

**THE FINAL MASTER'S THESIS REGULATIONS OF THE  
INTEGRATED STUDY PROGRAMME IN MEDICINE  
OF THE LITHUANIAN UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

**I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. The student's final Master's thesis (BMD) is an integral part of the Integrated Study Programme in Medicine at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU), designed to encourage students' initiative in choosing a research topic, to develop skills of planning, performance and interpretation of scientific work. This Regulation is the official document of the Faculty of Medicine of LSMU, establishing the procedure and terms for the preparation, presentation, defence and evaluation of BMD, it defines the structural, editorial and methodological requirements of the written work, the Regulation applies to all students of the Integrated Study Programme in Medicine completing their Final Master's Thesis (BMD). It does not define other forms of student research activity or their regulation.
2. The BMD Regulation is based on the following documents:
  - 2.1. LSMU Study Regulations (Resolution No. 190-03 of the Senate of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences of 29 May 2025);
  - 2.2. Description of the procedure for uploading documents and meta-data to the information system DSpace CRIS of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (Order No. 2021-V-0699 of the LSMU Rector of 30 December 2021);
  - 2.3. LSMU Open Access Mandate (Resolution No. 13-2 of the LSMU Rectorate of 4 November 2013).
3. The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the LSMU Medical Academy shall, by a separate decree, establish a minimum mandatory number of BMD execution venues for three academic years (starting from 1 September 2025) in the departments carrying out the integrated study programmes in Medicine and Medicine in English and in the laboratories of the research institutes of the Faculty of Medicine. The heads of departments are responsible for ensuring that the number of places determined by the Dean is ensured and meets the requirements of the quality of studies and the final

master thesis. The minimum required number of places shall be calculated in proportion to the volume (credits) of the medicine study programme carried out in the department during the 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> years.

4. The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the LSMU Medical Academy, in cooperation with profile clinics, departments and institutes, coordinates the course of BMD implementation, ensuring a smooth process and conditions for completion of theses. Issues not covered by this Regulation shall be considered and decided upon by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the LSMU Medical Academy.

## **II. MAIN CONCEPTS, FUNCTIONS, RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

5. **The final Master's thesis** is an original research project, which is independently carried out by the Master's student, during which the scientific question relevant to the medical study programme and its solutions are analysed. The primary purpose of BMD is to develop the student's ability to conduct research independently by acquiring experience and practical skills in research activities. The process of preparation of the work is oriented to the mastering of the methodology of research work, but it is not necessarily aimed at creating new scientific knowledge. The thesis is prepared in stages through years 4 to 6, while studying in the Integrated Study Programme in Medicine. In the BMD, the Master's student develops the following skills: conducting systematic research and critical analysis of scientific literature, properly applying research methods and conducting data analysis, adapting existing or original research ideas, researching and describing new factors, phenomena or patterns.
6. Depending on the nature and methodology of the study, BMD can be of different types, for example: clinical trial, epidemiological study (cohort, case-control, momentary), questionnaire survey, diagnostic accuracy study; laboratory or experimental study (molecular, genetic, pharmacological, physiological); health economics study, health system analysis, medical ethics and law research; theoretical and analytical research (systematic review of scientific literature, meta-analysis or bio-statistical and data analysis research).
7. **Master's student (graduate student)** – a student of the Integrated Study Programme in Medicine in preparation for the final Master's thesis (BMD).

7.1. The Master's student prepares BMD in accordance with the BMD Regulation approved by the Council of the Faculty of Medicine of the LSMU Medical Academy, and the procedures approved by the Department where the final thesis is being completed (clinical or non-clinical Department of LSMU).

- 7.2. At the specified time, the Master's student selects one of the proposed BMD topics.
- 7.3. The Master's student has the right to propose their BMD topic in the selected department, and to execute it with the consent of the head of the department. Topics proposed by students are subject to the discussion at the department and must be approved prior to the date on which the minimum compulsory topic proposal is submitted in accordance with the Dean's Order. Students whose proposed topics are approved do not participate in the general selection of topics.
- 7.4. The Master's student has the right to apply in writing to the Dean of the LSMU Faculty of Medicine regarding the change of the department and/or BMD topic within 10 working days from the choice of the topic (the subsequent change of the topic is not allowed).
- 7.5. Together with the Supervisor of the BMD, the Master's student shall draw up an individual BMD writing plan and shall comply consistently with the deadlines laid down in this Regulation;
- 7.6. The Master's student prepares all the necessary documents and receives the approval by the Bioethics Committee to conduct the scientific research.
- 7.7. The Master's student can continue the scientific research started in previous years of studies (for example, in the LSMU Student Scientific Society). The collected data can be used in the BMD if new challenges are addressed. When describing the methods and results of BMD, the Master's student must clearly indicate which part of the study was carried out before, which aspects overlap, and how they are incorporated into the new work.
- 7.8. The Master's student must declare the goals and scope of the use of artificial intelligence in the BMD or indicate that artificial intelligence tools have not been used.
- 7.9. The Master's student constantly cooperates with the Supervisor of BMD, informs them about the progress of work, takes into account the comments and recommendations of the Supervisor of BMD.
- 7.10. If there is a need, the Master's student has the right to apply in writing to the head of the department for the replacement of the BMD Supervisor. The department shall examine the application and make a decision within 5 working days. A copy of the application and decision shall be submitted to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of LSMU. The new Supervisor decides whether the Master's student can continue the work started or whether the BMD topic needs to be changed. If the subject is changed, the Master's student shall notify the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of LSMU of the change in writing within 5 working days.
- 7.11. If necessary, the Master's student can contact the BMD consultant, if such is appointed.

7.12. The Master's student can participate in mentoring sessions organised by the University, where they are consulted on various topics related to the BMD preparation.

7.13. The Master's student shall comply with the structural and methodological requirements for academic writing ("Methodological Requirements for the Preparation of the BMD of the Medicine Study Programme").

7.14. The Master's student must provide the BMD Supervisor with an initial version of the thesis in a timely manner.

7.15. Having received the approval from the BMD Supervisor, the Master's student shall upload the final Master's thesis for the reviewer's feedback into the information system CRIS.

7.16. Discuss the reviewer's comments with the BMD Supervisor and make the necessary corrections if necessary.

8. **The Supervisor of the final Master's thesis (BMD Supervisor)** is a person working in the LSMU department, who holds a doctoral degree and supervises the Master's student in the preparation of the BMD. The BMD Supervisor is responsible for the scientific quality of the work, ensuring that the research meets scientific and academic standards. In exceptional cases, where the department lacks researchers with a PhD in science, an employee with a Master's degree may be appointed as the BMD Supervisor. In this case, an additional consultant with a scientific degree (PhD or Habilitated Doctorate) shall be appointed and help ensure the quality of BMD. The candidates for the BMD Supervisor's roles are approved in LSMU departments according to the procedures and regulations of the departments.

8.1. The BMD Supervisor advises the Master's student on issues related to BMD preparation, provides scientific and methodological assistance at all stages of the work preparation.

8.2. If necessary, the BMD Supervisor recommends an additional consultant with an appropriate scientific degree, who can help ensure the quality of work.

8.3. The BMD Supervisor systematically monitors the progress of the work preparation, performs periodic reviews of the thesis, helps solve emerging problems and provides feedback to the Master's student.

8.4. The BMD preparation phase completed by the student of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years is assessed by the BMD Supervisor by marking the respective module according to the approved study plan in the LSMU SIS register, taking into account the quality of the work completed, compliance with the established deadlines and the evaluation strategy provided for in the module description.

8.5. The BMD Supervisor assesses whether the final thesis is properly prepared according to all structural and methodological requirements, performs the verification of the coincidences of the work text using the appropriate measures approved by the LSMU and differentiates it from the possible plagiarism. The maximum similarity of the final thesis text (as checked using the *Identific* system) shall not exceed 30 per cent. The BMD Supervisor also verifies that the title and keywords of the topic have been properly translated.

8.6. The BMD Supervisor confirms that the work is ready for reviewer's feedback and presentation for defence.

8.7. If possible, the BMD Supervisor participates in the BMD presentation at a public defence hearing, providing additional support and support to the Master's student.

9. **The consultant of the final Master's thesis** – a person working in the LSMU department or other scientific institution, having a degree not lower than a Master's degree, a professional practitioner who has mastered the basics of scientific research methodology and consulting the Master's student in the preparation of the BMD. According to the need, the BMD Supervisor chooses the candidate for a consultant, taking into account their expertise and experience, and the candidacy is approved by the LSMU department where the BMD is being prepared.

10. **The reviewer of the final Master's thesis** – a person with a doctoral degree who assesses BMD's compliance with academic and scientific requirements. In an effort to ensure scientific assessment of the thesis it is recommended that reviewers are chosen not from the specialists of the problem being examined, but from related specialties or sub-specialties to ensure objectivity and scientifically based assessment. Candidates for the role of reviewers are selected and approved in the LSMU department where BMD is prepared.

10.1. The BMD reviewer shall evaluate the BMD in accordance with the assessment form set out in the Annexes to this Regulation (Annex No. 1).

10.2. The completed and signed BMD assessment form shall be returned to the department in a timely manner, ensuring that the assessment is carried out in accordance with the established deadlines and requirements.

11. **Public defence of Master's thesis** – a public meeting of the LSMU department or departments, where BMD is presented and defended. The meetings shall be held on a schedule within the period of 1 to 2 days at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> semester. The schedule is established by the Dean's Office, acting on the recommendation of the departments, and submitted to the Rector for approval. The date, time and place of

the defence shall be included in the LSMU SIS schedule being marked as “Assessment” – this must be done no later than three months before the date of the defence.

**12. The Committee for the Public Defence of the Master’s Theses** – a group of evaluators formed to evaluate the BMDs during the public defence hearing. The Committee must be set up in such a way that for each thesis being defended there are at least 3 members of the Committee who have no conflict of interest in the defence of the thesis (or author). The members of the Committee may be researchers or holders of a Master’s degree who have research experience. The social partners may also participate in the Committee if they meet the requirements. The candidacies of the Chairperson and Members of the Committee, as well as Reviewers, are selected and approved by the relevant LSMU department where the BMD is being prepared. LSMU departments must submit to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine a list of BMD reviewers and members of the Public Defence Committee no later than two months before the planned public meeting of BMD defence. Based on this list, the Dean makes a final list of members of the Committee and submits it to the Rector for approval. The approved list is forwarded to the LSMU Library staff responsible for administration of the DSpace CRIS information system.

12.1. The BMD Defence Committee shall assess the BMD and presentation of the BMD (each member of the committee separately) at a public defence hearing in accordance with the assessment form set out in the Annexes to this Regulation (Annex No. 2).

12.2. The Committee shall calculate the final assessment of the BMD defence by drawing an arithmetic average from the assessments given by the reviewer and members of the Defence Committee;

12.3. The Committee decides on a recommendation for the Master’s degree to be awarded, taking into account the outcome of the defence.

12.4. The Chairperson of the Committee (or the Head of the Department) shall complete and sign the minutes of the Public Defence Meeting of the BMD. The Chairperson of the Defence Committee (or Head of the Department) shall make the final assessment of the defence of BMD within 1 working day after the entry of the BMD Public Defence Committee meeting into the LSMU SIS.

**13. The Appeals Committee** is the Committee dealing with complaints arising from the assessment of the BMD. The Appeals Committee shall be formed in advance, not later than 2 working days before the BMD Public Defence Meeting, upon the recommendation of the Dean of the LSMU Faculty of Medicine and approved by the Rector of the LSMU. The Committee consists of 3 members delegated by LSMU Student Representatives and 6 Representatives of LSMU administration.

### **III. ORGANISATION, PREPARATION AND DEFENCE OF THE BMD**

**14. Organisation of BMD completion, terms of preparation and defence**

The process of organisation, preparation and defence of the final Master's theses (BMDs) is carried out in stages:

**14.1. Choosing the topic of the BMD.** BMD topics for the next academic year are discussed and approved at the meeting of the LSMU Department. Topics may be offered by the Department's researchers, other staff and future Master's students. For international students, topics are offered in English. The number of subjects proposed must comply with the requirements of the Dean's Order (see Paragraph 3 of this Regulation). Approved topics are presented to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine until 30 June. The Dean establishes a list of proposed BMD topics and publishes it to the 4<sup>th</sup> year students on the LSMU Intranet within the first 10 working days of the 7<sup>th</sup> semester. The distribution of topics at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> semester is organised by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in September. The priority of choice is given to the students in accordance with the average grade of the 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> semesters of study. If the department has approved the subject proposed by the student in advance, this information is included in the distribution of topics. Within 10 working days, the Dean's office informs the departments about the students who have chosen their topics. At the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> semester in October, the department approves BMD Supervisors and consultants for students, taking into account their qualifications, scientific interests, and nature of theses.

**14.2. BMD preparation stages.** The student completes the BMD in accordance with the requirements of the modules of the study plan. In the 4<sup>th</sup> year, they develop and agree on the BMD writing plan with the supervisor, conduct theoretical research: collect, analyse literature and begin to prepare the theoretical part. At the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> semester, a list of literature and its initial analysis are presented to the supervisor. Later, literature analysis is deepened, research methodology is justified, and documents are prepared for the Bioethics Centre. The study may be initiated only with the approval by the Bioethics Centre. In the 5<sup>th</sup> year, data collection or an experiment is planned and the BMD research is conducted according to an approved plan. At the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> semester, the Master's student submits the description of the research methodology and initial research results to the Supervisor. In the 11<sup>th</sup> semester, the Master's student completes the analysis of the research data, performs the assessment of the results, and prepares and presents the initial version of the BMD to the Supervisor by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> semester. At the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> semester, a revision and review of the work takes place. If shortcomings are found in the thesis, they are corrected according to the Supervisor's comments and by 15 February the thesis is submitted for the Supervisor's final review. The supervisor records the permission to submit the thesis for defence in the LSMU SIS. At the Supervisor's permission, by 1 March, the student uploads the thesis into the DSpace CRIS system. The supervisor checks for matches, topic title, keyword translation and confirms submission to the reviewer. The thesis is submitted to the reviewer by 15 March. The reviewer completes the evaluation

form, and it must be submitted to the department by 15 April. The student and the BMD Supervisor have the opportunity to get acquainted with the reviewer's feedback. If the reviewer's feedback contains proposals for work corrections, they must be completed, and the final version of the work is uploaded to the DSpace CRIS system no later than a week before the defence. A positive reviewer's feedback is a prerequisite for permission to defend the thesis. The final version of the work is available to the supervisor, reviewer and Defence Committee through the DSpace CRIS system. The BMD defence shall take place by 10 May.

**14.3. Organisation of the BMD defence.** No later than two weeks before the defence, the departments submit to the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Medicine lists of students who have been granted permission to defend their BMD. The Dean's Office prepares for the Rector's approval the order for the defence of the BMD of the Medicine Study Programme.

**14.4. The BMD Defence Hearing and Appeal Procedure.** During the public BMD Defence Hearing, the student presents their work with a 10-minute report, which presents the topic of work, purpose, tasks, research methods, results, conclusions and practical recommendations. The presentation is followed by up to 10 minutes of questions and discussions. The Committee assesses the BMD and presentation of the BMD, calculates the final evaluation, which is recorded in the LSMU SIS register within one working day after the defence. The defended works are published in the Lithuanian ETD database, except in cases where this is contrary to the legislation on the protection of intellectual property or other secrets. If the student does not agree with the final evaluation of the BMD, they have the right to appeal in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Study Regulations.

15. If unfair conduct is found in the preparation or defence of the BMD, the BMD Supervisor, the reviewer or the member of the Committee must inform the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine by submitting an official report. The Dean then forms a Committee to investigate the situation in accordance with the LSMU Study Regulations.

16. These Regulations shall enter into force on 1 September 2025 and shall apply to students who are currently studying in year 4. The Regulations (approved by Minutes of the Council meeting No. 127 of 21 April 2025) were revised and approved at the Council of the Faculty of 20 April 2026, Minutes of the Meeting No. 135.

(Student's name, surname)

**EVALUATION OF THE FINAL MASTER'S THESIS**

(Date)

**Reviewer's evaluation form**

The thesis volume is \_\_\_\_ pages, the list of references contains \_\_\_\_ references, the thesis contains \_\_\_\_ tables, \_\_\_\_ figures, \_\_\_\_ annexes.

No.	<i>Compliance with the structural and methodological requirements for academic writing</i>	<i>Evaluation</i>	
		Yes	No
1.	Thesis volume is at least 30 pages (without annexes)		
2.	All the necessary structural parts are present		
3.	Distinctive chapter and section titles		
4.	The thesis is written in correct language, logically, concisely		
5.	There are no grammatical or computer literacy errors		
6.	Thesis volume has not been artificially inflated		
7.	The citations of references are correct (Vancouver style)		
8.	The list of references has been compiled correctly		
9.	Cited references no older than 10 years constitute at least 70 per cent of all references		
10.	The tables, figures, and annexes are presented correctly		
11.	Use/non-use of artificial intelligence has been declared		
	<i>Evaluation of the main parts of the thesis</i>	<i>Evaluation</i> (1 to 10)	
12.	Literature analysis: analysis of the latest and most relevant references, main statements and scientific problems of the topic under consideration are presented.		
13.	Aim and objectives: the relevance of the selected scientific problem is explained, the proposed hypotheses are described and explained, the aim and objectives are properly formulated.		
14.	Methodology: the research methodology is explained in detail, the research instruments are described, their suitability for the chosen problem is explained, the statistical methods used are described and their suitability is explained for addressing the identified objectives.		
15.	Results: the results presented are relevant to the topic under consideration, an analysis of the results is properly presented.		
16.	Discussion of results: the obtained results are compared with the latest results of other authors, and the student's own opinion on the topic under consideration is presented.		
17.	Conclusions: the presented conclusions are relevant and correspond to the topic of the work and the objectives set, the conclusions are based on the results obtained, suggestions and practical recommendations are provided.		
	<i>Final evaluation (average of scores for items 12 to 17):</i>		

Comments and questions from the reviewer:

Strengths of the final thesis:

Weaknesses of the final thesis:

Evaluation of the final thesis:

To endorse for public defence / to endorse for public defence after corrections (underline the appropriate option)

Evaluation score \_\_\_\_\_ (from 5 to 10)

To not endorse for public defence, evaluation score \_\_\_\_\_ (from 1 to 4)

Reviewer's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**EVALUATION OF THE FINAL MASTER’S THESIS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**Form of evaluation by the Member of the Defence Committee**

Master’s student \_\_\_\_\_, group \_\_\_ of the Integrated Study Programme in Medicine

Master’s thesis topic \_\_\_\_\_

<i>No.</i>	<i>Final thesis evaluation statements</i>	<i>Evaluation (1 to 10)</i>
1.	Main problem of the final thesis formulated, the aim and objectives indicated	
2.	Methodology of the thesis explained, the main research instruments, data collection methods explained	
3.	Statistical or other methods for addressing the set objectives properly indicated	
4.	The results of the research properly presented	
5.	Visual material presented in an understandable and informative way	
6.	The conclusions were based on the results obtained, related to the objectives and aims set.	
7.	If possible, practical recommendations have been put forward	
8.	Logical sequence of the message maintained	
9.	The main idea of the final thesis corresponds to the substance of the medical study programme	
10.	Culture of work presentation	
	<i>Final evaluation (average of scores for items 1 to 10):</i>	

Comments and questions from the Member of the BMD Defence Committee:

Signature of the Member of the Defence Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of the Department)

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC DEFENCE HEARING OF THE FINAL MASTER'S THESIS OF  
THE INTEGRATED STUDY PROGRAMME IN MEDICINE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

Composition of the Defence Committee:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The final Master's thesis is evaluated by at least 3 members of the Defence Committee.

<b>Student's name, surname:</b>		
<b><i>Evaluators:</i></b>	<b><i>Name, surname</i></b>	<b><i>Assessment</i></b>
Reviewer		
Member of the Committee		
Member of the Committee		
Member of the Committee		
<b><i>Final evaluation (average of evaluations by the evaluators):</i></b>		

Name, signature of the Chairperson of the Defence Committee (or Head of the Department): \_\_\_\_\_