**Executive order of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan on approval of Regulations on procedures for preparation, presentation and defence of Master’s Thesis**

Governed by Regulations for Master Degree Training approved by the order 15 of February 13, 1997, of the Cabinet of Ministries of the Republic of Azerbaijan and in order to regulate the preparation, presentation and defence of Master’s Thesis at the Master’s degree level of higher education, **it is hereby ordered as follows:**

1. Approve Regulations on procedures for preparation, presentation and defence of Master’s Thesis (attached).

2. Department for higher and secondary special education (I. Mustafayev) shall deliver the order to local departments and ensure its application.

3. Rectors of higher education establishments shall provide the strict execution of Regulations in the Master’s training process.

4. Deputy Education Minister (A. Abdinov) shall implement the control over the execution of the order.

***Misir Mardanov***

***Minister of Education***

***20.04.1998***

***#202***

 **Regulations on procedures for preparation, presentation and defence of Master’s Thesis**

**I. General rules**

1.1. These Regulations specify procedures for the granting of Master’s degree in culture, art and physical training fields, excluding some specialties.

Master’s degree is granted by the decision of relevant Specialised Councils created by the higher education establishment within the existing rules for the Master’s Thesis Defence.

1.2. Individuals successfully defended their Master's Thesis are granted a state standard diploma.

**II. Specialized Councils on Master’s Thesis Defence**

2.1. The final stage of study at the master's level is the defence of the thesis. Individuals fully completed curriculum for all disciplines and received relevant marks may defend the master’s thesis. The defence is conducted at the meetings of Specialized Councils.

2.2. Specialized Councils as one of the main parts of the master’s training system are established and acted over a calendar year.

2.3. A petition to establish Specialized Councils is solicited by a faculty based on the presentations of departments of the faculty implemented master’s programmes.

2.4. The Rules for creation of Specialized Councils is specified by the relevant regulations approved by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

2.5. In the case of revealing shortcomings made by Specialized Councils in fulfilling requirements and defence rules for master’s thesis defence, the head of higher education establishment may take organizational measures regarding their activity.

2.6. The work of Specialized Councils is directed by the chairman appointed by the Ministry of Education based on the presentation of higher education establishment. The work of councils is directed by the dean of faculties to which they are subordinated, as well as by the head of higher education establishment and pro-rector for education affairs.

The management of higher education establishment and faculty are responsible to create necessary conditions for activity of Specialized Councils.

2.7. The payment of expenses for Master’s thesis defence is regulated by respective documents.

2.8. The assessment of student knowledge during the dissertation defence is taken by a simple majority vote. The defence of master’s defence is assessed as “unsatisfactory”, “satisfactory”, “good” and “excellent.”

**III. Requirements for master’s thesis**

3.1. Master’s thesis is a scientific – research (creative) and practical – constructive works implemented independently by a student under the direction of a supervisor. Master’s thesis shall reflect innovations made by students in the relevant specialisation and field.

Preparation of master’s thesis and its successful defence are an obligatory condition for fulfilling of master’s programme.

3.2. Master’s thesis shall meet one of the following requirements:

- find a creative solution of any task important for the relevant scientific direction;

- make a scientific comment on technical, economic and technology works, which have an applied importance;

Results received from Master’s Thesis of student shall be scientifically and practically grounded, as well as comparatively assessed by existence facts and shall reflect recommendations for their use.

3.3. The topic and plan of Master’s Thesis, as well as his supervisor shall be satisfied with scientific directions of the department, and based on the presentation given by the department shall be approved by the Scientific Council of faculty within 3 months of the first semester.

3.4. The expediency of the research in the topic of the master's thesis should be substantiated.

In exceptional circumstances, as well as when the topic of Master’s Thesis will be the same with the specialties, a councillor may be appointed. The councillor could be selected among high profile experts of another education, scientific – research and economic establishments.

3.5. Before beginning to write the Master’s Thesis, the department to which the student belongs along with faculties, and Magistracy Department (responsible officer for Magistracy) shall prepare methodical instructions specified obligatory requirements for thesis and inform students about these instructions.

3.6. Supervisor:

- gives a task for the Master’s Thesis;

- helps to a student to prepare an individual working plan encompassed the period for preparation of the Master's thesis;

- gives to students the list of scientific – methodical literature, archival materials, projects and other sources for thesis;

- according to the individual working plan, regularly talks to the student and gives him scientific and methodical advices;

3.7. Students regularly report the supervisor and department on the preparation of the thesis. The date of the report in front of departments is specified by management of faculty. According to the results of the report, the preparedness level of the work is determined.

3.8. Student is responsible for the accuracy of information given in the Master’s Thesis.

3.9. Master’s Thesis is written in learning language and the student shall refer to materials, results of different sources and authors in the prescribed manner.

In the case of use of other materials and not referring to the author and literature the dissertation may be returned at any stage of examination.

3.10. Master’s Thesis shall be typed on the typewriter or computer, and double spaced. It length should be no more than 75 typed pages (including appendices) and should be bound. The title list of Master’s Thesis and composition of the topic should respond to requirements of Appendix 8.

3.11. Student should write an abstract reflecting a brief summary of the thesis. The volume of the abstract should be 1.5-line spaced and no more than two pages long.

3.12. By the consent of the department, the student may write the abstract of the thesis in one of the foreign languages and during the defence answer to questions in this language.

**IV. Presentation and Defence of Master’s Thesis**

4.1. Generally, the Master’s Thesis Defence is held from March to June of each year. The defence of Master’s Thesis could be rescheduled for valid reasons based on defined procedures.

4.2. Student presents his thesis along with the abstract to the supervisor after completing the thesis and preparing it based on the requirements. The supervisor checks the work and approves it. Further, he presents the thesis along with a reference to the department. The reference reflects works implemented at all parts of the thesis, and substantiated the accuracy of received results. The thesis is discussed at the meeting and presented to the Dean of the faculty along with the references. The Dean of faculty makes a decision on the admission of the thesis to defence and makes relevant notes in the title page of the thesis.

In the case if the dean of the faculty will refuse to accept the thesis to defence, the case will be considered at the Dean's office by participation of the supervisor.

4.3. Master’s Theses accepted for the defence are sent by the relevant department to the official reviewer no later than 15 days before the defence.

Official reviewers may be appointed among specialists working at scientific and industrial establishments; or among specialists with scientific titles and working at this university or other universities.

4.4. Official reviewer after analysing the thesis prepares a review statement and presents it to the Specialised Council. The review should reflect the actuality of the topic, the newness of its results, and respond to the demanded requirements.

The thesis can be presented to the defence along with copies of reviews of the official reviewer and consent of the student no later than 5 days before the defence. The official reviewer is responsible for the quality and impartiality of his review. Moreover, he remains responsible for delivery of the review to the student and Specialised Council within a defined period of time.

4.5. Student should present following documents in order to defend the Master’s Thesis at the Specialised Council no later than 3 days before the defence.

- statement (including the relevant footnote of the Dean);

- reviewer of the supervisor;

- Master’s Thesis – 1 copy (after defence keeping at the faculty);

- abstract 1 copy (after defence keeping at the faculty);

- Review of the official reviewer;

-  copy of individual working plan of the student.

4.6. A secretary of the Specialised Council inspects documents, and makes a relevant note on the abstract regarding the time, date and location of the defence.

4.7. In the case if required documents will not be submitted by the set deadline. The extension for the defence may only be granted where there is a good reason.

4.8. A meeting of Specialised Council shall be validly constituted when absolute 2/3 of its members are present at the meeting.

4.9. An open defence of the Master’s Thesis should be held in a scientific debate, in a high exacting standards and principled manner. During the defence, the correctness and substantiation of all results, scientific and practical proposals of the thesis should be comprehensively analysed.

The supervisor and official reviewers may not take part in the defence in the case if they will give a positive view on the thesis.

The defence of each Master’s Thesis lasts 45 minutes. 10 -15 minutes will be given for the report of the student.

4.10. After completing the defence of the thesis the members of the Council hold a vote in a prescribed manner. If more members vote in favour than against, then the Council will make a decision on granting a Master’s degree.

4.11. If the Council will take a negative decision on the thesis, resubmission of the thesis will be held within no later than one month after eliminating deficiencies in work. In the case of re-enactment of the negative decision, resubmission (no more than 2 times) of the thesis with a new topic is permitted within the period prescribed for the thesis defence of graduates of the next study year.

4.12. In the case of the thesis will not be submitted for the defence, the student of Master’s level will be granted a certificate of attendance of the relevant programmes.