
ISE MNU PHD THESIS GUIDELINE

2023-2024



2023 – 2024

International School of Economics
Maqsut Narikbayev University

PhD Thesis

A thesis is a key and central part of the Doctoral degree programme. The thesis is a confirmation of an independent researcher's skills gained during the study period. It must represent an original and independent research generating new knowledge, critically evaluating and exploring relevant ideas, and relating them to a broader knowledge context. With the thesis, a PhD Candidate must demonstrate a systematic understanding of an academic field, research methods used, and the ability to independently conduct empirical research of a publishable quality confirmed by appropriate publication(s).

Thesis supervision

Each PhD student is assigned to a supervisor(s). The supervisor is a qualified person with a PhD degree or equivalent in the related field actively involved in the research. The supervisor might be assigned by the school faculty members or higher educational institutions, research centres, public and private companies with expertise in the related field.

Supervisor's responsibility:

- Supervisor guides a student throughout the PhD thesis. The supervisor helps the student to formulate a research topic, identify relevant literature, and develop a research design in order to carry out the thesis in conformity with academic principles and expectations.
- Supervisor also comments and gives feedback on the draft for the thesis through different stages. Supervisor duties do not include providing proofreading of the thesis.
- Supervisor and a student should establish a schedule of regular meetings (not less than one meeting per month). During the meeting PhD students are expected to discuss their research in progress. They have to submit a brief report after each meeting to Canvas. This will be routinely monitored by the programme administration.
- Submission of the thesis is possible only after the official approval received from the supervisor(s). The approval ensures the appropriate quality of the thesis. The quality of the submitted thesis is the supervisor's responsibility (main supervisor, in case of more than one supervisor).

In Kazakhstan, the PhD defense and PhD degree award could only be done by the special Expert Councils. There are two types of Expert Councils. National universities that are believed to be most research-intensive have their own Expert Councils and have a right to award PhD degrees. Other universities can establish their own Experts Councils but only under the permission of the Academic and Research Quality Assurance Committee under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (further referred to as ARQAC). The thesis defended in these Councils along with the relevant documentation should be sent to the ARQAC which awards the degree. The ARQAC verifies the quality of the thesis and its compliance with the principles of independence, internal unity, scientific novelty, reliability and applicability, and academic integrity (Degree Award Rules).

The thesis should then be considered by the ISE Committee for Academic Quality and recommended for submission to the Expert Council. In case, if no Expert Council was commenced by the ISE at the moment of submission of the first thesis, the PhD Candidate(s) would be recommended another Expert Council (or the list of recommended Councils) to apply to. The candidate will be present at the AQC meeting to address possible questions and receive feedback. The meeting should be also attended by the ISE graduate-level instructors with the relevant expertise, and their feedbacks will be accounted for. The appropriate quality of the thesis must be ensured by the supervisor's approval and is his/her responsibility (main supervisor, in case of more than

one supervisor). However, in exceptional cases, the AQC reserves the right to not approve proceeding to the defense. The AQC decision should include a clear and transparent justification for the decision and further recommendations.

The final thesis should be assessed by a supervisor and the AQC against the following criteria:

- the thesis represents an original and independent piece of research generating new knowledge, critically evaluating and exploring relevant ideas, and relating them to a broader knowledge context
- throughout the thesis, the candidate demonstrates a systematic understanding of an academic field, research methods used, and the ability to independently conduct empirical research in economics
- the thesis is of publishable quality.

The PhD thesis defence is an oral public examination. Universities and the Councils are not granted academic freedom to define a procedure. Each Expert Council member has to read the thesis in advance. Additionally, two non-anonymous reviewers with expertise in a relevant field are assigned. They should provide comprehensive reviews for a thesis before the defence where the reviews should be presented. The defended thesis with the accompanying documents (examination minutes, decisions, etc.) is then sent to the ARQAC for degree award.

Graduation Requirements

PhD Student

In accordance with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education requirements, a PhD student is expected to complete classroom training (Core Courses I and II) during his/her first and/or second year of study. After successful completion (with "Pass" grades for each course), PhD student automatically receives the PhD Candidate ("All But Dissertation") status.

PhD Candidate then is given three years for successful completion of the PhD thesis.

The dissertation is submitted in one of the following forms:

- 1) a thesis or,

2) at least two articles and one review or three articles published in Q1 and/or Q2 journals according to the Journal Citation Reports by Clarivate Analytics. In one of the articles, the PhD student must be the first author or corresponding author.

In addition to the thesis, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education mandates each PhD Candidate to publish academic articles in recognized peer-reviewed journals. A certain number of publications is the requirement to be admitted for the thesis defense procedure. The number of publications depends on the quality of the journals:

<i>International peer-reviewed journals</i>	<i>Local recognised journals recommended by the Quality Assurance Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education</i>
One article or review published in a journal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - with JCR impact factor, and - indexed by Web of Science Core Collection (Arts and Humanities Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded sections), or - having at least 25 percentile by Scopus CiteScore 	Three articles
One article published in a journal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - indexed by Web of Science Core Collection (Arts and Humanities Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded, Social Sciences Citation Index sections), and - ranked Q1 or Q2, or - having at least 35 percentile by Scopus CiteScore 	No articles required
At least two articles published in a journal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - indexed by Web of Science Core Collection (Arts and Humanities Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded, Social Sciences Citation Index sections), and - ranked Q1, Q2, or Q3 - having at least 35 percentile by Scopus CiteScore or one article and one review published in journal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - indexed by Web of Science Core Collection (Arts and Humanities Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded, 	No articles required

<p>Social Sciences Citation Index sections), and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ranked Q1, Q2, or Q3 - having at least 35 percentile by Scopus CiteScore 	
<p>A monograph chapter (at least 3 pages), published in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elsevier, Brill, CRC Press, DeGruyter, Edward Elgar Publishing, John Wiley & Sons McGraw Hill, Palgrave Macmillan, Peter Lang, Prentice Hall, Routledge, Sage Publications, Springer Nature, Taylor and Francis, Wolters Kluwer, or - US News Best Global Universities Rankings, Academic Ranking of World Universities, or Times Higher Education World University 	No articles required
<p>One article published journal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ranked Q1 - having at least 75 percentile by Scopus CiteScore 	No articles required

If a PhD student is unable to meet publication requirements, he/she may apply to the Extension status. To be eligible a student should complete all credit workload (including all practices). At the ISE, the extension status to be awarded a maximum of three years. The extension status should be awarded by the ISE Committee for Academic Quality. The application should be submitted via Student Service Center MNU.