

APPROVED
by Order No.
of 15 March 2016
of the Dean of the Faculty of Law of Vilnius University

**TEMPORARY PROCEDURE FOR THE PREPARATION, DEFENCE, ASSESSMENT
AND STORAGE OF TERM PAPERS AND MASTER'S THESES AT THE FACULTY
OF LAW OF VILNIUS UNIVERSITY**

I. General provisions

1. Procedure for preparation, defence, assessment, and storage of term papers and Master's theses (hereinafter – Master's theses) at the Faculty of Law of Vilnius University (hereinafter – University) (hereinafter – Procedure) establishes the procedure for the preparation, defence, assessment, and storage of course papers and Master's theses (hereinafter – Papers) which shall apply to students in all study programmes at the Faculty of Law.
2. The Procedure has been prepared in accordance with the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, Regulation of the Study Process of Vilnius University, Regulation of Study Programmes of Vilnius University, Procedure for Assessment of Learning Achievements at Vilnius University, and Description of the Procedure of the Preparation, Defence, and Storage of Student Written Papers at Vilnius University.
3. Provisions of the Procedure shall not apply to other written Papers (abstracts, reports, essays, etc.) prepared by students during their studies.

II. Selection and approval of topics for Papers

4. Topics for Papers are proposed by departments of the Faculty of Law (hereinafter – Departments). Following their approval by the study programme committees, the topics are published in the academic information system of the University (hereinafter – System) by not later than:
 - 4.1. 1 June – for term papers prepared in the integrated studies in the autumn semester and by 5 January – for the term papers prepared in the integrated studies in the spring semester;
 - 4.2. 15 June – for Master's theses in the integrated studies;
 - 4.3. 15 March – for Master's theses in the Master's studies.
5. Each student must select a topic for the paper via the System by not later than:
 - 5.1. 15 September – for term papers prepared in the integrated studies in the autumn semester and by 5 February – for term papers prepared in the integrated studies in the spring semester;
 - 5.2. 1 October – for Master's theses in the integrated studies;

- 5.3. 1 April – for Master’s theses in the Master’s studies.
6. Should a student fail to select a topic by the time specified in Paragraph 5 above, the student may submit a motivated request to the Head of the Department to prepare a paper on a certain topic indicating the important reasons for the delay. The request must include the consent of the Supervisor of the Paper to supervise the student’s Paper with the note ‘I agree to supervise; first name, surname and signature.’ The Head of the Department takes a decision regarding the permission to prepare the Paper in the current semester within 5 business days after the receipt of the request and the student is notified about the decision by email to the email address provided to the student by the University.
 7. A Paper on a selected topic cannot be prepared by more than one full-time student in the daytime study timetable and one full-time student in the part-time study timetable.
 8. Second and third year students in the integrated studies select topics for their term papers according to the established student quotas, which are published in the System, and fourth year students – according to their selected branch of studies.
 9. The supervisors (hereinafter – Supervisors) are appointed by the Head of the Department. Information about the Supervisors is published in the System by not later than:
 - 9.1. 25 September – for term papers prepared in the integrated studies in the autumn semester and by 28 February – for term papers prepared in the integrated studies in the spring semester;
 - 9.2. 15 October– for Master’s theses in the integrated studies;
 - 9.3. 15 April – for Master’s theses in the Master’s studies.
 10. A student may propose his own topic for his Paper by submitting a motivated request via the Studies Unit to the Head of the Department. A potential Supervisor confirms his consent to supervise the Paper with the note ‘I agree to supervise; first name, surname and signature.’ The request must be submitted during the semester at the time specified in Paragraph 5 herein. The Head of the Department takes a decision regarding the permission to prepare the Paper on the proposed topic within 5 business days after the receipt of the request and the student is notified about the decision by email to the email address provided to the student by the University. If the topic proposed by the student is rejected, the student must select a topic from those proposed by the Department.
 11. Topics of Papers and Supervisors are approved by the order of the Dean and are entered in the System:
 - 11.1. for term papers – within 5 business days from the date of the appointment of the Supervisor;
 - 11.2. by 15 March– for Master’s theses in the integrated studies;
 - 11.3. by 15 November – for Master’s theses in the Master’s studies.
 12. A student may revise the topic of his Paper, but this must be done at least 10 business days prior to the date of entering the topic into the System and recording the topic in the Department specified in Paragraph 20.1 by submitting a request via the Studies Unit to the Head of the Department. The application must include the consent from the Supervisor concerning the verification of the Paper with the note ‘I agree; first name, surname and signature.’ The Head of the Department takes a decision within 5 business days after the

receipt of the request and the student is notified about the decision by email to the email address provided to the student by the University.

III. Preparation of the Paper

13. Papers must be prepared in accordance with this Procedure, Methodological Requirements for Research Paper and Master's Thesis Preparation at the Faculty of Law of Vilnius University, and descriptions of 'Term Papers' of a course and 'Master's Thesis.' Valid documents are published on the website of the Faculty of Law at www.tf.vu.lt.
14. The Paper must be written in the grammatically correct Lithuanian language. The Paper may be written in a foreign language if the study programme is implemented in other than the Lithuanian language or the Supervisor of the paper is a foreign national.
15. The Supervisor provides consultancy to the student on the methodological aspects and the subject matter of the Paper at the time of the Supervisor's consultancy hours specified in the Department section on the website www.tf.vu.lt, or at a time separately agreed by both parties.
16. The student may submit a motivated request via the Studies Unit to the Head of the Department to replace the Supervisor due to an important reason. The Head of the Department takes a decision within 5 business days after the receipt of the request and the student is notified about the decision by email to the email address provided to the student by the University. The request may be submitted by:
 - 16.1. 2 November – for term papers prepared in the integrated studies in the autumn semester and by 1 May – for term papers prepared in the integrated studies in the spring semester;
 - 16.2. 2 November – for Master's theses in the Master's studies;
 - 16.3. 1 March – for Master's theses in the integrated studies.
17. The student shall provide updates about the different stages of the preparation of the Paper according to the procedure set by the Supervisor and in the case of the Master's thesis – at the Master's seminar or during the Master's thesis practice, if this is provided for in the programme plan.

IV. Submission of the Paper for assessment

Submission of the term paper for assessment

18. No later than 15 business days prior to the end of the semester, the student must submit the term paper to the System, and provide one bound hard copy of the paper and record it in the Department by no later than 15 business days prior to the end of the semester. Once uploaded to the System the paper cannot be revised. If a student fails to submit the term paper in due time, the Supervisor shall have the right to refuse to assess it. In this case, the student is not allowed to defend the paper and the Supervisor enters the note 'Not allowed to defend' in the System.

Submission of the Master's thesis for assessment

19. The student must submit the Master's thesis to the System and, if the Supervisor wishes, to submit it to the Supervisor in an agreed form for review not later than 5 days prior to the final term for entering the thesis into the System and recording it in the Department specified in Paragraph 20.1, unless there are other mutual arrangements. Once uploaded to the System the thesis cannot be revised. If a student fails to submit the Master's thesis in due time, the Supervisor shall have the right to refuse to assess it.
20. The Master's thesis can only be defended after the Supervisor assesses a computer check for originality report of the thesis and concludes that the thesis has been prepared independently and meets the established requirements:
 - 20.1. if the Supervisor establishes that the thesis can be defended, he confirms this by signing a Guarantee concerning the data entered by the student into the System, which must be submitted by the student together with one hard-bound print copy of the thesis and recorded in the Department not later than 10 business days prior to the date of defence of the Master's thesis specified in the schedule.
 - 20.2 if the Supervisor decides that the thesis cannot be defended, he shall not later 2 business days prior to the final term for entering the thesis into the System and recording it in the Department specified in Paragraph 20.1, notify the student about it by email to the email address provided to the student by the University and also notify the Head of the Department about the reasons for such decision.
 - 20.3. if the Supervisor decides that the thesis cannot be defended or refuses to assess the thesis because it was not submitted by the term specified in Paragraph 19, the student shall have the right to submit a motivated request via the Department to the thesis defence committee (hereinafter – Committee) asking to be allowed to defend his Master's thesis. The student must submit the request, enter the thesis into the System and record one hard-bound print copy of the thesis in the Department by not later than 1 business day following the decision of the Supervisor. Having assessed the thesis, the computer check for originality report of the thesis, and the motives of the student, the Committee shall within 7 business days adopt a decision regarding permission or refusal to defend the thesis. If the Committee allows the Master's thesis to be defended, the Head of the Department shall appoint a reviewer. The student is notified about the decision by email to the email address provided to the student by the University.
21. The order of the Dean regarding permission to defend the Master's thesis is issued and is entered into the System, if the student:
 - 21.1. has completed the entire study programme and does not have academic debts;
 - 21.2. has recorded the printed thesis in the Department and entered it into the System;
 - 21.3. has submitted the Guarantee signed by the Supervisor or the Committee has granted permission to defend the thesis without the approval of the Supervisor.
22. If, due to failure to meet the conditions specified in Paragraph 21 the student is not granted permission to defend the Master's thesis, by the Dean's submission the student is

expelled from the University due to academic under-achievement during his studies:

22.1. by 31 March – for the integrated studies;

22.2. by 31 November – for the Master's studies.

V. Defence and assessment of the Paper

23. In assessing the Papers, the assessment criteria specified in the description of a certain course unit of the study programme must be observed and a computer check for originality report of the Paper must be taken into account. If a student fails to comply with the provisions of Chapter III of the Methodological Requirements for Research Paper and Master's Thesis Preparation at the Faculty of Law of Vilnius University concerning non-violation of intellectual property rights and if the fact of plagiarism is established, the Paper cannot be defended and assessed, and the student is expelled from the University for dishonesty during the studies.

Defence and assessment of the term paper

24. The Supervisor assesses the term paper which is defended at the time of the Supervisor's consultancy hours specified in the Department section on the website www.tf.vu.lt, or at a time separately agreed by both parties. The paper must be defended not later than on the last day of the semester.
25. If, by the term specified in Paragraph 18, the term paper is not entered in the System and not recorded in the Department or receives a negative assessment during its defence or it is not defended:
- 25.1. the full-time student in the integrated daytime study timetable may retake the examination for the course unit and defend the term paper during the first 2 weeks of the next semester. The paper must be entered in the System and one hard-bound print copy of the paper must be recorded in the Department not later than 10 business days prior to the end of the period for retaking the examination.
- 25.2. the full-time student in the integrated part-time study timetable may retake the examination for the course unit and defend the term paper by 31 March, if the paper is prepared in the autumn semester and by 31 October, if the paper is prepared in the spring semester. The paper must be entered in the System and one hard-bound print copy of the paper must be recorded in the Department not later than 15 business days prior to the end of the period for retaking the examination.
- 25.3. If, the paper is not entered in the System or recorded in the Department before the end of the period for retaking the examination or receives a negative assessment during its defence or it is not defended, the student earns an academic debt.

Defence and assessment of the Master's thesis

26. The Head of the Department shall appoint a reviewer to assess the Master's thesis not later than one month prior to the possible scheduled start of the defence of Master's theses

specified in Paragraph 28. After the appointment of the reviewer, the information is specified in the Department section on the website www.tf.vu.lt and must be entered in the System not later than 3 business days prior to the scheduled start of the defence of the Master's theses.

27. The reviewer must provide a written review on the Master's thesis and send it to the student by email to the email address provided to the student by the University at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting of the Committee at which the thesis will be defended. If the student fails to receive the review, he may submit a request via the Department to the Committee regarding postponement of the defence until a later date. Having assessed the student's request, the Committee shall adopt a decision regarding postponement of the defence until a later date. Having evaluated the student's application, the Committee shall adopt a decision on granting authorisation to defend the work at a later date. The student is notified about the decision by email to the email address provided to the student by the University.
28. The defence of Master's theses takes place:
 - 28.1. for integrated studies – from 5 April to 31 May;
 - 28.2. for Master's studies – from 1 December to 25 January.
29. The Head of the Department shall approve the schedule for the defence of Master's theses, which shall be published not later than one month prior to the possible scheduled start of the defence of Master's theses specified in Paragraph 28 above it in the Department section on the website www.tf.vu.lt and not later than within 3 business days it must be entered in the System. The student may, if there are exceptional circumstances, not later than 3 business days prior to the scheduled start of the defence of Master's theses, submit a motivated request via the Department to the Committee regarding a date other than the date specified in the schedule for the defence. The Committee shall adopt the decision regarding another date for defence within 1 business day after the receipt of the request and the student is notified about the decision by email to the email address provided to the student by the University.
30. The Master's thesis shall be defended publicly at the meeting of the Committee formed by the order of the Rector upon the Dean's submission.
31. The Supervisor or reviewer of the Master's thesis cannot vote when the Committee takes a decision regarding assessment of the thesis or chair the meeting of the Committee during which the thesis supervised or reviewed by them is defended.
32. If the Supervisor or reviewer of the Master's thesis is not included in the Committee, he is invited to take part in the meeting of the Committee at which the thesis supervised or reviewed by him is defended. If the Supervisor of the Master's thesis is unable to attend the meeting, he must provide the Department with his written opinion regarding the assessment of the defended thesis by not later than the time of the meeting of the Committee at which the thesis supervised or reviewed by him is to be defended.
33. During the defence, the student shall briefly present his Master's thesis (recommended time – 10 min.). The Supervisor shall present his opinion regarding the assessment of the

defended thesis and the reviewer shall present its review of the defended thesis. If the Supervisor or the reviewer is unable to attend the meeting for the defence of the thesis, the chairman of the Committee shall read the Supervisor's opinion regarding the assessment and the reviewer's review. Subsequently, the student shall answer the questions of the reviewer, members of the Committee and other persons participating in the defence.

34. The Committee shall assess the Master's thesis by taking into account the assessment proposed by the reviewer and the Supervisor's opinion. If no students object to the public announcement of the assessment of the Master's theses, the chairman of the Committee shall publicly announce the assessment of each student on the day of the defence. The student may also have access to the assessment of his Master's thesis in the System in which the assessment is entered on the day of the defence.
35. The decision adopted by the Committee regarding the assessment of the Master thesis is final and not subject to appeal. An appeal may only be filed against procedural breaches which could have affected the assessment of the Master's thesis.
36. The student who has not defended the Master's thesis is expelled from the University due to academic under-achievement.
37. If the student wishes to defend his Master's thesis on the same topic in the next study semester the student must submit a request via the Studies Unit to the Head of the Department regarding securing the topic of the Master's thesis. The Master's thesis on the same topic can be defended once, not earlier than the next study semester by re-enrolment until the beginning of that semester. If the Master's thesis is not defended the second time, following the re-enrolment a new Master's thesis on another topic may be prepared.

VI. Storage of Papers

38. The Papers in electronic format are stored in the System by downloading them on the Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library Information System (eLABa) according to the procedure and terms specified in its regulations.
39. Printed Master's theses are stored in the Studies Unit for 5 years after defence. The Department shall pass the theses to the Studies Unit according to the procedure established by the Dean's order.
40. Students of the Faculty of Law can familiarise themselves with the printed Papers by submitting a request to look at a specific Paper. The Paper may not be copied or otherwise reproduced or taken from the premises designated for review.

VII. Final provisions

41. If the date specified in the Procedure is a non-business day, the day for executing certain activities is the first business following the said day.
42. The Vice Dean for study affairs authorised by the Dean, heads of Departments and the Studies Unit shall control the implementation of the Procedure.
43. The Procedure shall enter into force from the day of signing of the order approving it.