

International Black Sea University LLC

**Guidelines for Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation**

Tbilisi

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## Chapter I. Introduction

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The goal of the guideline is to assist students (master's and doctoral students) in creating a research paper and to provide beginning researchers with the necessary knowledge and skills to develop a research paper that will meet both the requirements of the International Black Sea University LLC (hereinafter referred to as "IBSU") and international requirements.

Scientific research is a systematic attempt not only to collect information about a selected problem or issue, but also to analyze this information, confirm or reject certain views on the topic, and provide arguments for one's own conclusions.

### **1.1 Research paper as a specific form of both - research and writing**

We conduct research when we want to investigate a topic, test an idea, solve an existing problem, or raise an issue that requires more in-depth study. In this case, we try to find other studies related to the research problem, in addition to our own.

A research paper is mainly based on primary and secondary research or a combination of both. Primary research uses direct observation. For example, studying a literary or historical text, a film or a play, using reviews or interviews, conducting an experiment. Primary sources include: statistical data, historical documents, works of literature and art. Secondary research is an evaluation of studies conducted by other researchers. Examples of secondary sources are books and articles on political issues, historical events, scientific discussions, or works of art. The first chapter of a master's thesis and doctoral dissertation usually includes secondary research (a literature review). A research paper is a form of written communication. Like other non-fiction writing, it must present information clearly and effectively; therefore, the language of a research paper should be academic and clear.

This handbook is a guide for the preparation of research papers. Although the researcher needs to present facts and opinions fully, the purpose of the latter is to confirm the researcher's views and provide complete information about the sources used. Facts and the opinions of other researchers should not dominate the research paper; the reader should be able to understand your thoughts on the research question.

## Chapter II. How to Start Research?

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### 2.1. Selecting a research topic

When selecting a topic, it is important to consider:

- 1) Your interests and experience;
- 2) Your qualifications and those of your supervisor;
- 3) Community needs;
- 4) Literature resources.

A master's thesis or doctoral dissertation should have both practical and theoretical value. Therefore, the topic you choose and agree on should be "valuable" and useful to all interested parties.

Do not choose general, global topics, such as, for example, "educational software". In order to study such a topic in depth, you will need years. Take into account the time factor and choose a narrower topic that you can study in the time you have. For example, "Development of educational software for teaching mathematics in elementary school". At the same time, do not choose a topic that is too narrow: it will be interesting / useful for a narrow specialist, and besides, it will be difficult for you to find literature on it.

If you have searched for literature and found a large number of resources, there is a danger that the topic is so well studied that you can't say anything new about it, and conversely, if you have had a hard time finding literature on the topic, researching such a topic may prove problematic. Moreover, no one may be interested in the topic.

If you have already chosen a topic, you may need to refine/modify the wording of the topic title as you work on it. This is a process of working on the topic, as it is impossible to take into account all the details in advance. In addition, you should take into account the time and procedure established by the IBSU for changing the topic title.

## 2.2. Problem statement

The problem is the reason why we conduct research, because the problem must be solved at least at some level. Observing the field of your research, reading the relevant literature, experience in the given field (if the student has it) will help you solve the problem. Some students think that they do not have experience in the field (for example, in mathematics, philology, etc., graduates of the master's program do not have experience teaching these subjects), in fact they do have experience in this field - but from the student's perspective, which is no less valuable.

Like research, which can be quantitative (which measures certain variables) or qualitative (which develops a certain model), the problem can be formulated differently.

When formulating a quantitative problem, the focus is on explaining, predicting, or describing some result or event. See an example of such a study:

*It has been noticed that older lecturers have difficulties in using information technologies. There are several reasons for this: low level of interest, lack of access to computers, psychological, economic reasons, etc. Nowadays, universities require lecturers to be able to use computers. Accordingly, the number of lecturers over 60 years old in Tbilisi universities has significantly decreased.*

*Is there a relationship between the age of lecturers and their computer skills? Do the lecturer's age and low level of computer skills affect the quality of their teaching? What is the solution to this problem?*

The author of this paragraph introduces a general topic and formulates a problem. He/she then goes on to identify the problems that a lecturer who does not have adequate computer skills may face. All of these research problems are logical because they reflect an aspect of the field of education that needs to be addressed.

Quantitative research can be conducted to study existing problems and ways to solve them. They focus on cause-and-effect relationships, establishing the type of relationship between variables. Quantitative research often includes a hypothesis, the correctness of which must be tested in the

research process.

In qualitative research, the research problem focuses on defining or explaining some process, event, or phenomenon. For example:

*Women's participation in politics is increasing every year all over the world. Georgia, which has a rich tradition of women's involvement in social, economic and political life, is currently looking for ways to adequately use this situation. Recognizing that women play an important role in modern politics is of paramount importance in order to maintain gender balance in politics and ensure the further development of the country. The wide access of Georgian women to higher education, scientific and many professional careers, as well as global trends, political decisions become more balanced. Through women's participation in them, creates a good basis for their advancement in government decision-making. All this has drawn attention to the problems that exist in Georgia in this direction. Another big problem for society is the offer of a false female leader - one who holds a position, but has no authority. The so-called "glass ceiling" is also a problem of increasing importance, although the government is trying to hide this situation and verbally recognizes women's equal rights as an integral part of democracy. Only with the full inclusion of women in democratic processes can we achieve stable development of the country. What levers can we use for this? What qualitative changes can we expect in the near future?*

In this example, the author begins by presenting evidence on the importance of political participation and then describes the shortcomings in this direction. It reflects the problem of qualitative research. This study aims to examine this process using qualitative (as well as quantitative) methods. The author will try to answer the questions posed.

### 2.3. Research methodology and research methods

The following methodologies and methods may be used in the research process:

a) Interdisciplinary (American Studies):

Case study (specific case study), content analysis, observation and control, interview, online interview, questionnaire, document and text analysis.

b) Engineering direction (Computer Science)

Development of new programs based on existing software and algorithms; Application of current algorithms to solve specific problems; Modeling of current data analysis in computer and other directions.

c) Social Sciences:

Research based on primary data (interviews, observations, content analysis, discussion analysis) or secondary data (interpretation/analysis of theories and empirical data).

d) Business Administration:

Quantitative research: setting the research objective, creating a research scenario, observing and obtaining information, collecting and analyzing data, time series analysis and regression analysis, building and testing a model. Qualitative research: setting the research objective, creating a questionnaire, creating a research scenario, observing and obtaining information, identifying and surveying focus groups, conducting interviews, user surveys, statistical and graphical analysis of information.

e) Educational Sciences:

Interviews, questionnaires, case studies, observations, experiments, document analysis.

c) Humanities:

Practical research: observing participants and non-participants, questionnaires, surveys, interviews,

discussion groups;

Theoretical research: hermeneutics, interpretation, discourse analysis, comparative analysis, text analysis.

g) Social sciences:

Research based on primary data (interview, observation, content analysis, discourse analysis) or secondary data (interpretation/analysis of theories and empirical data).

h) Law:

Analysis of judicial practice, analysis of doctrine, observation, interview, questionnaire, comparative legal analysis, historical method, teleological method.

#### **2.4. Formulating the research objective**

The research objective is a statement of the researcher's plans. It follows logically from the research problem. It is necessary to define it because a well-defined research objective shows how clearly the researcher understands what he or she intends to do.

Defining the research objective from the very beginning of the research allows the researcher to adequately plan the research. The research objective helps him or her, for example, to clarify the methods by which information will be collected. The research objective will be written differently depending on whether you are conducting a qualitative or quantitative study.

The formulation of the research objective in quantitative research is an affirmative sentence that defines why the study is being conducted and what relationships between the variables will be studied. This relationship may be causal or descriptive. For example, if you want to investigate the cause-and-effect relationship that exists between teaching business writing via the Internet and the impact of this teaching on students' communication skills, your objective should be formulated as follows:

*The aim of this study is to investigate the impact that online writing instruction has on students' communication skills (cause-and-effect relationship: does an increase in one variable lead to an increase in the other?).*

On the other hand, if you are interested in describing how business communication and learning effectiveness are interconnected via the Internet, your goal formulation would be as follows:

*The purpose of this study is to describe the extent to which the use of business communication via the Internet affects the quality of student learning (descriptive relationship: to what extent does an increase in one variable affect an increase in the other variable?)*

Both of the above formulations of the purpose define the researcher's plan and the variables to be measured. Both formulations reflect the main parameters that should characterize the purpose: the type of relationships and the variables. Such specification of the purpose is necessary in order to clearly clarify the direction of the research.

In qualitative research, the purpose statement should be a statement that reflects the researcher's plan to study or better understand some phenomenon in a given field. This means that the purpose of qualitative research should meet the following requirements:

1. Express what the researcher intends to describe, understand, develop, or discover.
2. Identify the central idea that you intend to understand, develop, or discover.
3. Indicate the way (method) in which you intend to collect and analyze information, indicating whether you intend to conduct ethnographic research, theoretical research, case analysis, or phenomenological research.
4. Identify the object(s) of the research, for example, fourth-year students participating in a particular program.

For example, one of the authors formulated the purpose of his research as follows: *The aim of this study is to investigate moral and ethical changes in students in inclusive education in secondary schools over a period of five years.*

## 2.5. Formulating a research question

A research question is a specific question that a researcher seeks to answer. In fact, research questions are an extension of the research objective, which specifically defines what questions the researcher intends to answer. Quantitative and qualitative research questions are structurally different from each other.

Quantitative research questions precisely establish the relationships between the target variables. A quantitative research question is a question-form sentence that asks a question about the relationship between two or more variables. Descriptive, predictive, and causal questions are used, for example:

Is there a positive correlation between the cost of a product and its sales? If we increase the amount of homework, will the level of skills increase? Does watching aggressive movies cause teenagers to behave aggressively?

A quantitative research question precisely defines the variables that are to be investigated.

In qualitative research, more general questions are asked about a process or event. A qualitative research question is a sentence in the form of a question that asks a question about the process, issue, or event being investigated. It is an open-ended general question that allows for a variety of answers.

A descriptive question is a question that aims to determine whether a particular variable can be used to predict a future outcome. Descriptive questions try to determine, for example,

“What changes over time or across situations?” or “What is the average education level of a company’s top management?”. Descriptive questions try to determine the level/intensity of the relationship between two or more variables.

Causal questions are questions that compare variants of an event in order to determine the cause of something. These questions often require some manipulation of the independent variable. The results before and after the manipulation are then compared. An example of a causal question is “What do consumers cite as the reason for their choice? Why?”

From such a general question, you can often move on to a narrower research objective and more specific questions.

It is useful to first state the general purpose of the research and then formulate a few specific questions that break down the general question into more specific research components.

If you ask a question in the introduction of your dissertation, you must answer it in the conclusion - based on the results of a literature review, survey, interview, or experiment. These questions should be reflected in the hypothesis, because in order to answer the questions, you need to test the hypothesis.

## **2.6. Formulation of the hypothesis**

A hypothesis is a researcher's prediction of the relationship that exists between the research variables. It logically follows from the research questions, as it cannot be formulated unless you have formulated the research questions.

A hypothesis is an attempt to solve an existing problem(s) that is subject to testing. A hypothesis is an idea of what might be true - based on logical reasoning and experience. A working hypothesis is not binding on the researcher; on the contrary, he or she can modify or reject it during the research process.

Some research may begin without a hypothesis. Sometimes, it is necessary to study the field in depth (literature analysis, process observation, use of questionnaires or interviews) before the researcher can formulate a hypothesis. Also, as mentioned above, the working hypothesis may be significantly modified based on the results of the literature analysis and observation.

The hypothesis of the above study on teaching business English can be formulated as follows:

The use of business online correspondence in the learning process will promote students' learning ability and develop their communication skills.

A hypothesis is typically derived from an analysis of the literature or some theory. A hypothesis is based on some existing theory and attempts to predict the relationships between variables based on it.

A hypothesis can also arise from the researcher's logical reasoning, according to his or her beliefs. The researcher may make a prediction based on empirical observation or experience.

Regardless of the source of the hypothesis, it must meet one requirement: it must be possible to confirm or reject it. Accordingly, in correlational studies (which attempt to determine the relationship between two or more variables), there are positive, negative, and null hypotheses, for example:

- a) Increasing the number of writing exercises will improve spelling skills.
- b) Increasing the number of writing exercises will harm spelling skills.
- c) Increasing the number of writing exercises will have no effect on spelling skills.

If the literature review suggests that one of the hypotheses is correct, it is not necessary to test all three hypotheses.

In qualitative research, we do not measure variables; the research is conducted to describe or discover important variables. Therefore, the moral, ethical, and religious issues that arise from such research are not amenable to empirical investigation. In many qualitative studies, the researcher asks questions rather than formulates hypotheses, and some questions arise during the course of the research.

## **2.7. Literature review**

Familiarizing yourself with the literature on the research topic will help us not to waste time “reinventing the wheel”.

If you do not yet know exactly what your research problem and topic will be, the purpose of the research, start reading literature in the area that you want to connect your research with (for example, 19th century legislation). If you start reading literature just before approving the topic, you will have serious problems when working on your dissertation. We advise master's students to start thinking about the research topic one semester before they officially start working on it. Literature analysis will either confirm your ideas or ignore them. It will help you to formulate a hypothesis competently.

In fact, by the time you meet with your potential supervisor, you should have 2-3 possible areas that you have studied in depth and about which you have original ideas.

### **Where/how can you find sources? What sources should you look for?**

The library catalog and the Internet will help you make a choice, but this does not mean that Internet resources can make the majority of the literature used. Most of the sources that you will use should be master's theses (for a master's thesis), doctoral dissertations (for a dissertation), scientific books, articles that are included in peer-reviewed research journals, and scientific conference proceedings. Some publications are available both in traditional form (on paper) and electronically. Since such publications, like materials printed only on paper, undergo peer-review, they are quite reliable.

When writing articles and dissertations, doctoral students should mainly use dissertations and research articles with a high citation index from journals with a high impact factor. Most of the sources used should be quite recent (for example, published in the last 5-10 years). At the same time, Internet sites that do not have published versions in paper form are often not reliable and you should avoid them. Official sites of organizations such as UNESCO, the UN, the European Union, ministries, etc. are reliable and can be used.

Choose your search terms or keywords. Some students think that these words are only taken from the topic title. This is not the case. If you already have a thesis outline, you can take these words from the outline. If not, think of all the important concepts in the topic you are researching, ask your supervisor to suggest keywords. After your literature search has yielded some results, read the abstracts of the papers you found, information about the authors, in order to find out how useful the source is for your topic and how reliable it is. Review the publications. Only if you consider them useful, process them in depth.

Photocopy or make an electronic copy of the literature you plan to use. Make sure that the copy includes all the necessary information (see below). It may be very difficult or even impossible to find this information later. Underline important points, make comments in the margins. This will help you when writing your dissertation.

To search for literature, use professional databases, such as ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center, sponsored by the US government, EBSCO (Elton Bryson Stephens Company), Intellectual Property and Science (IPS by Thomson Reuters), Google Scholar, etc. Some publications are paid, but there is also free information in these databases. Check with your university library to see which

databases are free.

Some students simply cite other authors' opinions in the literature review section. This is not how a literature review is written. It should be analyzed, which means that your opinion should be presented (regardless of whether it coincides with the opinions expressed in the papers being analyzed), and you should discuss the reasons why you support (or do not support) the opinions expressed by other authors. The same opinion expressed by different authors should not be presented separately, but should be summarized (for example, Smith, 2007; Brown, 2011, and Johnson, 2012 believe that ...).

A literature review is not an end in itself - it should lead you to the research topic: the issues you will observe and/or discuss, the variables you will measure. If not, such a review is useless. For example, if your dissertation is about teaching English grammar to first-year students and the subtopic is called "History of Grammar Teaching," you should not discuss issues related to teaching in preschool or elementary school.

## **2.8. Structure**

For your master's thesis, please follow the following templates developed by the International Black Sea University:

- a) Master's thesis template in Georgian/English;

For your doctoral dissertation, please use the following template:

- b) Dissertation template (English)
- c) Abstract title page (Georgian, English)

A master's thesis/doctoral dissertation includes:

- a) Title page and second title page; ;

- b) Acknowledgements (optional),
- c) List of tables, figures and graphs, list of abbreviations (in alphabetical order),
- d) Short summary for master's thesis,
- e) Abstract (for doctoral dissertation);
- f) Introduction,
- g) Usually 2-4 chapters,
- h) Conclusions (and recommendations), i) List of references,
- j) Appendices.

An abstract is a brief overview of a paper: presenting its topic, objectives, methods, results, and conclusions. It is advisable to indicate to whom your research is of interest.

The structure of the abstract includes:

- a) an introduction (with the same components as in a doctoral dissertation),
- b) a brief overview of all chapters, with special emphasis on the contribution of the researcher himself, especially in the research chapter,
- c) conclusions and recommendations (as in a doctoral dissertation)
- d) a list of publications that the student has published related to the dissertation.

### **2.8.1 Tables and figures**

The dissertation's text should only contain tables and figures that are absolutely required and offer fundamental information; the remainder should be relegated to the appendices.

### **2.8.2 Abbreviations**

Use abbreviations sparingly. Many abbreviations are confusing to readers. If you create your own abbreviation, use the full term the first time you use it, then use the abbreviation in parentheses, for example:

"The criterion variable was preference for sick humor (PSH)".

In addition to very well-known abbreviations, such as UN, VAT, etc., the full version must also be given when they are used for the first time in the text of the work. If the title of a journal that is included in the list of references is an abbreviation, it must also be included in the list of abbreviations.

### **2.8.3. Introduction**

The problem, its background, and its importance are typically presented at the start of the introduction.

The introduction should include:

- a) a clearly formulated problem,
- b) research objectives,
- c) research questions,
- d) hypothesis,
- e) novelty, relevance of the work,
- f) practical and theoretical value,
- g) research methods,
- h) structure of the master's thesis/dissertation.

Some of them (for example, hypothesis, novelty, theoretical value) are not mandatory for a master's thesis.

Do not start writing a dissertation with an introduction, or revise it again after you have finished working on the dissertation.

### **2.8.4. Research part**

The research chapter (“case”, survey, interview, experiment) should include:

1. A general description of the research methods (qualitative/quantitative; variables; survey, interview, experiment, case, text analysis, etc.);
2. Information among participants that is relevant to the type of research (number of

respondents/experiment participants, some information about them, such as age, professional experience, gender, socio-economic status, level of education/knowledge, etc.; in the case of a survey, the percentage of completed questionnaires from the distributed questionnaires). Research ethics require that participants in the study be volunteers and their participation anonymous;

3. Description of the context (where and when the study was conducted) and procedure (how the variables were measured, how the reliability and validity of the results/procedure were ensured);

4. Results, their analysis and interpretation.

#### **2.8.5. Presenting a statistical data**

Statistical results should be presented in the form of tables (if necessary, with explanations of the terms used in them) and explained verbally.

Pay attention to the difference between the terms: review, case (case analysis), interviewing and questionnaire only establish the existing situation. The experiment includes two groups: control (where the process proceeds as usual) and experimental (where some innovative approach is used). The goal of the experiment is to determine whether the proposed approach is more effective than the traditional one.

#### **2.8.6. Citation**

There are different citation styles, at IBSU we use the so-called APA style, unless otherwise specified by the relevant educational program. In addition, the work must be performed in one reference and citation style. When using any style, there is basic information that must be presented: author (surname, initials or full name), title, year of publication, name of journal, book, etc.

In the text of a research paper, only the author's last name and the year of publication are written. If the opinion presented is a quotation, it should be enclosed in quotation marks and the page should be indicated, for example:

Laufer (1986) and Nation (1990) have argued that “little can be said without grammar, and nothing without vocabulary” (p. 2).

In other cases, a page reference is preferred, but not required. Usually, initials and full names are omitted, although it is permissible to include the researcher's name when first mentioning him, for example: Stephen Krashen (1975) was the first to distinguish between "learning" and "assimilation".

A quotation that is longer than 50 words should be printed as a separate paragraph, slightly shorter than the main text, with less line spacing and without quotation marks. The period is at the end of the sentence and is followed by the page reference. In other cases (as in the example above), the period is written after the page reference. "Assimilation".

Richards and Renandya (2002) found that vocabulary is a key component of language proficiency; it underpins much of the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Without a rich vocabulary, students often fail to reach their potential and may lose motivation. (p. 252)

Remember that if an author is mentioned in the text, their publication should be included in the reference list, and vice versa.

#### **2.8.7. The rule for citing the source used:**

##### **a) Journal article**

Surname, initials. (Year). Title (without capital letters except for the first word). Journal name (italics, all words begin with a capital letter). Number, issue, pages:

Tabatabaei, O., & Goojani, A. H. (2012). The impact of text-messaging on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 8(2), 47-55

(or the abbreviation “p.”) Write or simply separate them with a comma for all articles: “8 (2), p. 47-55” or “8 (2): 47-55,” do not write in one pattern and then in the other.

##### **b) An article from a book**

Surname, initials. (Year). Title (without capital letters except for the first word). Surname, initials of the author (editor) of the book. Title of the book (in italics, in capital letters). Place of publication: Publishing house, pages:

Yahya, N. (2007). Second language vocabulary development and instruction. In H. Zainuddin, N. Yahya, C. A. Morales-Jones, & E. N. W. Ariza (Eds.), *Fundamentals of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages in k-12 Mainstream Classrooms*. Dubuque, IA: Kendal/Hunt, p.163- 181

**c) book**

Surname, initials. (Year). Title (in capital letters). Place of publication: Publishing house

Underwood, J. H. (1984). *Linguistics, Computers, and the Language Teacher: A Communicative Approach*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House

If a book does not have an author or editor, we can write the organization instead:

UNESCO. (1998). *Learning to live together in peace and harmony: values education for peace, human rights, democracy and sustainable development for the Asia-Pacific Region; a UNESCO/APNIEVE sourcebook for teachers education and tertiary level education*. Bangkok, Thailand: UNESCO PROAP

If the book has been published more than once, indicate which edition it is (for example: 4th ed.). If the year of publication is not given, indicate n.d. (not dated).

**d) Electronic sources:**

Do not just write the Internet address. Sometimes it is impossible to find the source of the information. The information should be presented in a format that is as similar as possible to the printed publication. If the website does not have an author, indicate the organization or the name of the website. If neither is available, start directly with the title. Finally, you should indicate when and from what address the material was taken, for example:

Suits, B. (1967). *What Is a Game?* *Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 34. Retrieved April 21, 2014 from <http://www.stsintl.com/articles/whatisagame.html>

NCTE / IRA. (2012). *Standards for the English Language Arts*. September 1, 2014 from <http://www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira>

Georgian National Standard. (2012). (In Georgian). Retrieved May 20, 2014 from [http://eqe.ge/geo/textbook\\_approval/textbook\\_approval\\_2011](http://eqe.ge/geo/textbook_approval/textbook_approval_2011)

If you have found an electronic source in another article and are using it in your research, make sure that the source is still available. Write the date you accessed it.

The list of references is written alphabetically. Among publications by the same author, you list the most recent first, then the oldest. If you have used several publications by the same author that were published in the same year, they can be cited as follows: Stone, 2012a and Stone 2012 b. If one publication has one author, and another publication has the same author as a co-author, the publication with one author comes first, then the publication with two or more authors, for example:

Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching Vocabulary: A Vocabulary Research Manual*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Schmitt, N. (1997 a). Vocabulary learning strategies. In Schmitt, N. and McCarthy, M. (eds), *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition, and Pedagogy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 17-26

Schmitt, N. (Ed.) (1997b). *Vocabulary: Description, acquisition, and pedagogy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmitt, N. and Meara, P. (1997). Researching vocabulary through a word knowledge framework: Word associations and verbal suffixes. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 19, p. 17–36

### **2.8.8. Language**

The way you write affects the reader. Therefore, your writing should be structured to be understandable. Do not use very long sentences, if this makes the text difficult to understand.

Use personal pronouns carefully if the previous sentence includes more than one subject. Use academic vocabulary, refrain from using slang. Do not use abbreviated forms (don't, isn't). Avoid using exclamation marks.

The length of paragraphs should be moderate. Start a new paragraph every time you move on to a new idea / topic.

Avoid discriminatory language. Do not use masculine pronouns when referring to people of both genders. You can avoid discrimination based on gender by using paraphrase. For example, the sentence "The participant rated his preference for each joke" should be replaced with "The participant rated each joke for preference" or "Participants rated their preferences for each joke." If you want to refer to both genders, avoid using "s/he," especially if it is repeated many times. Although pronouns in Georgian do not differ by gender, there are a few nouns (for example, stewardess) that express gender and should be treated with caution.

Avoid using uncomfortable words: don't say "disabled student", say "student with limited abilities".

### **2.8.9. Tense-aspect forms**

In a research paper, the report is usually written in the past tense because it describes events that have happened (what the researchers did and found). The present tense is more acceptable in the introduction or discussion section when you are analyzing theories, and in the results section when you are describing information in tables/figures/graphs. Sometimes it is permissible to use the future tense. The tense should not change within a paragraph, and especially not within a sentence.

### **2.8.10. Singular/plural**

The words must agree with each other in number, for example, the sentence "Each participant made their responses in writing." should be replaced with the sentence "Participants made their responses in writing."

### **2.8.11. Personal pronouns**

Traditionally, most reports were written in the third person (he, she, they). Today, it is becoming popular to use the first person (I, we). The APA manual recommends that we only use the first person when necessary. Do not switch from one pronoun to another (sometimes "I conducted a survey" and sometimes "we obtained the following results"). In Georgian, use impersonal sentences (not "I conducted a survey," but "the survey was conducted").

### **2.8.12. Voice**

In English, it is better to use the active pronoun rather than the passive pronoun. In Georgian, the use of the passive pronoun is acceptable.

Use either English or American grammar rules in grammar and spelling in the same text, except for the spelling in quotes (for example, do not write 'behavior' in one place and 'behaviour' in another).

## Chapter III. Structure of Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation

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### 3.1 Typing

Use Times New Roman for English and Sylfaen for Georgian texts.

The chapter title should be typed in 14-point font, capital letters, subheadings - 12-point, text - 12-point. The line spacing should be 1.5. Paragraphs should be separated (indented or with spacing between paragraphs). Do not use italics (except when citing or citing literature).

It is best to place the headings on the left. In any case, all headings should be formatted the same way - starting in the right margin or centered on the line.

The introduction, each chapter, conclusions and list of references should start on a new page. There should be 1-2 lines left between subheadings. The table heading should be on the same page as the table itself (do not split them). The sub-chapter title should not end the page (it should be followed by at least one line).

### 3.2 Paper

A4 format, good quality paper, orientation: portrait.

### 3.3 Margins

2.5 centimeters below and above, 3 cm - left and 1.5 - right

### 3.4 Page numbering

Pages should be numbered at the bottom, in the middle. The cover page should not be numbered. The second page of the cover (in master's theses and dissertations), the acknowledgments, the list of tables, figures and graphs, the list of abbreviations, the summary and the table of contents should be numbered in Roman numerals. The numbering in Arabic numerals begins with the introduction. When we indicate the length of the work, we mean the number of pages from the introduction to the end of the conclusions (excluding the list of literature and appendices). This is 50-90 pages for a master's theses and 110-200 (+/-10%) pages for a dissertation.

### **3.5 Tables and illustrations**

All tables and figures should be titled and numbered. The title should be written in one place throughout the paper - above or below the table. The table number should include its number, a period and the number of the table in the given chapter, for example 2.1 (= the first table in the second chapter).

Table 2.2. List of institutions subordinate to the Ministry of Economy If you have compiled the table yourself, this should be mentioned in the text. If

you use any source, this should be indicated, for example: (Ministry of Economics, 2012: 17)

If you have used someone else's table, but modified it, this should also be indicated.

### **3.6 Printing and binding**

The dissertation must be submitted in printed form, on one page of paper, and thermally bound. The same applies to the dissertation abstracts. Abstracts submitted in English/Georgian must be bound separately.

### **3.7 Presenting in an electronic format**

Master's thesis and doctoral dissertation must be submitted in hard copy and electronically – on disk, in PDF format.

## Chapter IV. Ethical Issues in Research, Plagiarism

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### 4.1. Ethics

Ethics are principles and rules that help us protect our values.

Research ethics are principles that help researchers conduct research in compliance with ethical norms. These issues are considered by the Research Ethics Commission.

Falsification of particularly important information by scientists. The most serious crime that a scientist can commit is falsification of results (fabrication of non-existent data or alteration of real results).

Other serious ethical issues:

Partial publication - collecting data for one study and then publishing several articles based on a certain part of this data (in fact, hiding part of the data). However, in the case of large-scale research, it is quite acceptable to publish several articles based on this data if they relate to different research questions.

Duplicate publication - publishing the same data in more than one publication. In some countries/institutions, it is considered acceptable for a researcher to present a paper at a conference (usually without publication) that has already been published as an article, but is of interest to the conference participants. First, the source of the paper must be acknowledged at the conference. Furthermore, such a paper cannot be considered as another publication. At the University of Georgia, we completely avoid such duplication.

Use of results - There is a risk of misuse or misinterpretation of results. It is the ethical duty of a scientist to resist such practices. This often means speaking out publicly against such cases. Falsification of data, methods, or results is unacceptable.

## 4.2. Plagiarism

Derived from the Latin word *plagiarius* (kidnapper), plagiarism refers to a problem of academic integrity, defined as

“False evidence of authorship: the passing off of another person’s ideas as one’s own” (Alexander Lindey, 1952. *Plagiarism and Originality*, New York: Harper). Plagiarism is the appropriation of intellectual property. Strictly speaking, it is more of a moral and ethical issue than a legal one, as most cases of plagiarism do not infringe copyright and are not criminal offenses. Nevertheless, plagiarism is often severely punished, ranging from failing a course to expulsion from the institution, as well as the revocation of a degree.

Forms of plagiarism include:

- a) failure to provide adequate citation (passing off someone else’s ideas as one’s own - the real author is not mentioned);
- b) attributing to the author an idea that he or she did not express;
- c) Cite a quote without quotation marks.

If we quote a quote without quotation marks (to avoid using excessive quotation marks), we are obliged to paraphrase it (represent the idea in our own words). Paraphrasing does not mean simply omitting / adding / replacing some words with synonyms. We must use a different sentence structure, in fact, quoting the author's opinion in our own words. According to APA style, when quoting / citing the author's opinion, the source used must be indicated in parentheses with the author's surname, year of publication and page number. If the idea is not expressed on a specific page, but represents the essence of the entire work, the page reference is not mandatory.

In the text of the work, all works mentioned must be indicated in the list of references, and vice versa, all works listed in the list of references must be reported in the text of the research paper. This issue is regulated in accordance with the "Academic Integrity Policy" document.