

**REGULATIONS  
OF PREPARATION AND DEFENCE  
OF THE MASTER THESIS IN THE MASTER STUDY PROGRAMMES  
“MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH”  
“APPLIED PUBLIC HEALTH” AND  
“LIFESTYLE MEDICINE”  
OF THE FACULTY OF PUBLIC HEALTH MEDICAL ACADEMY  
LITHUANIAN UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

**I. General provisions**

1. This Regulation is an official document of the Faculty of Public Health (hereinafter - FPH) of the Medical Academy of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (hereinafter - LUHS), which defines the procedure and deadlines for the preparation and defence of the master thesis in the master study programmes in Lithuanian and English languages “Management of Public Health”, “Applied Public Health”, and “Lifestyle Medicine”.

2. The master thesis is an integral part of the master study programme, which is regulated by the laws of the Republic of Lithuania, normative documents approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (“Description of Public Health Studies”, etc.) and the valid study regulations of the LUHS.

3. The master thesis is prepared throughout the period of master studies.

4. The thesis must be prepared in accordance with valid methodological recommendations and in compliance with the stages of its preparation and the deadlines for submission to public defence specified in this Regulation.

5. Changes to this Regulation can only be made after they have been considered by the study programme committees and approved by the FPH Council.

**II. Main terms and concepts**

6. Terms used in this Regulation:

6.1. **The master thesis** – is a description of a problem that is relevant to the health of the population and its care, independently analysed by the master’s student, and a description of the way to solve it, which reflects the master’s student’s ability to independently solve the research tasks, applying the elements of scientific research work and using the knowledge acquired in studies and practice, and revealing the master’s acquired abilities.

6.2. **The thesis defence committee** (hereinafter referred to as the Defence Committee) is a group of experts approved by the Rector of LUHS, which evaluates the master's thesis.

6.3. **The thesis preparation committee** (hereinafter - the Preparation Committee) is a group of experts from the FPH participating in the study programme, which supervises the preparation of the master's thesis.

6.4. **Thesis consultant** – a person who works in the same or a different LUHS department or other scientific or practical institution than the supervisor of the thesis and has a doctorate or master's degree and experience in scientific work. The candidacy of the thesis consultant is selected by the thesis supervisor, and it is approved by the thesis Preparation Committee.

6.5. **Thesis supervisor** – a person with a PhD degree or a doctoral student in the third and fourth year of doctoral studies, who supervises the preparation of the thesis. The functions of the supervisor during the preparation of the master thesis are as follows: to help the master's student to formulate the topic, purpose, and tasks of the master thesis and to draw up an individual plan for the preparation of the master thesis; to recommend the necessary literature for the completion of the thesis; to advise the master's student on research organisation and methodology issues; systematically monitor the progress of master thesis preparation, help solve emerging problems; at the end of each semester, except the first, to evaluate the work done by the master's student with a grade and sign to approve the report.

6.6. **Master 's student** – a person studying in a master study programme and preparing a master thesis. The responsibilities and functions of the master's student in preparing the master thesis are as follows: prepare the master thesis in accordance with this Regulation; choose the topic of the thesis at the specified time; prepare an individual work preparation plan together with the thesis supervisor and follow it when preparing the work; prepare the necessary documents and obtain the approval of the Bioethics Centre to conduct the study, if such approval is required; to regularly cooperate with the supervisor of the thesis, to inform him about the progress of the work; if necessary, contact the thesis advisor; comply with the methodological and structural requirements of the thesis; take into account the comments and recommendations of the supervisor and the Preparation Committee when completing the master thesis; submit the initial and final version of the thesis to the thesis supervisor in time, in accordance with the established procedure for submission of electronic documents of master theses and doctoral theses at LUHS (ETD), place the master thesis in the Research Information System (CRIS).

6.7. **A reviewer** – a person with a PhD degree or a doctoral student in the third and fourth year of doctoral studies who assesses the compliance of the thesis with the requirements.

### **III. Master thesis preparation**

7. To supervise the preparation of master theses, a permanently functioning Preparation Committee for each study programme (Lithuanian and English language) is formed, consisting of 5 scientists from the field of public health science (1-2 members of this committee may be representatives of other scientific fields). The composition of the Preparation Committee is proposed by the Study Committee of the relevant study

programme and approved by the Dean of FPH by the decree.

8. The Preparation Committee supervises the preparation of the master these in a following way: considers and approves the topics and supervisors of the theses; if necessary, appoints theses consultants; discusses and approves individual programmes and reports for the preparation of master theses in open meetings together with master's students; appoints theses reviewers; makes decisions on the suitability of theses for public defence; resolves various controversial issues.

9. The topic of the master thesis must correspond to the area of the master's study programmes "Management of Public Health", "Applied Public Health" or "Lifestyle Medicine". Thesis topics and supervisors can be proposed by faculty units and health care institutions, or topics are chosen by master's students themselves based on their professional interests.

10. In the first semester, master's students are given a list of thesis topics and/or research interests of potential supervisors.

11. Master's students prepare a master thesis in accordance with the deadlines for master thesis preparation and delivery, which are provided in the Annexes to the Regulation.

11.1. The master's student chooses the topic of the thesis, agrees with the supervisor, and creates an individual work plan by filling out a special form that is approved by the Preparation Committee of the relevant study programme. This form is submitted to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the theses.

11.2. Topics and plans of the theses are discussed at an open meeting of the Preparation Committee. The master's student prepares a presentation, for which 5 minutes are allocated. The Preparation Committee evaluates and approves theses topics and work plans.

11.3. The master's student collects literature on the topic of the master thesis, discusses work methods with the supervisor and prepares research instruments, submits documents to obtain the approval of the Bioethics Center, collects the data; analyses the collected data in regular consultations with the supervisor and prepares the master thesis; according to the established schedule, reports to the supervisor for the work performed.

11.4. Before the set deadlines, the master's student submits to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the master thesis completed report forms, which are approved by the Preparation Committee of the relevant study programme, the supervisor's conclusion about the compliance of the thesis preparation process with the planned work plan and the evaluation with a grade.

11.5. Master thesis preparation reports and completed work are discussed at the meeting of the Preparation Committee. If necessary, master's students can be invited to the Preparation Committee meeting.

#### **IV. Submission of the thesis for defence, defence, and assessment**

12. Submission of thesis for defence:

12.1. In the last semester of studies, the master's student submits the prepared master thesis to the supervisor by the set date (the deadlines are provided in the annexes of the Regulation).

12.2. The supervisor decides whether the work is completed and suitable for public defence. The supervisor prepares written feedback according to the form approved by the Preparation Committee of the relevant study programme and evaluate the work with a grade. The supervisor's feedback and one copy of the master thesis are forwarded to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the master thesis.

12.3 The master's student, having received the approval of the supervisor of the master thesis, **no later than 20 days before the announced defence date** uploads the master thesis to the CRIS in accordance with the procedure for submitting electronic documents established by LUHS.

12.4. The Preparation Committee appoints a master thesis reviewer and hands over the work to him.

12.5. The reviewer submits written review to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis (the review form is approved by the Preparation Committee of the relevant study programme) about the quality and suitability of the thesis for defence and evaluates the work with a grade. A copy of this review is given to the master's student. If there are any comments to be corrected, the master's student corrects the thesis and submits one fully organised, printed, and bound copy of the thesis to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis.

12.6. The Preparation Committee, considering the conclusions and comments submitted by the supervisor and the reviewer, makes the final decision on the suitability of the work for public defence. The decisions of the Preparation Committee are presented in the protocol of the meeting.

13. At the proposal of the Dean of FPH, the permission to defend the master theses is legitimised by the Rector's order. The master thesis is allowed to be defended after receiving the credits provided for in the study plan and after passing all the exams and after receiving a positive decision of the Preparation Committee.

14. Thesis defence:

14.1. The thesis is defended at an open meeting of the Defence Committee. The schedule of Defence Committee meetings is approved by the Rector at the proposal of the FPH Dean.

14.2. A Defence Committee is established for the defence of theses of each study programme. The composition of the Defence Committee, consisting of 5-7 persons and the chairman, is approved by the Rector on the recommendation of the FPH Dean. At least one member of the Defence Committee must be a person who has not worked at LUHS for the past three years. The meeting of the Defence Committee is considered legal if more than half of the commission members participate in it.

14.3. The chairman of the Preparation Committee hands over theses deemed suitable for public defence to the chairman of the Defence Committee. The chairman of the Defence Committee appoints one opponent for each work from the members of the commission, who provides an evaluation of the work during the defence.

14.4. The participation of the master's student in the meeting of the Defence Committee is mandatory, and if the master's student does not participate, the work is not considered.

14.5. The chairman of the Defence Committee or the member of the committee presiding over the meeting introduces the participants to the topic of the master thesis, introduces the master's student, supervisor, work consultant (if there was one) and gives the floor to the master's student. Master's student presents the

thesis in 10 minutes, answers the questions of the meeting participants and the reviewer. After that, the appointed opponent from the members of the Defence Committee speaks. The master's student responds to the opponent's critical remarks. All meeting participants can participate in the discussions.

15. Evaluation of the thesis

15.1. Each member of the Defence Committee evaluates the work with a grade (a ten-point grading scale is used). Average score is calculated.

15.2. A member of the Defence Committee removes themselves from the evaluation of the master thesis, which he supervised or reviewed.

15.3. The final assessment of the thesis is carried out in a closed meeting of the Defence Committee. The formula for the master thesis assessment cumulative score is presented in the subject description.

15.4. The topic of the master thesis and the evaluation grade are recorded in the protocol of the Defence Committee and in the electronic register of the master thesis defence.

16. In case of *force majeure*, the work can be defended remotely, in accordance with the valid LUHS legislation.

17. Appeals regarding the evaluation of thesis are accepted in accordance with the valid provisions of the study regulations of LUHS. The master thesis and its assessment are reviewed by the Appeals Committee, formed by the Rector, and operating in accordance with the LUHS study regulation.

18. The provisions of the LUHS study regulation apply to a master's student who did not defend the master thesis at the appointed time or did not defend it.

**DEADLINES FOR THESIS PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION FOR THE  
DEFENCE FOR MASTER'S STUDENTS  
OF MASTER STUDY PROGRAMMES  
"MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH" AND  
"APPLIED PUBLIC HEALTH"**

**1. In the first semester:**

1.1. **Until October 1** a list of supervisors and their research interests is announced.

1.2. **Until November 1** – the master's student chooses the topic of the thesis, coordinates it with the supervisor and informs the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis by e-mail about their choice.

1.3. **Until November 15** – the master's student prepares an individual thesis plan with the thesis supervisor, filling out a special form, which the student submits to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis.

1.4. **Until December 1** – the topic and plan of the thesis are considered at an open meeting of the Preparation Committee. The master's student prepares a presentation, for which 5 minutes are allocated. The Preparation Committee evaluates and approves the thesis topic and work plan.

**2. In the second semester:**

2.1. The master's student collects literature on the topic of the master thesis, discusses working methods with the supervisor and prepares research instruments, submits documents for the approval of the Bioethics Center; after receiving permission, begins to collect data.

2.2. **Until June 15** submits a completed report form, signed, and graded by the supervisor, and the prepared part of the thesis (literature review; description of the research methodology; data collection forms; approval of the Bioethics Center) to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis.

2.3. A week before the end of the semester, a meeting of the Preparation Committee is organised, where the master's thesis preparation reports and the completed work are considered. If necessary, master's students and/or their scientific supervisors may be invited to the meeting of the Preparation Committee.

**3. In the third semester:**

3.1. The master's student finishes collecting data and prepares it for analysis; analyses the collected data in regular consultation with the supervisor and prepares the master thesis; according to the established schedule, reports to the supervisor for the work performed.

3.2. **Until January 15** submits to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the master thesis a completed master thesis report form and the supervisor's conclusion about the compliance of the thesis preparation process with the planned work plan and the evaluation with a grade.

3.3. A week before the end of the semester, a meeting of the Preparation Committee is organised where the reports are approved. Master's students who fall behind the deadlines provided for in the work plan may be invited to the meeting.

#### **4. In the fourth semester:**

4.1. The preparation of the thesis continues, regularly consulting with the supervisor. According to the established schedule, the student submits work to the supervisor.

4.2. **Until April 15** the master's student submits the prepared master thesis to the supervisor.

4.3. **Until May 1** the work supervisor makes a decision whether the work is completed and suitable for public defence. The supervisor prepares review and grade the work. The supervisor's review and one copy of the master thesis are forwarded to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the master thesis.

4.4. **Until May 5** the Preparation Committee appoints master thesis reviewer and hands over the work to him.

4.5. **Until May 15** the reviewer provides review on the quality and suitability of the thesis for defence and evaluates the work with a grade. A copy of this feedback is given to the graduate student.

4.6. **Until May 20** the master's student corrects the work if there are comments from the reviewer to be corrected. The master's student submits one fully organised, printed, and bound copy of the thesis to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis.

4.7. The master's student, having received the approval of the supervisor of the master thesis, **no later than 20 days before the announced date of the defence** uploads the master thesis to the CRIS in accordance with the procedure for submitting electronic documents established by LUHS.

4.8. **Until 25 May** the Preparation Committee considering the conclusions and comments submitted by the supervisor and the reviewer, makes the final decision on the suitability of the work for public defence. The conclusions of the Preparation Committee are presented in the protocol of the meeting.

**DEADLINES FOR THESIS PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION FOR THE  
DEFENCE FOR MASTER'S STUDENTS OF MASTER STUDY  
PROGRAMME  
"MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH" OF PART-TIME STUDIES**

**1. In the first semester:**

1.1. **Until October 1** a list of supervisors and their research interests is announced.

1.2. **Until January 1** – the master's student chooses the topic of the thesis, coordinates with the supervisor and informs the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis by e-mail about their choice.

**2. In the second semester:**

2.1. **Until March 1** – the master's student prepares an individual thesis plan with the thesis supervisor, filling out a special form, which he submits to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis.

2.2. **Until April 1** – the topic and plan of the thesis are considered at an open meeting of the Preparation Committee. The master's student prepares a presentation, for which 5 minutes are allocated. The Preparation Committee evaluates and approves the thesis topic and work plan.

**3. In the third semester:**

3.1. According to the established schedule, the student submits work to the supervisor.

3.2. **Until January 15** submits to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the master thesis a completed master thesis report form and the supervisor's conclusion about the compliance of the thesis preparation process with the planned work plan.

3.3. A week before the end of the semester, a meeting of the Preparation Committee is organised where the reports are approved. Master's students who fall behind the deadlines provided for in the work plan may be invited to the meeting.

**4. In the fourth semester:**

4.1. The master's student collects literature on the topic of the master thesis, discusses research methods with the supervisor and prepares research instruments, submits documents for the approval of the Bioethics Center; after receiving permission, starts to collect data.

4.2. **Until June 15** submits a completed report form, signed, and graded by the supervisor, and the prepared part of the thesis (literature review; description of the research methodology; data collection forms; approval of the Bioethics Center) to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis.

4.3. A week before the end of the semester, a meeting of the Preparation Committee is organised, where the master's thesis preparation reports and the completed work are considered. If necessary, master's students and/or their scientific supervisors may be invited to the meeting.



## **5. In the fifth semester:**

5.1. The master's student finishes collecting data and prepares it for analysis; analyses the collected data in regular consultations with the supervisor and prepares the master thesis; according to the established schedule, reports to the supervisor for the work performed.

5.2. **Until January 15** submits to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the master thesis a completed master thesis report form and the supervisor's conclusion about the compliance of the thesis preparation process with the planned work plan and the evaluation with a grade.

5.3. A week before the end of the semester, a meeting of the Preparation Committee is organised where the reports are approved. Master's students who fall behind the deadlines provided for in the work plan may be invited to the meeting.

## **6. In the sixth semester:**

6.1. The preparation of the thesis continues, regularly consulting with the supervisor. According to the established schedule, the student submits work to the supervisor.

6.2. **Until April 15** the master's student submits the prepared master thesis to the supervisor.

6.3. **Until May 1** the work supervisor makes a decision whether the work is completed and suitable for public defence. They prepare feedback and grade the work. The supervisor's feedback and one copy of the master thesis are forwarded to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the master thesis.

6.4. **Until May 5** the Preparation Committee appoints a master thesis reviewer and hands over the work to him.

6.5. **Until May 15** the reviewer provides review on the quality and suitability of the thesis for defence and evaluates the work with a grade. A copy of this review is given to the graduate student.

6.6. **Until May 20** the master's student corrects the work if there are comments from the reviewer to be corrected. The master's student submits one fully organised, printed, and bound copy of the thesis to the department administrator coordinating the preparation of the thesis.

6.7. The master's student, having received the approval of the supervisor of the master thesis, **no later than 20 days before the announced date of the defence** uploads the master thesis to the CRIS in accordance with the procedure for submitting electronic documents established by LUHS.

6.8. **Until 25 May** the Preparation Committee considering the conclusions and comments submitted by the supervisor and the reviewer, makes the final decision on the suitability of the thesis for public defence. The conclusions of the Preparation Committee are presented in the protocol of the meeting.

**DEADLINES FOR THESIS PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION  
FOR THE DEFENCE FOR MASTER'S STUDENTS  
OF MASTER STUDY PROGRAMME “LIFESTYLE MEDICINE”**

**1. In the first semester:**

1.1. **Until October 1** a list of supervisors and their research interests is announced.

1.2. **Until October 10** students choose a preliminary thesis topic, coordinate it with the thesis supervisor, report their choice to the department administrator coordinating the preparation of the thesis, with the guidance of the thesis supervisor discuss the thesis plan.

1.3. **Until November 1** the master's student chooses the topic of the thesis, coordinates with the supervisor and informs the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the thesis about their choice.

1.4. **Until November 15** the topic and plan of the thesis are considered at the meeting of the Preparation Committee. The master's student prepares a presentation, for which 5 minutes are allocated. The Preparation Committee evaluates and approves the thesis topic and work plan, if needed they provide comments.

1.5. The master's student, after considering the comments and suggestions of the Preparation Committee and after consulting with the supervisor, supplements the work plan and submits it **by December 1**. The Preparation Committee gets acquainted with the revisions of the final work plan and approves it in the minutes of the meeting.

**2. In the second semester:**

2.1. The master's student collects literature on the topic of the master thesis, discusses working methods with the supervisor (i.e., questionnaire, questions for the interview), submits documents for the approval of the Bioethics Center; after receiving permission, begins to collect data.

2.2. According to the established schedule, the student submits work to the supervisor.

2.3. **Until June 15** the master's student submits a completed master thesis report form and the supervisor's conclusion about the compliance of the thesis preparation process with the planned work plan. The approval of the Bioethics Center for the conduct of the study is submitted to the Preparation Committee, the part of the final work is prepared (literature review, description of the research methodology, data collection forms).

2.4 At the end of the second semester, a meeting of the Preparation Committee is organised, where the reports on the preparation of the master's thesis and the completed work, which is evaluated with a grade, are considered. If necessary, master's students and/or supervisors may be invited to the meeting.

**3. In the third semester:**

3.1. The master's student finishes collecting data and prepares it for analysis; analysis the collected data in regular consultations with the supervisor and prepares the master thesis; according to the established schedule, reports to the supervisor for the work performed.

3.2. **Until November 1** the master's student submits to the Preparation Committee a completed form of master thesis report and the supervisor's conclusion about the compliance of the course of thesis preparation with the planned work plan.

3.3. Within ten working days after the submission of the report, a meeting of the Preparation Committee is organised, where the master's student's master thesis preparation reports are approved. During the meeting, students briefly present the results of their final work. The completed work is evaluated with a grade.

#### **4. The procedure and deadlines for submitting the master thesis for public defence:**

4.1. In the third semester, **until December 10**, the master's student submits the prepared thesis to the supervisor.

4.2. **Until December 20** the supervisor decides whether the work is completed and suitable for public defence. Supervisor reviews and grades the work. The supervisor's review and one copy of the master thesis are forwarded to the administrator of the department coordinating the preparation of the master thesis.

4.3. **Until December 21** the Preparation Committee appoints a master thesis reviewer and hands over the work to him.

4.4. **Until January 4** the reviewer provides review on the quality and suitability of the thesis for defence and evaluates the work with a grade. A copy of this review is given to the student.

4.5. **Until January 6** the master's student corrects the work if there are comments from the reviewer to be addressed. The student submits one fully organised, printed, and bound copy of the thesis to the department administrator coordinating the preparation of the thesis.

4.6. The master's student, having received the approval of the supervisor of the master thesis, **no later than 20 days before the announced date of the defence** uploads the master thesis to the CRIS in accordance with the procedure for submitting electronic documents established by LUHS.

4.7. **No later than the 10** days before the announced day of public defence, the Preparation Committee, considering the conclusions and comments submitted by the supervisor and the reviewer, makes a final decision on the suitability of the work for public defence. The conclusions of the Preparation Committee are presented in the protocol of the meeting. If necessary, the supervisor and/or reviewer may be invited to the meeting.

4.8. The chairperson of the Preparation Committee, no later than two days after the submission of the conclusions of the Preparation Committee, hands over the theses, which are recognised as suitable for public presentation, to the chairperson of the Defence Committee.

4.9. At the proposal of the Dean of FPH, the permission to defend the master thesis is approved by the Rector's order. The master thesis is allowed to be defended after receiving the credits provided for in the study plan and after passing all the exams and after receiving a positive decision of the Preparation Committee.