methods and their reliability, reveal the results of empirical research, introduce the conclusions, provide and justify recommendations.

12.3.2. It is recommended to prepare about 10-12 slides (text, tables, figures – only what is presented in the bachelor thesis), for example: topic, author, supervisor of the bachelor thesis (slide 1); relevance and problem of the bachelor thesis (slide 2); aim and objectives of the bachelor thesis (slide 3); literature analysis (slides 4-5); aim, objectives, methods of the research (slide 6); justification of the research sample (slide 7); research results (slides 8-10); conclusions and suggestions (slides 11-12). The slides delivering a presentation do not have to contain a lot of text, it is not advisable to choose a small font, it is better not to put several figures, tables, etc. in one slide.

12.3.3. Before the defence session begins, the presentation shall be uploaded to the computer available in the room where the bachelor thesis is defended. Students are advised to check whether the presentations will open or whether the slide design will allow good visibility of the text, figures and tables.

12.4. Defence of the bachelor thesis:

12.4.1 The Chairman of the Defence Commission opens the defence meeting and presents the defence procedure. During the defence hearing, the Chairman of the Defence Commission invites students to defend their bachelor theses by introducing the name of the bachelor thesis being defended. The topic of the work that has already been approved cannot be questioned during the defence.

12.4.2 The defence of the bachelor thesis takes place in the language of the study programme in which the student is studying. The bachelor thesis presentation delivered by the student should not exceed 10 min. If a student exceeds the time assigned for the bachelor thesis presentation, the Chairman of the Defence Commission has the right to terminate the presentation of the work after giving a warning remark.

12.4.3 After the student's presentation, the reviewer provides his or her opinion on the student's bachelor thesis. If the reviewer is not involved in the defence, his review is read by the bachelor thesis opponent. After the student answers the comments and questions raised in the review, a discussion with the student shall be held and questions raised by the bachelor thesis opponent. After the student answers the opponent's questions, the members of the Defence Commission or other persons participating in the defence may ask questions related to the published information.

12.4.4 During the public defence of the bachelor thesis, the recording of the student's defence language may be carried out by recording devices, after the persons involved in the defence had been informed accordingly. Students and/or other persons participating in the defence who wish to make or receive a record of the defence of the bachelor theses must obtain the permission of the Defence Commission.

12.4.5 The bachelor thesis can also be defended by remote means of communication.

12.5. Assessment of the bachelor thesis:

12.5.1. Bachelor theses are evaluated in a closed meeting of the Defence Commission after completing the defence of all the bachelor theses of that day (or in cases where several defence streams are scheduled on the same day, after completing the defence of all the bachelor theses during a separate meeting).

12.5.2. The Defence Commission, when assessing the defence of students' bachelor theses, follows this Description (see Annex 5, the scale and criteria for the evaluation of course papers and bachelor theses), as well as the course unit description of the relevant study programme, the criteria specified in the evaluation procedure included in the "Methodological Requirements for the Preparation of Course Papers and Bachelor Thesis set forth by VU FEBA" and the "Procedure for the Assessment of Students' Learning Outcomes of VU".

12.5.3. The Defence Commission, when assessing the student's bachelor thesis, takes into account the assessment of the bachelor thesis proposed by the reviewer and the defence of the bachelor thesis, i. e. the student's answers to the questions of the reviewer, opponent, members of the commission and other persons who participated in the public defence of the bachelor thesis.

- 12.5.4. The decision on the assessment of the bachelor thesis is made by the Defence Commission collegially. A member of the commission who did not take part in the defence of a particular bachelor thesis does not evaluate that work. In the absence of consensus, the decision on the final assessment of the bachelor thesis shall be taken by the Defence Commission by voting. The decision shall be taken by simple majority. If the opinions of the members of the Defence Commission regarding the assessment of the bachelor thesis are evenly distributed, the assessment of the bachelor thesis shall be determined by the assessment proposed by the Chairman of the Defence Commission.
- 12.5.5. If the supervisor is a member of the Defence Commission, he or she shall not vote in deciding on the final assessment of the bachelor thesis of the student under his or her supervision. In cases where the Chairman of the Defence Commission is unable to vote because the bachelor thesis of the student under his supervision is being evaluated and the opinions of the members of the Defence Commission on the bachelor thesis evaluation are evenly distributed, the evaluation is determined by the evaluation proposed by the Vice-Chairman of the Commission elected by voting.
- 12.5.6. After the student has successfully defended the bachelor thesis, the Chairman of the Defence Commission completes a record indicating the bachelor thesis grading, its eLABa storage access status, and the Embargo period (if any). The list shall be signed by all members of the Commission. On the basis of the transcript, a bachelor thesis defence protocol shall be formed in VUSIS, in which the student is awarded the appropriate degree and/or qualification provided for in the study programme description.
- 12.5.7. Student assessments are not made public, information on the assessment of each bachelor thesis is provided by the Chairman of the Defence Commission to each student individually and/or students have access to the bachelor thesis assessment in the VUSIS system where the assessment is entered no later than the day after the defence takes place.
- 12.6. The Commission's decision on the assessment of the bachelor thesis is final and not subject to appeal. For procedural violations of the bachelor thesis defence that may have affected his/her assessment, the student has the right to apply to the VU FEBA Dispute Committee and submit an appeal in accordance with the VU FEBA Dispute Committee regulations no later than the next working day after the defence takes place. The appeal must identify the specific breach of the bachelor thesis defence procedure and the circumstances confirming the existence of the breach.
- 12.7. A student who has not defended the bachelor thesis within the allocated time or failed to defend his/her bachelor thesis shall be expelled from the University for failure. The second defence of the bachelor thesis is allowed only after the student resumes studies, no earlier than in the next academic year. If the bachelor thesis prepared on the same topic is not defended for the second time, the work is prepared on another topic. A student who resumes his/her studies after he/she had been removed from the student lists due to a detected plagiarism must write the bachelor thesis on a new topic.

13. Storage and Publicity of Bachelor Theses

- 13.1. The storage of written academic papers in VUSIS is regulated by the "Description of the Procedure for the Administration of Written Academic Papers in the Study Information System of Vilnius University".
- 13.2. All the defended bachelor theses must be made public in eLABa, unless the Defence Commission decides not to publish the bachelor thesis in eLABa. A decision not to publish a bachelor thesis in eLABa can be made if:
 - 13.2.1. The bachelor thesis uses confidential information as defined in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania.
 - 13.2.2. Uploading and/or making public the bachelor thesis would infringe the rights of the student, eLABa manager (s) or those of other copyright holders.
 - 13.2.3. Uploading and/or publishing the bachelor thesis would violate the data subjects' right to privacy.
 - 13.2.4. The student requests to establish an Embargo period in the Guarantee.

CHAPTER IV

PROCEDURE FOR PREPARATION, DEFENCE, EVALUATION AND STORAGE OF MASTER THESES

14. Selection and Approval of Topics for Master Theses

- 14.1. The Final Master thesis is usually awarded 30 credits from the total volume of master degree programmes and is divided proportionally into three academic papers: Research project 1, Research project 2 and Master thesis. They are written during the semesters specified in the plan of the study programme.
- 14.2. Topics for the master theses are offered to SPC by the lecturers and/or researchers working in the field of the study programme. The SPC approves the list of proposed master theses topics in the minutes of the meeting. The SPC administrator provides the master students with an approved list of master theses topics. Master students may also offer the preferred topics for writing master theses. The master student must adjust the topic proposed by him/her with the potential supervisor of the master thesis (hereinafter – the supervisor).
- 14.3. No later than the first 2 weeks of September, master students shall choose topics for the master theses and the supervisors shall be assigned to them. For important reasons, during the course of writing the master thesis, a student may request the SPC to change the supervisor, but such a change takes into account the academic workload of the master thesis supervisors.
- 14.4. No later than 1 month before the master thesis registration date, the master students shall submit to the SPC administrator the final title of the master thesis, which together with the list of the supervisors shall be entered into VUSIS and approved by the order of the Dean of VU FEBA.

15. Preparation of Master Theses

- 15.1. Research project 1, Research project 2 and master thesis shall be prepared in accordance with this "Description and the Methodological Requirements for Master Thesis of the VU FEBA". These documents are published on the VU FEBA website www.evaf.vu.lt and <https://www.evaf.vu.lt/en/>.
- 15.2. Seminars can be organized to facilitate the preparation of Research project 1 and Master thesis, and methodological material is placed in the VLE.
- 15.3. Master students shall write the master thesis individually.
- 15.4. Master theses shall be written in the standard Lithuanian language, unless the study programme is conducted in English or the supervisor is a foreign lecturer. In terms of the possibility to prepare the master thesis in English, when the study programme is conducted in Lithuanian, the master student must apply to the relevant SPC with a motivated application, approved by the signature of the appointed supervisor. The master student will be notified about the decision of the SPC by an e-mail at the student's university email address within 5 working days of the receipt of the request.
- 15.5. Master students consult the master thesis supervisor on a regular basis according to a mutually agreed schedule. Consultations can also take place remotely using means of remote communication. The supervisor's consulting hours are indicated on the FEBA website <https://tvarkarasciai.vu.lt/ef/>.
- 15.6. No later than during the first month of the semester in which Research project 1 is written, the master student and the supervisor shall finally agree on the master thesis topic, title of Research project 1, as well as identify the scientific problem, choose the field of the research, make a preliminary plan for writing the whole academic paper.
- 15.7. No later than the first month of the semester in which Research project 2 is written, the master student shall agree with the supervisor on the title of Research project 2 and discuss the research methods and methodology.
- 15.8. The master student shall report on each of the stages of Research project 1, Research project 2 and Master thesis preparation in accordance with the procedure established by the supervisor. Draft versions of Research project 1 and Research project 2 must be submitted to the supervisor no later than 3 weeks before the date of registration of the academic paper and master thesis no later than 4 weeks before the date of registration of the academic paper.

16. Submission of Master Theses for Evaluation and Defence

- 16.1. Research project 1 and Research project 2 must be finalized and submitted to the supervisor for review no later than 10 days before their registration date.
- 16.2. Research project 1 and Research project 2 shall be signed by the supervisor and submitted to the SPC administrator for registration no later than 5 working days before the date of the defence.
- 16.3. The SPC administrator sends the thesis to the reviewer no later than within 5 working days before the defence of Research project 1 and Research project 2. The reviewer submits a review of the relevant work no later than 2 working days before the defence takes place. For the preparation of Research project 1 and Research project 2, the Master thesis review form (see Annex 4) can be used, in which only the criteria relevant to a specific final thesis project are assessed.
- 16.4. Access to the final stage of studies is allowed to those master students who:
 - 16.4.1. Have completed the entire study programme and have no debts and/or academic debts.
 - 16.4.2. Have fulfilled all financial obligations to the university.
 - 16.4.3. Submitted their master theses by the deadline.
- 16.5. The final version of the master thesis shall be submitted to the supervisor for assessment at least 15 working days before the date of the defence. After the supervisor confirms that the master thesis has been prepared properly and meets the "Methodological requirements of the Master Thesis of VU FEBA", the master student must upload the master thesis and its metadata (summaries in Lithuanian and English) to VUSIS no later than 12 working days before the defence. The master theses not uploaded to VUSIS cannot be registered, defended or evaluated. The work uploaded to VUSIS cannot be edited.
- 16.6. Before deciding on the suitability of the master thesis for defence, the supervisor checks it in the EPAS system and prepares a Plagiarism Verification Certificate (see Annex 1). The supervisor who decides that the master thesis is defensible confirms this by signing the printed title page of master thesis. In the absence of the supervisor or in case of his illness, the master thesis shall be signed by the Chairman of the SPC upon the receipt of all information in line with the compliance of master thesis to the requirements from the supervisor.
- 16.7. No later than 10 working days before the date of defence, the master student shall bring to the SPC administrator a printed, bound copy of the master thesis signed by the master student and his/her supervisor, a Plagiarism Verification Certificate prepared by the supervisor (see Annex 1). Upon the receipt of the required documents, the work shall be registered.
- 16.8. If the supervisor decides that the master thesis has not been prepared properly and/or has been prepared without the supervisor's guidance and cannot be defended, the supervisor submits his/her feedback and arguments to the Defence Commission as to why the master thesis is not defensible. The master student has the right to apply to the Defence Commission with a request to allow the defence of the master thesis without the permission of the supervisor. The master student must submit the application and the master thesis to the Defence Commission no later than 2 working days from the date of the supervisor's decision not to allow the defence of the master thesis. After considering the motives of the master student, the Defence Commission shall decide no later than 3 working days from the receipt of the master student's application whether to allow the master student to defend the master thesis. Within 1 working day of the receipt of the Commission's decision, the master student shall be notified at his/her university e-mail address about the decision of the Defence Commission.
- 16.9. The Chairman of the SPC and/or the Chairman of the Defence Commission assigns the reviewers and opponents of the master thesis. No later than 5 working days before the date of the defence, the SPC administrator sends the master theses to the reviewers and opponents for evaluation. The reviewer submits his/her review to the SPC administrator no later than 2 working days before the defence date (see Annex 4). The master thesis review shall be written in the language of the study programme. No later than 1 working day before the meeting of the Defence Commission, where the master thesis will be defended, the SPC administrator shall send a review of the master thesis (without the reviewer's questions for defence) to the master student at his/her university e-mail address.
- 16.10. If the supervisor, reviewer or the Defence Commission identifies a case of plagiarism, the master thesis can not be defended, assessed and made public, then the student will be given a grade "Not allowed to

defend". The person who detected the plagiarism in writing or by e-mail informs the Dean of VU FEBA, submitting both the summary and the spreadsheet from the EPAS system. The student is subject to the penalty provided for in the Study Regulations of Vilnius University⁴.

17. Defence and Evaluation of Master Theses

- 17.1. The Chairman of the SPC shall set the dates for the defence of the master thesis and form the Defence Commission. They shall be approved by the Rector on the basis of the Order of the Dean of VU FEBA. The Defence Commission shall include lecturers and/or researchers of the faculty working in the field of the respective study programme, as well as a representative of an external institution/organisation. The master students shall be informed about the master theses defence dates by the SPC administrators. The dates for the defence of master theses are provided in the VU FEBA schedule.
- 17.2. The defence of the master thesis shall be public (except the closed mode of master thesis defence) and takes place at the meeting of the Defence Commission in accordance with the procedure established in this Description. At the request of the supervisor, the Chairman of the SPC or the institution where the work was prepared, the master thesis may, if its results are not made public, be defended in a closed meeting of the Defence Commission. The institution requesting closed defence shall apply in writing to the Dean of VU FEBA no later than one month before the date of the master thesis defence specified in the respective study programme. The Commission shall announce part of the session to be close.
- 17.3. During the public defence of the master thesis, the language of the master student during the master thesis defence procedure may be recorded by means of recording, after the persons participating in the defence had been informed accordingly. Students and/or other persons participating in the defence who wish to make or receive a record of the defence of works must obtain the permission of the Defence Commission.
- 17.4. The master thesis can also be defended by remote means of communication.
- 17.5. The Chairman of the Defence Commission shall open the defence meeting and present the defence procedure. At the defence meeting, the Chairman of the Defence Commission shall invite the master students to defend their master theses by presenting the title of the master thesis to be defended. During the defence, the already approved topic of the work cannot be discussed.
- 17.6. After informing the persons participating in the defence, the student's speech used during his/her public defence of the master thesis may be recorded by recording devices. Students and/or other persons participating in the defence who wish to make or receive a record of the defence of master theses must obtain the permission of the Defence Commission. The defence of the master thesis takes place in the language of the study programme in which the student is studying. During the defence, the master student shall briefly present the master thesis, by indicating the research problem, goal, objectives, briefly describing the object, the results obtained, the methods used, introducing the conclusions and justifying them, providing recommendations. The delivery of the master thesis should not exceed 12 minutes. If the master student exceeds the time assigned for the master thesis presentation, the Chairman of the Defence Commission has the right to terminate the presentation of the master thesis after giving a warning remark.
- 17.7. After the master student delivers his/her presentation, the reviewer gives his/her opinion on the student's master thesis. If the reviewer is not involved in the defence, his/her review is read by the master thesis opponent. After the master student answers the comments and questions raised in the review, the discussion with the student is led and the questions are raised by the opponent of the master thesis. After the master student answers the opponent's questions, the members of the Defence Commission or other persons participating in the defence may ask questions related to the information presented during the defence.
- 17.8. Master theses shall be evaluated in a closed commission meeting at the end of the defence of all the master theses of that day (or at the end of the defence of all the master theses of a separate meeting when several defence streams are scheduled on the same day).
- 17.9. When assessing the defence of master theses, the Defence Commission follows this Description (see Annex 6, Assessment Scale and Criteria for Master Theses), as well as the relevant course unit description

⁴ https://www.vu.lt/site_files/VU_studiju_nuostatai_suvestin%C4%97_redakcija_nuo_2018-09-25.pdf;
https://www.vu.lt/site_files/Studies/Study_regulations/Study_regulations_of_VU.pdf

of the study programme, based on the “Methodological Requirements for Master Thesis at VU FEBA” and the “Procedure for the Assessment of Students’ Learning Outcomes of Vilnius University”.

- 17.10. When evaluating the master student’s theses, the Defence Commission takes into account the evaluation of the work proposed by the reviewer and the defence of the work, i. e. the answers of the master student to the questions of the reviewer, opponent, members of the Commission and other persons involved in the public defence of the master thesis.
- 17.11. The decision on the evaluation of the master thesis shall be made by the Defence Commission collegially. A member of the Commission who did not participate in the defence of a particular master thesis does not evaluate that master thesis. In the absence of consensus, the decision on the final assessment of the master thesis shall be taken by the Defence Commission by voting. The decision shall be taken by simple majority. If the opinions of the members of the Defence Commission regarding the evaluation of the master thesis are evenly distributed, the evaluation of the master thesis shall be determined by the evaluation proposed by the Chairman of the Defence Commission.
- 17.12. If the supervisor of the master thesis is a member of the Defence Commission, he/she shall not vote to make a decision on the final assessment of the master thesis of the master student under his/her supervision. In cases where the Chairman of the Defence Commission is unable to vote because the evaluation concerns the master thesis of the master student who is under his/her supervision, or his/her and the opinions members of the Defence Commission on the evaluation of master thesis are evenly distributed, the evaluation is determined by the evaluation proposed by the Vice-Chairman of the Commission elected by the members of the Defence Commission.
- 17.13. After the Master student has successfully defended the master thesis, the Chairman of the Defence Commission fills in a form indicating the evaluation of the master thesis, its eLABa storage access status and the Embargo period (if any). The transcript shall be signed by all members of the Commission. On the basis of the transcript, the master thesis defence protocol shall be formed in VUSIS, in which the master student is awarded the appropriate degree and/or qualification, as specified in the study programme description.
- 17.14. The evaluations of master students shall not be made public, information about the evaluation of each master thesis is provided by the Chairman of the Defence Commission to each master student separately and/or master students can get familiar with the master thesis evaluation in VUSIS system, where the evaluation shall be entered no later than the day after the defence.
- 17.15. The Commission’s decision on the assessment of the master thesis is final and not subject to appeal. Regarding procedural violations of the master thesis defence, which may have affected the assessment of master thesis, the master student has the right to apply to the VU FEBA Dispute Committee and submit an appeal in accordance with the VU FEBA Dispute Committee regulations no later than the next working day after the defence. The appeal must identify the specific violation of the master thesis defence procedure and the circumstances confirming the fact of the violation.
- 17.16. A student who has not defended the master thesis within the assigned time or failed to defend the master thesis will be expelled from the University for failure. Master students shall be allowed to defend the master thesis for the second time only after the resumption of studies, no earlier than in the next academic year. If the master thesis prepared on the same topic is not defended for the second time, the master thesis shall be prepared on another topic. A master student who has been removed from the student lists as a result of a detected plagiarism, after resuming his/her studies, must write the master thesis on a new topic.

18. Storage and Publicity of Master Theses

- 18.1. The storage of the written academic papers in VUSIS is regulated by the “Description of the Procedure for the Administration of the Written Academic Papers in the Study Information System of Vilnius University”.
- 18.2. All the defended master theses must be made public in eLABa, unless the Defence Commission decides not to publish master theses in eLABa. A decision not to publish a master thesis in eLABa can be made if:
 - 18.2.1. The master thesis uses confidential information as defined in accordance with the procedure provided for in the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.
 - 18.2.2. Uploading the master thesis and/or making it public would infringe the rights of the student, eLABa manager (s) or other copyright holders.

18.2.3. Uploading the storage of the master thesis and/or making it public would violate the rights of data subjects to privacy.

18.2.4. The student requests an Embargo period in the Guarantee.

PLAGIARISM VERIFICATION CERTIFICATE

Author _____

Title of the Thesis _____

Supervisor _____

Plagiarism check (EPS) report _____

Supervisor's conclusion (if the plagiarism rating is >0 percent)

Supervisor's signature _____

Date

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

**WARRANTY
for Vilnius University Student Thesis**

Vardas, pavardė:

Name, Surname:

Padalinys:

Academic unit:

Studijų programa:

Study programme:

Darbo pavadinimas:

Topic of the Thesis:

Darbo tipas:

Type of the Thesis:

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

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

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

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

Aš, [Vardas Pavardė], patvirtinu (pažymėti)

I, [Name Surname], confirm (check)

Patvirtinu, kad baigiamasis darbas yra pateiktas į Vilniaus universiteto studijų informacinę sistemą.

I declare that this Thesis is submitted to the Vilnius University Study Information System.

(vardas, pavardė / name,
surname)

(parašas / signature)

(data / date)

Embargo laikotarpis / Embargo period

Prašau nustatyti šiam baigiamajam darbui toliau nurodytos trukmės embargo laikotarpį:

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

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

Embargo laikotarpis nereikalingas / no embargo requested.

Embargo laikotarpio nustatymo priežastis / a reason for an embargo period:

.....

(vardas, pavardė / name,
surname)

(parašas / signature)

(data / date)

Kamieninio akademinio padalinio (šakinio akademinio padalinio) patvirtinimas, kad atspausdintas baigiamasis darbas buvo pateiktas ir užregistruotas: / Confirmed by the main academic unit (branch academic unit) that the printed thesis has been submitted and registered:

(vardas, pavardė/name, surname)

(parašas/signature)

(data/date)

BACHELOR THESIS REVIEW

Author of the Bachelor Thesis: _____

Title of the Bachelor Thesis: _____

Point-rated evaluation of criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Formulation and achievement of the aim and objectives of the Thesis										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
2. Compliance of the Thesis content and structure to the topic										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
3. Logical consistency of writing										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
4. Explicitness of literature analysis										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
5. Quality of the analysis of research data										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
6. Validity of conclusions and recommendations										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
7. Language and style, technical design used in the Thesis										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										

Final conclusion and evaluation provided by the reviewer

Questions to be raised during the defence (2-3 questions):

Reviewer's name, surname _____

Signature _____

Date _____

MASTER THESIS REVIEW

Author of the Master Thesis: _____

Title of the Master Thesis: _____

Point-rated evaluation of criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Formulation and achievement of the aim and objectives of the Thesis										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
2. Compliance of the Thesis content and structure to the topic										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
3. Logical consistency of writing										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
4. Explicitness of literature analysis										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
5. Appropriateness of research methods										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
6. Quality of the analysis of research data										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
7. The value of the author's "product", the theoretical and / or applied benefits of the Thesis										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
8. Validity of conclusions and recommendations										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										
9. Language and style, technical design used in the Thesis										
<i>If you rate the criterion less than 9 points, please provide your arguments</i>										

Final conclusion and evaluation provided by the reviewer

Questions to be raised during the defence (2-3 questions):

Reviewer's name, surname _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Annex 5. Assessment Scale and Criteria for Course Papers and Bachelor Theses

Pass/Fail system	Assessment in points	Assessment criteria
Pass	Excellent (10) Rounding 9.5–10	Excellent, outstanding knowledge and skills. The topic has been examined in detail. The work is original, impeccable in discipline-related, methodological and technical terms. Significant research results have been achieved. High level of defence, demonstration of deep knowledge of the field.
	Very good (9) Rounding 8.5–9.4	Strong, good knowledge and skills. The topic has been examined in detail. The work is original, but has insignificant discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings and inaccuracies. Significant research results have been achieved. The defence demonstrates very good knowledge of the field, but there are insignificant shortcomings in the defence.
	Good (8) Rounding 7.5–8.4	Knowledge and skills are above the average. The topic has been examined well and qualitatively, but not deeply enough, there is a noticeable lack of the latest theoretical and practical approaches. The work has discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings. The defence has demonstrated good knowledge of the field, but no comprehensive answers are received to the questions given.
	Highly satisfactory (7) Rounding 6.5–7.4	Average knowledge and skills, there are significant errors. The topic has been examined, theoretical analysis and adequate research have been performed, but there is a lack of methodological justification, integrity of the work, relevance of the topic. Not all the objectives are sufficiently developed, the results lack completeness. The work has discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings. Mid-level knowledge in the field has been demonstrated in the defence.
	Satisfactory (6) Rounding 5.5–6.4	Knowledge and abilities (skills) are worse than average, there are mistakes. The topic has been examined, but the work is incomplete, there is a lack of analysis and there are elements of descriptive work. The work lacks integrity, the relationship between the theoretical and research parts. The research has not been formulated correctly enough, there are methodological shortcomings, research methods are not properly applied. The objectives of the work are not sufficiently developed, not all the results of the work correspond to the aim and the problem of the work. The work has significant discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings. The defence demonstrates a significant lack of knowledge in the field.
	Sufficient (5) Rounding 4.5–5.4	Knowledge and abilities (skills) meet the minimum requirements. The problem selected is scientific/applied, but it has received minimal analysis. The work is dominated by descriptive text. The work has significant methodological shortcomings, the aim and problem of the work are not formulated correctly, there is no adequate theoretical analysis, research methods are not properly applied. The objectives of the work are insufficiently developed, the results of the work do not sufficiently correspond to the aim and problem of the work. There are significant discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings. The defence demonstrates weak knowledge of the field.
	Fail	Insufficient (1, 2, 3, 4) Rounding 1–4.4

Annex 6. Assessment Scale and Criteria for Master Theses

Pass/Fail system	Assessment in points	Assessment criteria
Pass	Excellent (10) Rounding 9.5–10	Excellent, outstanding knowledge and skills. The original scientific/applied research, the problem under analysis is new, unexplored, the findings are original and relevant from the point of view of theory and/or practice. The topic has been examined in detail; innovativeness, creativity, excellent knowledge, appropriate theoretical models and research methods are applied. The work is impeccable in discipline-related, methodological and technical terms. High level of defence, demonstration of deep knowledge of the field. The work can be recommended for publication in a scientific journal.
	Very good (9) Rounding 8.5–9.4	Strong, good knowledge and skills. The original scientific/applied research, the problem under analysis is new, unexplored, the findings are original and relevant from the point of view of theory and/or practice. The topic has been examined in detail, innovativeness, creativity, very good knowledge, appropriate theoretical models and research methods are applied. The work has insignificant discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings and inaccuracies. The defence demonstrates very good knowledge of the field, but there are insignificant shortcomings in the defence.
	Good (8) Rounding 7.5–8.4	Knowledge and skills are above the average. A comprehensive scientific/ applied research, the problem under analysis is acute, the outcomes meet the aims and objectives. The topic has been examined well and qualitatively, but not deeply enough; there is a noticeable lack of the latest theoretical and practical approaches. Appropriate theoretical models and research methods are applied; the work has discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings. The defence has demonstrated good knowledge of the field, but no comprehensive answers are received to the questions given.
	Highly satisfactory (7) Rounding 6.5–7.4	Average knowledge and skills, there are significant errors. The topic has been examined, theoretical analysis and adequate research have been performed, but there is a lack of methodological justification, integrity of the work, relevance of the topic. Not all the objectives are sufficiently developed, the results lack completeness. The work has discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings. Mid-level knowledge in the field has been demonstrated in the defence.
	Satisfactory (6) Rounding 5.5–6.4	Knowledge and abilities (skills) are worse than average, there are mistakes. The topic has been examined, but the work is incomplete, has no scientific value, there is a lack of analysis and there are elements of descriptive work. The work lacks integrity, the relationship between the theoretical and research parts. The research has not been formulated correctly enough, there are methodological shortcomings, research methods are not properly applied. The objectives of the work are not sufficiently developed, not all the results of the work correspond to the aim and the problem of the work. The work has significant discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings. The defence demonstrates a significant lack of knowledge in the field.
	Sufficient (5) Rounding 4.5–5.4	Knowledge and abilities (skills) meet the minimum requirements. The work is dominated by descriptive text. The work has significant methodological shortcomings, the aim and problem of the work are not formulated correctly, there is no adequate theoretical analysis, research methods are not properly applied. The objectives of the work are insufficiently developed, the results of the work do not sufficiently correspond to the aim and problem of the work. There are significant discipline-related, methodological and/or technical shortcomings. The defence demonstrates weak knowledge of the field.
Fail	Insufficient	Minimum requirements not met.

	(1, 2, 3, 4) Rounding 1-4.4	The work does not clearly state the problem and/or aim of the work. The content of the work does not correspond to the title and/or aim of the work. Compilational elements of plagiarism are visible in the work. There are many significant errors, factual, methodological and/or technical shortcomings. During the defence, the questions are not answered; a fundamental lack of knowledge in the field is demonstrated.
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