

Regulation on Master's Studies of the Georgian Technical University > Resolution of the Academic Council No. 01-05-04/133 of 14 August 2020

1. Objectives of Master's Studies

1.1. Master's studies constitute the second cycle of academic higher education. A master's educational programme is an educational programme of the second cycle of academic higher education whose learning outcomes correspond to the generalised learning outcomes defined for level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework;

1.2. The objectives of master's studies are:

- a) the acquisition of deep and systematic knowledge and the development of appropriate skills in the relevant field, sector/speciality and/or sub-sector/specialisation, which prepares a person for work, taking into account the restrictions established by the legislation of Georgia, and/or for doctoral studies;
- b) a change of speciality (except for regulated educational programmes);
- c) preparation for scientific research work and for pedagogical activity at a higher education institution;
- d) professional development and upgrading of qualifications.

2. Educational and Research Components of a Master's Programme

2.1. The total volume of 120 credits of a master's educational programme is distributed as follows: the educational component (courses (subjects)/modules/concentrations) – no fewer than 75 credits, and the scientific research component, presented in the form of a master's project/thesis or a creative/performance work or another scientific project/paper/activity (hereinafter the master's thesis) – no fewer than 30 credits.

2.2. Depending on its volume, the master's thesis may be completed over one or two semesters.

3. Master's Student's Supervisor/Supervisors

3.1. A master's student's supervisor may be a professor, associate professor or assistant professor of the relevant academic department of GTU, invited personnel/a teacher (a person holding the academic degree of doctor), an emeritus, or a chief or senior researcher holding the academic degree of doctor at a scientific institute/centre integrated with GTU. A master's student's supervisor may also be an employee of another institution holding the academic degree of doctor, provided that an agreement/memorandum has been concluded between GTU and that institution.

3.2. The master's student's supervisor, in agreement with the master's student, draws up a personal work plan (Annex 1), which must indicate the title of the master's thesis, the list of compulsory and elective subjects/modules/concentrations, and the activities to be carried out under the scientific research component.

3.3. The master's student's supervisor supervises the master's student's completion of the master's thesis and its preparation for defence.

4. Joint Master's Programme

4.1. GTU may implement a master's programme jointly with a higher education institution recognised in accordance with the legislation of Georgia and/or of a foreign country. The rules for implementing a joint programme are established by GTU in accordance with the legislation of Georgia, the Statute of the University, its regulatory documents and the agreements/memoranda concluded with the partner institution.

4.2. In the case of a joint master's programme, the programme may have a head from each institution. A joint master's programme must satisfy all the conditions set out in the "Rules for Planning, Developing, Evaluating and Improving Educational Programmes at the Georgian Technical University". In addition, the components of the master's programme that will be implemented at the partner institution (subjects, research, practice, invitation of lecturers, etc.) must be specified.

4.3. The agreement concluded for the purpose of implementing a joint master's programme must also set out the conditions for awarding a joint academic degree, if such is planned.

5. Admission Quota for Master's Studies

5.1. Within the deadline set by the Teaching Department, a professor, associate professor, assistant professor, invited personnel/teacher or emeritus of the relevant academic department, as well as a chief or senior researcher of a scientific institute integrated with GTU, within the framework of the relevant master's programme and for the purpose of determining the admission quota for master's studies, submits to the academic department a written proposal on the allocation of vacant places, indicating the subject matter or tentative title(s) of the corresponding number of master's theses.

5.2. On the basis of discussion and adjustment within the department, the head of the academic department submits to the dean's office a request for the allocation of vacant places by master's programme, also indicating the prospective supervisors and the subject matter or tentative titles of the master's theses.

5.3. The dean of the faculty considers the requests submitted by the academic departments at the Faculty Council. On the basis of the Council's decision, the dean submits to the Teaching Department the minutes of the Faculty Council and an internal memorandum requesting that the relevant vacant places be taken into account in the admission quota.

5.4. After the admission quota has been determined by the Academic Council, the dean ensures that the tentative titles of the topics and the information on the supervisors (name, surname, position, research area) are posted on the faculty website.

6. Admission to Master's Studies

6.1. A person holding at least a bachelor's degree or an academic degree equivalent thereto is entitled to pursue master's studies.

6.2. GTU is obliged to post on its official website and to submit to the LEPL National Assessment and Examinations Centre, within the deadline set by Order No. 227 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of 22 April 2009:

- a) the list of master's programmes to which admission of master's candidates is planned in the relevant year and the number of vacant places allocated to each of them;
- b) information on the annual tuition fee for each master's programme;

- c) information on whether the relevant educational programme is accredited/authorised;
- d) information on the distribution of coefficients for the master's examination by master's programme;

6.3. Admission of master's candidates to GTU is carried out on the basis of the results of the master's examination(s).

6.4. The purpose of holding the master's examination(s) is:

- a) to ensure the objectivity and transparency of the process of admitting master's candidates to GTU's master's studies;
- b) to identify the skills and abilities of those wishing to continue their studies at master's level.

6.5. The master's examination consists of two parts:

- a) the Common Master's Examination;
- b) the examination(s) set by GTU.

6.6. For the purpose of participating in the Common Master's Examinations, an interested person registers in accordance with the procedures and deadlines established by the LEPL National Assessment and Examinations Centre.

6.7. The Common Master's Examination identifies the master's candidates who obtain the right to take part in the examination(s) set by GTU (hereinafter the examination(s)).

6.8. GTU is obliged to set an examination in the relevant speciality for those wishing to continue their studies on a specific master's programme, and is also entitled to set an additional examination(s) in another subject(s) for a specific master's programme.

6.9. For the purpose of supporting master's candidates and student mobility, studying at GTU without passing the Common Master's Examinations is permitted, in the manner and within the deadlines established by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, for:

- a) master's candidates who have lived in a foreign country for the last 2 or more years and who have received a document certifying the relevant academic degree of higher education in a foreign country;
- b) those studying at master's level at a higher education institution of a foreign country recognised in accordance with the legislation of that country;
- c) a person who has passed the relevant threshold in an examination included in the list of international examinations approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

6.10. Format of the Common Master's Examination

- The Common Master's Examination is held in writing, by means of a test.
- The Common Master's Examination test consists of four parts:
 - a) reading comprehension;
 - b) analytical writing;
 - c) logical reasoning;
 - d) quantitative reasoning.

6.11. A master's candidate obtains the right to participate in the examination(s) set by GTU if he/she passes the established minimum competence threshold in at least three of the four parts of the Common Master's Examination test. After the results of the Common Master's Examinations have been summarised, the LEPL National Assessment and Examinations Centre publishes the preliminary results of the master's candidates who took part in the Common Master's Examination, and later the list of master's candidates who have successfully passed the said examinations.

6.12. After successfully passing the Common Master's Examinations, the master's candidate takes the examination(s) set by GTU.

6.13. For the purpose of taking the examination(s) set by GTU, the registration of master's candidates is conducted at GTU in the manner and within the deadline set by an individual administrative-legal act of the Rector. The duration of the registration period for master's candidates may not be less than 5 calendar days from the publication of the Rector's act on the registration of master's candidates on the official website.

6.14. A person wishing to be admitted to master's studies must submit an application addressed to the Rector, indicating the faculty and the master's programme, together with the following documents:

- identity card and a copy thereof;
- document certifying academic higher education – diploma and a copy thereof, or another document certifying qualification and a copy thereof;
- 4 photographs measuring 3×4 cm and a CD;
- military registration certificate and a copy thereof, or military ID and a copy thereof (for persons liable for military service);
- the scores obtained by the master's candidate in the Common Master's Examinations (a printout from the website of the LEPL National Assessment and Examinations Centre – www.naec.ge);
- a receipt from any branch of TBC Bank for payment of the fee set for participation in GTU's master's examinations.

For the purpose of preliminary verification, the master's candidate submits the documents to the dean's office of the relevant faculty; if the documents are submitted incompletely, the application is not accepted. If the documents are in order, the originals are returned to the applicant, and the master's candidate submits the endorsed application, together with the documents, to the GTU Chancellery.

6.15. In order to obtain the right of admission to a master's programme, the master's candidate must also pass the minimum competence threshold (32 points out of 100) in the examination(s) set by GTU.

6.16. GTU itself determines the content of the examination(s) it sets, the minimum competence threshold and the procedural matters relating to the holding of the examination(s). Sample examination tests are posted on the website of the GTU Teaching Department one month before the examinations.

6.17. GTU holds the examination(s) in a building it designates in advance.

6.18. The results obtained by the master's candidate in the examination(s) set by GTU are published on the official website of the faculty.

6.19. In the event of a complaint, the master's candidate submits an appeal within the deadline established by order of the Rector of GTU.

6.20. The appeals of master's candidates are considered by an Appeals Board established by GTU. The Appeals Board may not be composed of persons who participated in the assessment of the master's candidates. The final results are published on the faculty website.

6.21. When the Academic Council of GTU adopts a decision on the assignment of coefficients for the master's examination, the following requirements must be observed:

- a) the sum of the coefficients of the master's examinations is equal to 100; it is distributed between the Common Master's Examination and the examination(s) set by GTU;
- b) the coefficients assigned to the Common Master's Examination must be distributed among each part of the Common Master's Examination test;
- c) each part of the Common Master's Examination test is assigned a coefficient of no less than 5;
- d) the total sum of the coefficients assigned to each part of the Common Master's Examination test is determined, and must be no less than 35 and no more than 65.

6.22. Ranking by master's examination coefficients:

- a) after publication of the final results of the examination(s) it has set, GTU draws up a ranking document based on the master's examination coefficients;
- b) only those master's candidates who have successfully passed the Common Master's Examination and the examination(s) set by GTU are included in the ranking document based on the master's examination coefficients;
- c) GTU creates the ranking document based on the master's examination coefficients taking into account the number of places announced for the relevant master's programmes, the normalised score obtained by the master's candidate and the coefficient(s) assigned by GTU to the parts of the Common Master's Examination test and/or to the examination(s) it has set, and, where the coefficients are identical, the priority of the test parts and/or examinations.

6.23. A master's candidate's specific score in the Common Master's Examination is calculated as follows:

- a) the score obtained by the master's candidate in each part of the Common Master's Examination test/examination is divided by the maximum score of that examination to give the normalised score;
- b) the normalised score is multiplied by the coefficients predetermined by GTU for the parts of the test to give the specific score for each part of the Common Master's Examination test;
- c) the specific scores obtained by the master's candidate in the Common Master's Examinations are summed to give the consolidated specific score of the Common Master's Examination.

6.24. A master's candidate's specific score in the examination(s) set by GTU is calculated as follows:

- a) the score obtained by the master's candidate in the examination set by GTU is divided by the maximum score of that examination to give the normalised score;

b) the normalised score is multiplied by the coefficient(s) predetermined by GTU for the examinations it has set to give the specific score of the relevant examination(s) set by GTU.

6.25. The specific scores obtained by master's candidates in the Common Master's Examination and in the examinations set by GTU are summed to give the competition score.

6.26. Admission to the Georgian Technical University:

a. The Common Master's Examination and the GTU examination(s) identify the master's candidate who obtains the right to continue studies at GTU's master's level;

b. On the basis of successfully passing the Common Master's Examination and the examination(s) set by GTU, the master's candidate is admitted to GTU's master's studies;

c. Admission to GTU is carried out on the basis of the ranking document based on the master's examination coefficients.

6.27. If, in the process of admitting master's candidates to a master's programme at GTU, it is found that, after the priorities of the test parts/examinations have been taken into account, two or more master's candidates from the list of candidates ranked in the last place have an equal right of admission, GTU decides, within the number of admission places allocated to it, to add places to that programme. If the number of admitted students exceeds the number of admission places determined for the relevant GTU programme in the relevant year, the number of added students is deducted from the student admission quota established for GTU for the following academic year.

6.28. Admission of master's candidates to GTU is possible only after the submission of a document certifying academic higher education recognised in the manner prescribed by law – a diploma – and, for persons subject to military registration in the manner prescribed by law, a document certifying that they are on the military register.

6.29. Admission of a master's candidate to GTU is formalised on the basis of an agreement concluded between GTU and the master's candidate.

6.30. A unified act of the Rector on the admission to master's studies of those persons with whom GTU has concluded agreements is issued no later than the deadline set by Order No. 227 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of 22 April 2009, and is sent, within the deadline set by the same order, to the LEPL National Assessment and Examinations Centre and the LEPL National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement;

6.31. Upon issuance of the unified act, the person becomes a master's student of GTU.

7. Educational Process

7.1. The educational process is conducted on the basis of the curriculum of the master's programme.

7.2. The description of the methods, criteria and scales corresponding to the forms of assessment of knowledge in the subjects provided for by the educational programme is given in the syllabi, which are attached to the educational programme. The criteria for assessing the scientific research component are given in the Rules for Assessing the Scientific Research Components of a Master's Educational Programme (Annex 2).

7.3. In order to facilitate the selection of a supervisor and topic by newly admitted master's students, the head of the department organises a meeting between the master's students and the prospective supervisors. The supervisors present the tentative titles of master's theses and their relevance, as well as their own research areas. The master's student has the right to state the subject matter of interest to him/her. On the basis of the meeting, the master's students make their choice and apply to the head of the academic department with the corresponding application. The master's student also has the right to select a topic and supervisor from the list posted on the faculty website and, without participating in the said meeting, to apply to the head of the academic department with an application on his/her choice.

7.4. On the basis of discussion at the department meeting, the head of the academic department submits to the dean's office the list of master's students, indicating the candidate supervisors and the titles of the topics (together with the corresponding internal memorandum and an extract from the minutes of the department meeting).

7.5. The master's student's supervisor and the title of the master's thesis are approved by order of the dean.

7.6. A change of supervisor and/or title of the master's thesis may take place at the beginning of the semester, and is likewise approved by order of the dean on the basis of an internal memorandum from the head of the relevant academic department and an extract from the minutes of the department meeting.

7.7. The results of the research obtained by the master's student are reflected in the master's thesis, which must be prepared in the language of instruction in accordance with the established form and rules (see Annex 3).

7.8. The master's thesis is a completed piece of work reflecting the ability to carry out such work as scientific research, design work, etc. At the defence of the master's thesis, the master's student must present the work he/she has carried out and demonstrate the ability to participate in a discussion.

7.9. Together with the master's thesis, the master's student must submit to the dean the supervisor's written conclusion, as well as an application requesting that the master's thesis be checked for plagiarism.

7.10. The dean hands the master's thesis over to the faculty operator of the Strikeplagiarism.com programme for the preparation of a similarity report.

7.11. The presence of plagiarism in a master's thesis, or citation of text from other works beyond the norm, is grounds for not admitting the master's student to the defence. In addition, the presence of plagiarism is also grounds for disciplinary action against the master's student and/or his/her supervisor.

7.12. If the thesis does not contain plagiarism and the similarity of the text with other works is within the norm, a person who has published at least three works in the field/area corresponding or related to the master's thesis is approved as reviewer by order of the dean. The reviewer may not be a co-author of any work carried out by the master's student; the reviewer's conclusion must contain a reasoned proposal on admitting the master's student to the defence of the master's thesis or on refusing such admission.

7.13. The master's student has the right to proceed to the defence even in the event of a negative assessment by the reviewer.

7.14. A master's student who has failed to complete the educational programme within the scheduled period has the right to extend his/her student status by no more than 2 additional semesters. To this end, he/she must apply to the Rector no less than two

weeks before the start of the next semester and, in the event of a positive decision and the issuance of the corresponding order, conclude an academic and financial agreement in accordance with the existing rules;

7.15. A master's student who has failed to complete the educational programme within the scheduled period and has not applied to the Rector for an additional semester in order to complete it has his/her student status suspended on the recommendation of the dean.

8. Part-Time Mode of Teaching and Learning

8.1. GTU is entitled, on the basis of educational objectives, to conduct the teaching and learning process in part-time mode within the framework of master's educational programmes;

8.2. The part-time mode of teaching and learning means a student workload with a total volume of independent and contact hours per week not exceeding 25 astronomical hours;

8.3. When determining part-time teaching and learning, one academic year comprises an average of 30 (ECTS) credits.

9. Examination Board. Defence

9.1. A person who has completed all the components provided for by the educational programme, except for the component "Completion and Defence of the Master's Thesis"/"Execution and Defence of the Master's Thesis", is admitted to the defence of the master's thesis. For the purpose of holding master's thesis defences and awarding qualifications, the dean, in agreement with the head of the faculty Quality Assurance Service, submits to the Teaching Department the composition of the examination board(s); the Teaching Department prepares the draft of the corresponding unified order.

9.2. The examination board may include a professor, associate professor, assistant professor, invited personnel/teacher or emeritus of the GTU academic department in the field corresponding or related to the master's programme, as well as a chief or senior researcher of a scientific institute integrated with GTU; persons holding the academic degree of doctor from other institutions may also be involved.

9.3. The examination board must consist of 5-7 members. It is chaired by the chairperson of the board, who must be a member of GTU's academic staff. More than 2/3 of the board must be present at the defence.

9.4. As a rule, the master's student's supervisor must attend the defence.

9.5. The master's student reports to the board the main provisions of the master's thesis and the results obtained; during the defence of the master's thesis the master's student may use visual materials: posters, video/film projection equipment, etc.

9.6. The master's student answers the questions put by the members of the board; the chairperson of the board or one of its members reads out the review. The master's student comments on the reviewer's remarks.

9.7. Immediately after the end of the defence, the examination board, in closed session, assesses the master's student's thesis using the 100-point system specified in Annex 2, in accordance with the Rules for Assessing the Scientific Research Components of a Master's Educational Programme.

9.8. The defence is public; minutes must be drawn up of its proceedings and outcome, reflecting the board's decision on the award of the qualification.

9.9. Several master's thesis defences may be held at one session of the examination board.

9.10. It is mandatory to transfer the audio-video recording of the master's thesis defence to a compact disc (CD) and to keep it as an annex to the minutes.

9.10. If a master's student submits a document confirming his/her absence from Georgia, he/she may, with the permission of the Rector and by decision of the Academic Council, defend the master's thesis remotely, online (via Skype).

10. Diploma Certifying the Academic Degree of Master

10.1. On the basis of the minutes of the examination board, the dean's office prepares a draft order on the issuance of a master's diploma or a master's diploma with honours and forwards it to the Teaching Department.

10.2. The master's diploma and the master's diploma with honours certifying the award of the academic degree of master, together with the supplement, are issued by the relevant service of GTU.

10.3. To receive a master's diploma with honours, the weighted average of the grades obtained in all components must be 91 points or more.

11. Invalidity

Submission of incorrect data in the course of processing a master's student's file is grounds for not issuing, or for revoking, the diploma certifying the academic degree of master. The corresponding decision is taken by the Faculty Council.

12. Storage

12.1. Defended master's theses must be handed over to the GTU Archive no later than one month after the defence.

12.2. Upon handover of a master's thesis, an acceptance and delivery act is drawn up in 2 copies, one of which is kept by the party delivering the thesis and the other by the party receiving it.