VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

METHODOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER THESIS

For Master degree students of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

Vilnius, 2021

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FOREWORD

The publication outlines the main requirements for the preparation and defence of Master thesis at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA) of Vilnius University. It covers the entire process, from the thesis topic selection and the preparation of the structural parts to the technical formatting, defence and evaluation of the thesis. Therefore, it is recommended to read the requirements carefully from start to finish.

Master thesis is an essential element of the second cycle of studies. It is a *systematic*, demanding and time-consuming *process* that begins at the start of the first semester and ends with its defence at the end of the studies. In order to achieve successful outcomes, it is important to work consistently and in accordance with the thesis preparation plan agreed upon, in advance, in close cooperation with the thesis supervisor, to progressively move on in line with the objective of the thesis and to develop the idea of the research by reviewing, analysing, and critically evaluating scientific literature; by creating the methodology for empirical research and examining and interpreting the data obtained on the basis of the research carried out. Master thesis is an original *scientific* work the content of which reflects the author's ability to intelligently and creatively integrate theoretical knowledge with empirical analytical skills by adding new ideas and insights to the research field.

The methodological requirements for Master thesis have been prepared on the basis of the following documents:

- Order No V-826 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 3 June 2010 "On the Approval of the Descriptor of General Requirements for Master Study Programmes";

- Order No. V-793 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 July 2015 "On the Approval of the Descriptor of the Study Field of Economics";

- Order No. V-817 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 July 2015 "On the Approval of the Descriptor of the Study Field of Finance";

- Order No. V-818 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 July 2015 "On the Approval of the Descriptor of the Study Field of Accounting";

- Order No. 2294 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 31 July 2008 "On the Approval of Regulation of the Study Field of Management and Business Administration";

- Order No. V-812 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 July 2015 "On the Approval of the Descriptor of the Field of Statistical Studies";

- Study Regulations for Vilnius University approved by the VU Senate Commission, Resolution No. SK-2012-12-8 of 21 June 2012; revised and amended by the VU Senate, Resolution No. S-2018-5-2 of 22 May 2018;

- Study Program Regulations for Vilnius University approved by the VU Senate Commission, Resolution No. SK-2013-12-14 of 24 October 2013;

- Code of Academic Ethics for Vilnius University, approved by VU Senate, Resolution No. S-2018-4-4 of 17 April 2018;

- Regulations for the Preparation, Defence and Accumulation of Written Papers of Vilnius University Students, approved by the VU Senate Resolution No. S-2017-12-11 of 19 December 2017;

- Descriptor of the Procedure for the Administration of Written Papers in Vilnius University Study Information System, approved by VU Vice-Rector for Studies, Order No. R-512 of 22 November 2017;

- Vilnius University Study Achievement Assessment Procedure approved by the VU Senate Commission, Resolution No. SK-2012-20-6 of 13 December 2012; revised and amended by the VU Senate, Resolution No. SPN-1 of 22 January 2019;

- Regulations of the Dispute Settlement Commission of the Vilnius University Core Academic Subdivision, approved by the VU Senate Resolution No. S-2014-10-2 of 4 December 2014; revised and amended by the VU Senate, Resolution No. SPN-27 of 16 April 2019;

- Regulations of the Academic Ethics Commission of the Vilnius University Core Academic Subdivision, approved by the VU Senate, Resolution No. S-2018-4-4 of 17 April 2018;

- Regulations of the Vilnius University Study Programmes Committee approved by the VU Senate Commission, Resolution No. SK-2014-4-1 of 6 March 2014; revised and amended by the VU Senate, Resolution No. S-2017-11-6 of 21 November 2017.

Study programme committee (SPC) may determine additional, study programme-related requirements for Master thesis.

1. AIM OF MASTER THESIS AND SKILLS TO BE DEMONSTRATED

The Master thesis is an independent research study aimed at demonstrating the ability of master degree students to deal with current and important practical and/or scientific issues in a creative, comprehensive, explicit way by taking into account the restrictions triggered by information, time and other factors. The Master thesis must demonstrate the ability to analyse the chosen topic, evaluate previous research work carried out by other scientists, independently study and conduct research, analyse the accumulated data, provide interpretations of the research results, clearly and reasonably formulate the research conclusions and recommendations. The Master thesis must be based on independent scientific research or applied research.

The knowledge and competences to be acquired in master degree studies are specified in Shared "Dublin" Descriptors (2004), The Descriptor of Study Cycles approved by the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania by Order No. V-1012 of 16 November, 2016. More specifically, the knowledge and competences to be developed are described in the Descriptor of the Study Field of Economics (Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, No. V-793 of 23 July 2015) and the Descriptor of the Study Field of Finance of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (Order No V-817 of 23 July 2015), the Descriptor of the Study Field of Accounting (Order of the Ministry of Education and Science, No V-818 of 23 July 2015) and Regulation of the Study Field of Management and Business Administration (Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, No 2294 of 31 July 2008). According to these documents, master students should develop and demonstrate the following skills when writing their Master thesis:

1. Knows and applies the principles of social sciences in order to perceive and evaluate the theoretical and professional performance phenomena of economics and/or management in a complex and systematic manner under conditions of uncertainty;

2. Has acquired knowledge in fundamental and applied research that results in the ability to develop and/or apply original ideas in a research context;

3. Knows the latest model and interdisciplinary research methods, knows their possibilities and limitations;

4. Is able to analyse and critically evaluate economic and/or management ideas, formulate arguments and assumptions, apply models, while conducting applied and interdisciplinary research;

5. Is able to systematise and evaluate information retrieved from a variety of sources in order to carry out research on selected topics;

6. Is able to integrate knowledge, manage complex situations in an innovative way, and make decisions in the absence of complete and defined information;

7. Is able to initiate, organise, independently conduct research, interpret results from national and international perspectives applying an interdisciplinary approach;

8. Is able to solve atypical complex tasks in a new and unfamiliar environment with access to only limited information, to implement innovative methods, harmonise cross-disciplinary knowledge and social responsibility;

9. Is able to apply quantitative and/or qualitative methods of analysis for case studies and evaluation;

10. Is able to communicate effectively, fluently and persuasively with relevant professionals and other stakeholders in writing and orally, in at least one foreign language, and discuss relevant practice and theory issues, including presentation of ideas, issuing reports, consulting, and expert evaluation;

11. Is able to organise and conduct research in both national and international contexts;

12. Is able to make independent decisions in difficult and uncertain situations;

13. Is able to critically evaluate and select the most appropriate national and international sources of information, to ensure confidentiality of information.

The Master thesis differs from Bachelor thesis both in quantitative and qualitative indicators. First of all, the Master thesis is larger in scope. However, the main difference is related to the qualitative parameters: knowledge of the subject and completeness. <u>Under no circumstances can a Master thesis be purely descriptive and reviewable.</u> The Master thesis is a *scientific* work, it must involve more of a personal contribution, more novelty, originality.

The intended <u>scope of the Master thesis</u>, excluding tables, lists of figures and abbreviations, summaries in Lithuanian and foreign languages, list of references and sources and annexes, shall be of **<u>50-70 pages (120,000-160,000 characters without spaces).</u>**

2. STRUCTURE OF MASTER THESIS

The Master thesis consists of the following components: title page, table of contents, list of tables, list of figures, list of abbreviations (if necessary), introduction, analysis of scientific literature, research methodology, analysis of empirical results, conclusions and suggestions, list of references, a summary in a foreign language (in English or in Lithuanian if the Master thesis is written in English), annexes.

The title page is intended to indicate the requisites of VU FEBA, the author and the Master thesis. The title page template is provided in Annex 1.

The table of contents provides the structure of the work, i.e. the Master thesis divided by chapters, subchapters and sections. Numbering shall be done in Arabic numerals. The content includes numbers of the pages of the structural elements of the Master thesis. Summaries, lists of tables and figures, list of abbreviations (if needed), introduction, conclusions and suggestions, list of references and sources in the content are not numbered. A template for the table of contents is provided in Annex 2.

The list of tables (table number and title), **the list of figures** (figure number and title) and, where appropriate, **the list of abbreviations** (glossary) are given below the contents. An alphabetical list of abbreviations is needed when specific terms or abbreviations are abundantly used in the Master thesis. A list of abbreviations is not required when the total number of abbreviations is less than 20 and each repeats less than three times in the text.

Introduction is an important element of the Master thesis and usually lacks appropriate attention. The introduction briefly and concretely describes the following features: the relevance of the topic; level of research of the topic analysed in the thesis; novelty of the Master thesis, problem of the Master thesis; purpose of the Master thesis, tasks; problem solving methods and theoretical and empirical methods applied, structure of the Master thesis; difficulties and limitations, if the author encountered them, while writing the Master thesis.

Relevance of the topic is the importance of the problem under examination in the thesis from a practical and theoretical point of view. From a practical point of view, important topics are related to the social problems of a present-day life which require scientific solutions. Theoretically relevant topics develop or create scientific theories, research methodologies, provide empirical data needed for science.

The level of exploration of the topic under analysis reveals what researchers have already done in addressing the topic chosen by the master student. Discussions on the topic are based on the work of other scholars and show the aspects in which the chosen topic has already been studied. All this information is presented in more detail in the analysis of scientific literature.

The novelty of the Master thesis is its contribution to science, which can be based on new data, scientific literature analysed or systematised on a new basis, a new research methodology developed, new problem-solving ways formulated.

The problem of the Master thesis raises a question that should be answered by the Master thesis.

The aim of the Master thesis must be consistent with the chosen theme of the Master thesis and relate to the problem of the Master thesis. The purpose of the Master thesis can be formulated using the verbs "reveal", "evaluate", "determine".

The objectives of the Master thesis are the steps necessary to achieve the aim of the Master thesis. The objectives show how the aim will be achieved. Usually, to 'reveal' something, you need to systematise, isolate, define, compare, and so on. When formulating the tasks of the work,

it is necessary to divide the process of the achievement of the aim into stages, to consider what partial results will help to achieve the aim of the Master thesis.

The methods deployed by the Master thesis include methods used for the analysis of scientific literature as well as for conducting a research in the empirical part. They should be listed and their choice should be briefly justified.

The description of the structure of the Master thesis should explain the sequence of the sections of the Master thesis and the main issues discussed in them, indicating which section deals with which objective of the Master thesis.

The length of the introduction is 2-3 pages.

The analysis of scientific literature presents the research material collected, analysed and systematised by the master student on the problem under consideration. This chapter should be based on material provided in scientific monographs, scholarly articles, or other scientific sources (textbooks or popular science publications are not desirable). The aim of the analysis of scientific literature is to create a theoretical basis for practical solution of the problem. The analysis of the scientific literature highlights the fundamental theoretical approaches that serve as the basis for the Master thesis, examines the studies of other authors on similar topics, systematises the opinions of various scholars, points out differences in previous research, and expresses a critical personal opinion with respect to one or another opinion or model. The reproduction and rephrasing of other sources should be avoided when writing the chapter, and citations should only be made if it is necessary to accurately convey another author's point of view. Master students should use the narrative analysis approach, and subchapters and sections should be concluded with a summary written by a master student.

This scope of this section is 20-25 pages.

The empirical research methodology addresses three questions related to the analysis of a practical problem: What do you want to determine? How will this be investigated? Why is this method the most appropriate?

In order to answer the first question, the research methodology presents and describes in detail the purpose of the empirical research, the research model, formulates hypotheses or research questions, identifies the investigated variables, their reliability, relevance and relationship.

In the answer to the second question, the methods, techniques, procedures and tools used to collect the data, the specifics of their use and their relevance for the purpose of collecting the primary information necessary to achieve the aim of the Master thesis are presented. Where necessary, secondary sources of information shall be provided, their completeness and reliability assessed. The entire focus of the research shall also be justified and overviewed, and, where appropriate, it is necessary to justify the sample size selected, the respondents and their selection procedure described. The data analysis methods are also introduced in the research methodology.

The answer to the third question (Why is this method the most appropriate?) must be based on theoretical information describing the research methods and on the experience of other researchers in analysing similar problems.

The scope of the research methodology is 5-10 pages.

The empirical results analysis chapter presents the most important empirical research results and the most significant information. Secondary data, qualitative research, surveys and observations are analysed, hypotheses are tested, various calculations are made, and statistical criteria are used to evaluate the relationships between variables. An important element of the

analysis of the results is the interpretation and applicability of the data obtained. Therefore, the results analysis chapter should integrate the results of the research carried out and other authors' research and link it with the theories presented in the Master thesis. Finally, master students must be able to relate their research results to the practice of organisations and provide problem solving decisions.

This chapter should consist of 20-25 pages.

It should be noted that it is by no means permissible to name the Master thesis chapters "Theoretical Part", "Practical Part", "Literature Review" and the like, because they must reflect the content of a particular chapter or subchapter.

Conclusions and recommendations. The original main conclusions and recommendations provided in the Master thesis are formulated here, limitations of the research are mentioned, directions for further research are indicated. There are several ways of presenting the material, but in this section it is more convenient to present all the conclusions first, then all the recommendations. A rarer and more difficult way is to come to a conclusion and make a corresponding recommendation immediately after. Conclusions and recommendations should take the form of clear and carefully thought out theses. If the author feels that figures need to be given, they should be few and only the most important. The conclusions should be related to the aim and objectives of the Master thesis.

Conclusions and recommendations should comprise 2-4 pages.

Literature and references. This part provides the descriptions of the literature and sources used, based on the standards of the document's bibliographic description: it describes the elements of the bibliographic references, defines the order in which they are presented, and describes how to transcribe and present information from the source. Note that only those sources that have been directly used in the Master thesis should be included here: quoted verbatim or describing the idea (secondary citation), or using the information contained therein (figures, models, pictures, etc.). It is recommended that the list of bibliographic references be compiled in accordance with the requirements of APA (American Psychological Association). For a more detailed explanation of the source description, see Section 5.

Summary in Lithuanian or foreign languages is a short description of the Master thesis or a synthesis of the Master thesis. The summary, outlined in a few short paragraphs in the third person, gives the reader a quick glance at the main aspects of the Master thesis. The Master thesis is briefly described, indicating the aim and objectives of the Master thesis; methods used for the Master thesis; the research carried out and the results obtained; the main conclusions; information on the publication or availability of the results of the Master thesis. A summary is provided on a separate page after the list of references and sources. Its size is 300-500 words. A summary template is provided in Annex 3. In the Master thesis written in Lithuanian, a summary in a foreign language is written in English, and in the Master thesis written in English - in Lithuanian. The author of the paper is responsible for the linguistic accuracy of the foreign language.

Annexes. An additional, non-essential material intended to further explain, illustrate the main points of the Master thesis (larger tables, illustrations, cartograms, etc.) are provided here. The annexes usually contain a data collection instrument (questionnaires, interview instructions), formulas, some intermediate calculations, data processing schemes and any other material that reflects the research process and results. Each annex must have a title. Annexes are numbered consecutively. The scope of annexes is unlimited.

3. CASES OF PLAGIARISM AND IN-TEXT REFERENCES

When writing the Master thesis, one has to rely on the thoughts of other authors. The experience of other authors in solving analogous problems may be presented already in the introduction of the Master thesis where it is necessary to specify what is already known in the topic under analysis. The analysis of the literature is largely based on the findings, conclusions, and insights of other authors. Finally, when developing the research methodology, the experience and interpretations of the results of other authors have to be used, often the results obtained have to be compared with the research findings obtained by other authors. You can include literature in your text by quoting, paraphrasing, citing, analysing, interpreting, disputing and evaluating it. Inappropriate quoting or conveying thoughts of other authors can be assessed as plagiarism.

Paragraph 19 of the Code of Academic Ethics of Vilnius University stipulates that "plagiarism is prohibited at the University" (Code of Academic Ethics of Vilnius University, 2018). Usually several types of plagiarism are distinguished.

- Plagiarism of authorship is the taking and presentation of another author's work or its section as part of one's own work (section), including literal or meaningful translation from a foreign language.

- Literal plagiarism occurs when an entire sentence, a significant phrase, or a paragraph is moved (written off) from another author's work without proper reference to the source. Literal plagiarism also includes the literal or meaningful translation of a sentence, a significant phrase or a paragraph from a foreign language and its presentation without proper reference to the source.

- Plagiarism by changing the word or plagiarism by paraphrasing. If a sentence, a phrase or a paragraph is taken from another author's work and one or more words are replaced but the source is not mentioned, is also considered as plagiarism. Plagiarism also includes work that (or a part of it) consists of paraphrased (by substituting one word for another) sentences, paragraphs, or paragraphs of other sources without specifying the authors and sources. This type of plagiarism is considered to be a situation where the above-mentioned actions are performed by making a literal or meaningful translation from a foreign language.

- Incorrect citation - the text, tables or figures of the written work contain data without reference to the source (unless the data is collected by the author himself).

- Self-plagiarism refers to the reuse of large volumes of your own text without reference to the source. However, text written by a student in previous semesters as part of Scientific research project is not considered self-plagiarism.

- Compilation is another type of plagiarism where text is compiled, consisting of fragments copied from various sources, even when the text is quoting the sources correctly but without the original text.

Plagiarism also refers to situations where references to non-existent or incorrectly described sources are mentioned in the text when the text mentions the sources but they are not included in the list of references. A violation of the Principle of Academic Integrity shall also be detected if a knowingly erroneous source page or the date of visit to the website are indicated.

The Master thesis is considered a case of plagiarism if:

- Extracts from other authors' texts that are literally transcribed or translated from other languages, literally or meaningfully translated, without citing the source or citing the source, but without quoting (without quotation marks), the volume of which at least in one place of the Master thesis exceeds 600 characters, not including spaces;

- Extracted (compiled) extracts from other authors' (one or more) paraphrased text (individual words and sentences may be replaced, but retains the content of the foreign text), without specifying the original source, the volume of which at least in one place of the Master thesis exceeds 1,200 characters, not including spaces. The case where literal or meaningful translation from a foreign language is used is also considered plagiarism;

- The student's text, tables or figures contain data without reference to the source (unless the data are collected by the author himself);

- The total number of coincidences with other works as determined by a plagiarism screening programme or by a manual calculation is 15 percent or more, excluding coincidences which are not considered plagiarism, such as bibliography, properly indicated references, citations, general knowledge, etc.,

- The number of coincidences with a single source, as determined by a plagiarism screening programme or by a manual calculation, represents 5 percent or more of the Master thesis excluding coincidences which are not considered plagiarism, such as bibliography, properly indicated references, citations, general knowledge, etc.,

- The Master thesis was not prepared by the student, but was purchased, downloaded from the Internet or otherwise obtained from third parties.

Plagiarism and the serious consequences associated with it can be avoided by properly referring to the literature source used. Master students of VU FEBA are encouraged to use the text referencing system offered by APA (The American Psychological Association). In the case of direct citation (literally quoting or translating material from another author), quotations in the text are enclosed in quotation marks, following the Lithuanian punctuation rules. At the end of the citation, a reference to the source used by the master student must be included and the cited page indicated. Quotations of no more than two or three sentences should be ingeniously inserted in the text, in the right place, **only occasionally and only when** the author's words are very important. In line with the **APA** style, direct citation should be limited to a maximum of 40 words per paragraph in quotation marks. Long quotations should be avoided, and a quotation of one paragraph and longer is already considered a case of plagiarism.

Secondary citation is a recitation of another author's thought, another author's thought is used to justify one's own thought (comparing research findings, conclusions, etc.) or to modify a model (diagram, graph, etc.). The secondary citation does not require special punctuation, but it is necessary to refer to the original. Reference to the original is made at the end of the sentence (when the whole sentence consists of another author's thoughts) or after a particular word or words (if they are "borrowed" from another author). Sometimes the author of the original thought becomes part of the aster student's text, without the need for additional references.

Based on the **APA** standard, references should be indicated in the text as follows:

A) If the name (s) of the author (s) of the quoted text or thought does not become a natural part of the sentence, then, at the end of the sentence or after a significant word, the author's surname (the first name or the first letter of the name are not written) and the year of publishing are written in brackets, with a comma, for example, (Stoma, 2017), (Greetham, 2008), (Lukin, 2019).

When reference is made to the work of several authors, the reference is inserted alphabetically indicating the author's surname, year of publication, followed by a semicolon, then the surname of another author, year of publication, for example (Stoma, 2017; Petraitiene, 2004).

When a given source is written by two authors, the word "and" should be written between their surnames, and the surnames are presented in the same order as seen in the source, for example (Stoma and Petraitis, 2017).

When the source used is written by three to five authors, the first time the text is referenced, the surnames of all authors are written, followed by the "and", for example (Stoma, Mackeviciene & Antanaitis, 2017). Other times, a reference to the same source will include the first author's name and "et al", for example (Stoma et al., 2017).

When reference is made for works of six or more authors, the first author's name and "et al.", as well as the year of publishing, separated by a comma, should be used, for example (Stoma et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2013).

Based on the information provided by the organisation or institution, its name and year are indicated, for example, (United Nations, 2016). If there is a well-known abbreviation for the organisation in question, first include the full name of the organisation and its abbreviation in brackets, and then only the abbreviation, such as (UN, 2016).

If a source whose authors have the same surname is used, each surname is preceded by the first letter of the name, for example (P. Stoma, 2010; S. Stoma, 2018).

For works of the same author written in the same year, a, b, c, and so on are written in an alphabetical order next to the year. i.e., for example (Stoma, 2009a).

If an unpublished interpersonal communication (interviews with experts, e-mail message, telephone interview) is used in the text, the first letters of the name (s), surname and date are indicated, e.g. P. Stoma (interpersonal communication, 20 September 2016) spoke out against plagiarism. There is no need to include interpersonal communication in the list of references and sources.

B) If the surname (s) of the author (s) of the quoted text or thought becomes a natural part of the sentence, then the surname of the author is followed by the year of publishing in parentheses, for example, in research conducted by Stoma (2017) a relationship was also found…... If the author of the publication is not one, the indication is done in the same way as in the case of A described above.

In quoting, first, the author of the primary source is indicated in the text or in parentheses, followed by the surname and year of the secondary source, for example ... Mackeviciene, as quoted by Stoma (2017), states that ... It is noteworthy that in repeated quoting, a secondary source, i.e. a source read by the author is included in a list of references.

4. FORMATTING OF MASTER THESIS

It takes a lot of time and patience to format the Master thesis properly. Time can be won if formatting is given due consideration right from the start of the Master thesis preparation. The Master thesis must be written in the correct language. The pages shall be bound by adding transparent covers. The material to be presented is divided into the required number of chapters and subchapters. The Master thesis formatting requirements are listed in the following table.

Table.

Formatting of Master Thesis

Formatting requirements	Description
Paper	White, A4, is printed on one side of the page
Font	"Times New Roman Normal 12 pt"
Space between lines	1.5
Text alignment	Both right and left sides („justified")
Margins	2.54 cm on the left, 2 cm on the right, top and bottom
Highlighting information	*Italic*, **bold** or <u>underline</u> text formatting; letter extension function
Writing of parts of the text	By retracting the first line of a text within 1.27 cm from the left margin of the page (Paragraph / Indentation / left / by 1.27). The text shall not be retracted in the summary.
Page numbering	• Arabic numerals in the lower right corner of the page without dots or dashes; • Page numbers start from the introduction of Master thesis (page numbers are not written on the pages above the introduction of Master thesis, but counted); • The numbering is continuous with annexes included.
Numbering of structural parts	• Arabic numerals; • Each smaller part (subchapter, section) must have the number of the corresponding larger part, supplemented by an additional number, separated by a dot (for example 3.1; 3.1.1).
Writing of chapter titles, words Santrauka, Summary, Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, List of Abbreviations, Introduction, Conclusions and Recommendations, List of References, Annexes	• Bold, in capital letters, **TIMES NEW ROMAN NORMAL 14 PT BOLD** font; • Starting on a new page and writing one line below the beginning of the page field; • No punctuation marks are added at the end of chapter titles or other structural elements.
Layout of chapter titles	• Starting from the left edge of the page, without retracting; • Words in chapter titles cannot be subdivided; • Each Master thesis chapter begins with a new page and subchapters and sections – on the same page; • The title cannot be written on one page and the text started on another.
Beginning of writing subchapters	Immediately below the previous text, skipping one interval;

Writing subchapter titles	• Starting from the left side of the page, without retracting; • **Times New Roman normal 12 pt bold** font, small letters, starting with a capital letter; • No punctuation marks are added at the end of the subchapter titles.

Continuation of Table 1

Numbering and writing of tables	• The number is given according to the order of the table in the text; • The number is written in Arabic numerals and a space of one character is made before the word "table" is written (e.g. Table 1); • It is written above the table header in the left corner; • If there is only one table in the text, only the word "table" is written above the table heading on the left side of the page; • If the text contains several logically related tables, one after the other, the tables can be numbered by adding a letter to the number of the table (e.g. Table 1, Table 1a and Table 1b) to emphasize the continuity of the data contained therein; • The title of the table is written in *italics* (in small letters starting with a capital letter) above the table and is written starting from the left side of the page. All abbreviations should be explained in formatting the table; • It is recommended to use as few lines as possible when formatting tables; • Font "Times New Roman normal 10 or 12 pt"; • Line spacing 1 or 1.5; • Care must be taken not to split the table. If necessary, the table may be moved to another page and the words "Continuation of Table 1" shall be written on the second page; • The name of the source is given below each table. • An example table is given in Annex 4.
Writing and numbering of figures	• The number is given according to the order of the figure in the text; • The number is written in Arabic numerals and the word "figure" is written in *italics* (one character spacing) (e.g. *Figure* 3); • If there is only one figure in the text, the number shall not be written: "Figure"; • A few related and continuing figures can be numbered as follows: Figure 1, Figure 1a and Figure 1b; • Figures are all graphic material (graphs, pictures, drawings, diagrams, photographs representing statistical quantitative processes), so all the above graphic material can only be described as a figure! This is the international norm. No other wordings such as "graph", "chart", "diagram", etc. are allowed; • The title should be written in the same font as the text, in small letters starting with the capital letter, below the figure; • The title is written starting from the left side of the page. The title of the figure must clearly state the content of the figure; • Below each figure is the name of the source, with a page reference where appropriate; • Figures (in two-dimensional space rather than three-dimensional space) are inserted into the text after the paragraph that refers to them or on the next page; • An example figure is given in Annex 5.
Writing and numbering of formulas	• Statistical symbols are in *italics*; • Numbered sequentially, in parentheses, next to the formula on the right side of the page.

Literature and sources	• All lines except the first are written over 1.27 cm (Paragraph/Indentation/ Special/Hanging/by 1.27) from the left margin of the page;
	• Not numbered;
	• Arranged in alphabetical order according to the name of the first author, strictly according to the specified requirements;
	• Works by a single author are presented in chronological order.

Source: modified, based on Kasnauskienė, 2016; American Psychological Association, 2020.

Abbreviations included in the Master thesis should be kept to a minimum. Only very common and well-known abbreviations or abbreviations that are used very often in the Master thesis are suitable. In both cases, when the abbreviation is first written in the text, its full form must be given in parentheses.

Larger tables and figures (covering half and more pages) are recommended to be included in annexes and only the most important indicators or conclusions of the analysis should be given in the text. It is advisable to have at least some text underneath the table or figure on the same page. It is recommended that a chapter or subchapter is not completed with a table or figure.

5. COMPILING A LIST OF REFERENCES

The list of references includes only the sources quoted literally or implicitly in the text of the Master thesis: scholarly articles, monographs, dissertations, documents and other publications. In addition, all references in the bibliography must be mentioned in the text. It should be noted that the list of documents used in the Master thesis should not include articles from popular newspapers and magazines, lecture notes.

It is particularly important to reassure yourself that sources are correctly cited. When citing or compiling a list of references, it is recommended to comply with the APA requirements that are widely used in social science research (the 7th edition of the APA requirements are coming into force in spring 2020 and include over a hundred examples of citation and compilation of a list of references (APA, 2020)). The most important of these are the following requirements (Kasnauskienė, 2016):

- Documents mentioned or cited in the Master thesis are listed in alphabetical order according to the name of the first author.

- Non-Latin letters are not used in the APA style literature list. Therefore, the names of the authors of the work written in non-Latin characters (Russian, Arabic, Chinese, etc.) are transliterated (one font is rewritten in another font), with the title written in Lithuanian in parentheses. This type of a source will have the following items to be included in the list of references:

- Surname (s) of the author (s), first name in roman characters. (years). *Title in Latin letters (Title in Lithuanian)*. Place: Publisher.

- When publishers of a work are not specific authors, but associations or organisations, the name of the author is replaced by the name of the publisher, and the entire title is written. A collective author is usually presented for the purpose of describing official material (the statute, regulations, etc.), for example, Vilnius University, The Lithuanian Department of Statistics, etc.

- If the author of the book is not indicated, then the title of the book should be moved to the beginning, before the date of publication, for example, "Title of work. (years) (x-edition). Place: Publisher.".

- If the author of the book is not indicated but its editors are specified, then the name of the editor is written in the space provided for the author, followed by the title of the section, followed by the surnames of the editors of the publication, with the abbreviation "ed." if there is one editor or "Eds." if several editors are given.

- If it is not possible to determine the year of publication of a source, "N. d." (no date) is written.

- Describing the sources found on the Internet the author, the *title*, the exact address of the website has to be included, and describing the sources whose content may change, such as company websites, online magazines, newspapers, discussion forums, the date of access has to be indicated and marked as "Viewed", for example, viewed on 10/31/2019. The location of the source is determined and identified as "Internet Access". The address is preceded by a colon, such as "Internet access: http://www.apastyle.org/".

- Indication of edition is a required element. It can be given in the form of "5th edition, 3rd ed." or similar.

- The place where the document was published given in non-Latin characters is transliterated. If several places of publishing are specified in the source, the highlighted one is used. If the places of publishing are the same, the first one in the source is written. If the place of publishing is not specified, the phrase "sine loco" or an equivalent abbreviation "s. l." shall be used. A colon is used following the place of publishing.

- The publisher's name may be incomplete or its abbreviation is given. If there are several publishers of the source, the highlighted one is written. If publishers are presented in the same font, the first is written.

LIST OF REFERENCES

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) Viewed on 2019-01-06. Internet access: http://www.apastyle.org/

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ANNEXES

Annex 1. Example Title Page of Master Thesis

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

STUDY PROGRAMME (TITLE)

Student's Name, Surname

MASTER THESIS

TITLE IN LITHUANIAN	TITLE IN ENGLISH

Supervisor_____

(scientific, pedagogical titles of the supervisor, supervisor's name, surname)

Vilnius, 20..

Annex 2. Example Table of Contents of Master Thesis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MOTIVES AND BENEFITS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Jūratė SIRVYDAITĖ

Master Thesis

Quality Management Master Programme

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Vilnius University

Supervisor prof. J. Ruževičius, Vilnius, 2010

SUMMARY

64 pages, 17 charts, 14 figures, 52 references.

The main purpose of this master thesis is to determine the motives that encourage the companies to implement quality management systems (QMS) and to evaluate the benefits of the QMS implementation.

The Master thesis consists of three main parts; the analysis of literature, the research and its results, a conclusion and recommendations.

Literature analysis reviews the development of quality management theories, presents the main concepts of QMS, introduces the requirement for ISO 9000 standards and shows their pervasion and importance as well as indicates the benefits and the advantages that the companies obtain after QMS implementation.

Following the literature analysis, the author carried out research into the motives and benefits of the implementation of QMS among the Lithuanian companies that have obtained ISO 9001 certificates. In all, 21 Lithuanian companies (23% of all the certified companies) have presented answers to the prepared questionnaire. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to find out why the Lithuanian companies seek the implementation and certification of QMS in accordance with the requirements of ISO 9000 series of standards and what has changed after the QMS implementation. Furthermore, the results of the research were compared to the similar studies performed in other European countries. The results of the research were statistically processed with the SPSS programme batch. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to determine the alignment of the Likert scales'; in all cases, it was higher than 0.7 which indicates that the scales used were consistent. In order to establish a correlation between the organisation's maturity and ISO 9001 QMS using timescale, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used.

The performed research revealed that the implementation of QMS mostly results in the benefits of an intangible nature that are internal to the company. Although the main reasons to start implementing QMS are the expectations of the external advantages, the implementation results mostly in the increase of internal benefits, such as the improvement in the definition of the responsibilities and obligations of the employees, decrease in nonconformities, better communication among the employees, the increased efficiency.

The conclusions and recommendations summarise the main concepts of literature analysis as well as the results of the performed research. The author believes that the results of the study could give useful guidelines to the companies that are going to implement QMS, and could help the companies that have already implemented QMS to take more advantages of the system.

Annex 4. Example Table
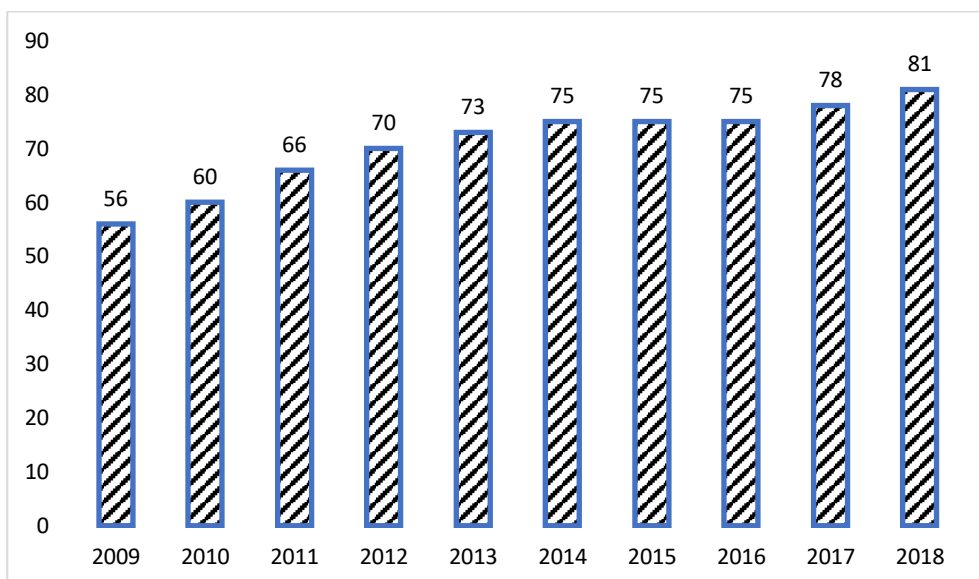
Table 1

Lithuanian GDP in 2015 - 2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018
GDP at current prices (million EUR)	37,434	38,849	42,191	45,114
Compared to a previous year (%)	102.0	102.4	104.1	103.5
Per capita at current prices (EUR)	12,886	13,545	14,917	16,104

Source: The Lithuanian Department of Statistics, 2019.

Annex 5. Example Figure

Figure 1

Lithuanian GDP per capita in purchasing power standards. ES28-100

Source: Eurostat database, 2019.