



REQUIREMENTS FOR PREPARATION OF FINAL THESIS IN THE UNDERGRADUATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION PROGRAM

Course code	<i>MNG 266</i>
Course title	<i>Bachelor thesis</i>
Type of course	<i>Main</i>
Stage of study	<i>Undergraduate</i>
Department in charge	<i>Studies Department</i>
Year of study	<i>3th</i>
ECTS	<i>15</i> <i>6 hours of seminars and presentations (introductory seminar on the concept of Final Bachelor Theses and of applicable requirements, Bachelor Thesis topic defense, Bachelor Thesis public defense), 4 hours of consultations with Bachelor ATS, 4 hours of general thesis writing seminars, 391 hours of individual work</i>
Coordinating lecturer	<i>Assoc.prof.dr. Eigirdas Žemaitis (Program Director)</i>
Studies form	<i>Full-time classes</i>
Prerequisites	<i>Internship</i>
Language of instruction	<i>English</i>

MAPPING OF COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES) WITH DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES (See Annex), ASSESMENT AND TEACHING METHODS

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Degree level learning objectives (Number of LO)	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. To be able to define the research problem and the main goals of a thesis in a concise way. Be able to integrate the theoretical knowledge obtained in the bachelor studies.	BLO1.1.; BLO1.2.; BLO4.3.	Thesis topic defense, final bachelor thesis defense, evaluation of advisor, evaluation of faculty reader	Consultations, individual study
CLO2. Be able to apply the knowledge to identify a start-up or business relevant problem. To be able to perform a review of academic literature and other sources, relevant to the problem-area and the main goals of a thesis	BLO1.1.; BLO1.2.; BLO4.3.	Thesis topic defense, final bachelor thesis defense, evaluation of advisor, evaluation of faculty reader	Consultations, individual study
CLO3. To be able to prepare and conduct (on an individual basis) empirical research to suggest managerial solutions. Be able to present a testable hypothesis, consistent with assumptions derived from situation analysis.	BLO1.1.; BLO1.2.; BLO4.3.	Thesis topic defense, final bachelor thesis defense, evaluation of advisor, evaluation of faculty reader	Consultations, individual study
CLO4. Be able to collect quantitative and/or qualitative data and perform appropriate empirical analysis to solve the research problem	BLO1.1.; BLO1.2.; BLO3.1.; BLO4.3.	Thesis topic defense, final bachelor thesis defense, evaluation of advisor, evaluation of faculty reader	Consultations, individual study
CLO5. Be able to formulate, select, analyze and generalize the information relevant for managerial solutions. Be able to demonstrate proficiency in analysis, validation of the solutions	BLO1.1.; BLO1.2.; BLO4.3.	Thesis topic defense, final bachelor thesis defense, evaluation of advisor, evaluation of faculty reader	Consultations, individual study, bachelor thesis defense

CLO6. Demonstrate ability to present findings of the thesis to an academic community of peers and defend the thesis in front of a faculty panel	BLO4.1.; BLO4.2	Thesis topic defense, final bachelor thesis defense, evaluation of an advisor, evaluation of a faculty reader	Consultation s, individual study, public defense of a thesis
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1. General Aspects

The **Final Bachelor Thesis (FBT)** is an independently prepared thesis that summarizes the knowledge, abilities, and skills acquired in the course of studies and serves as the basis for the entrepreneurship and innovation qualification awarded.

1.1. FBT is focused on three main research fields:

- 1.1.1. Start-up business development. Students have to write the FBT about start-ups that they have established. They would like to scale the business or prepare a market entry strategy, team development strategy, new product development, etc. The final direction of start-up development will be decided together with the supervisor.
- 1.1.2. A student works in the company (preferably a technological company or a startup, but it could be any, e.g., advertising agency, audit company, market research company, etc.) and analyzes the activity of the company and solves a problem related to the improvement of any process within the company, related with working area. The student provides improvement suggestions and validates possible solutions.
- 1.1.3. The student focuses on Entrepreneurial ecosystem with the goal to analyse and improve the specific problems in this area. The student collects data and makes analysis with the main stakeholders of the ecosystem, provides improvement solutions (the research areas could be venture business networks, entrepreneurship fostering systems, etc)

1. STRUCTURE OF FINAL BACHELOR THESES

FBT must be prepared in adherence to the APA bibliographical standard¹. The structure and scope of individual sections of Final Bachelor Theses is specified in Table No. 1 below.

Table No. 1. Structure and scope of Final Bachelor Theses

Section	Volume
Title page	1 page
Summary (in English)	1 page or 300 words
Table of contents	1–2 pages
List of figures	1–2 pages
List of tables	1–2 pages
Introduction	500–800 words
1. Theoretical and practical foundation of the thesis	4000–6000 words
2. Research methods and empirics	4000–6200 words
3. Managerial solutions	3500–5000 words
Conclusions	1–2 pages
Bibliography	1–5 pages

¹ <http://www.apastyle.org/about-apa-style.aspx>

Total:	12 000–18 000 words
Annexes	Based on the needs

The purpose of the **summary** is to provide the following essential information about the final thesis: topic, aim and objectives, research methods, and obtained results. The summary is written in English only and follows right after the title page. The summary may be one page at maximum. The summary must include relevant keywords and total number of words. The author and the title of the final thesis are specified above the summary:

[Surname, first letter of given name]; Preparation of the Go-to-market strategy for the start-up “Unicornio”. [manuscript]: Final Bachelor Thesis. Entrepreneurship and Innovation Studies: Vilnius, ISM University of Management and Economics, 2024.

The **Table of contents** of the FBT Thesis must correspond to the structure of the thesis (see Table No. 1). The table of contents must contain all the sections as set by the requirements for the structure of the FBT.

The sections' titles and start page numbers must be specified in the table of contents. The table of contents must begin with the 'Introduction' section and end with the 'Annexes' section. It is essential that the titles of individual sections are not identical to the title of the topic of the entire thesis and that the titles of subsections do not repeat the section titles. On the other hand, the primary concepts mentioned in the topic title must be reflected in one manner or another and be related to section titles. In contrast, section titles must be linked to subsection titles. Section, subsection, and the paragraph titles must follow from each other and form a totality.

Introduction. The introduction should reflect the essence of the thesis and present the key results of the topic being analyzed. The structure of the introduction must be as follows:

- Problem tackled;
- The topicality (relevance) of the topic;
- The goal of the thesis;
- Objectives of the thesis;
- Research methods;
- Logical sequence of the thesis.
- AI usage declaration

The problem of the thesis reflects the pursuit of the strategic goal of the start-up company, leading to the company's development plans or improved process management or fostering entrepreneurship ecosystem. The problem is formulated as the result of the problem analysis of the start-up/ company. It should be clear and concise. **The topicality (relevance)** of the problem should be based on the relevance of the underlying strategic goal. The problem is usually formulated as a statement or question, e.g. “In which way should process management be improved to increase customer satisfaction?” Since the problem can be solved in many different ways, it should be split into goals corresponding to a particular way of solution. By assigning priorities, one of them should be chosen as the main **goal** (topic) of the thesis. Next, this goal is broken down into the **objectives** of the thesis, be clear with the objectives, I recommend using 3, they should reflect the analysis you will do in the thesis.

The introduction must specify what data collection and processing methods (observations, surveys, experiments, document analysis, statistical data analysis, modeling, case study, etc.) were used to prepare the thesis. At the end of the introduction, the logical sequence of the work must be explained: the main parts of the thesis are named and described briefly, revealing the interrelationship of the parts. Optionally, you can outline the practical value of the thesis for the ecosystem or the

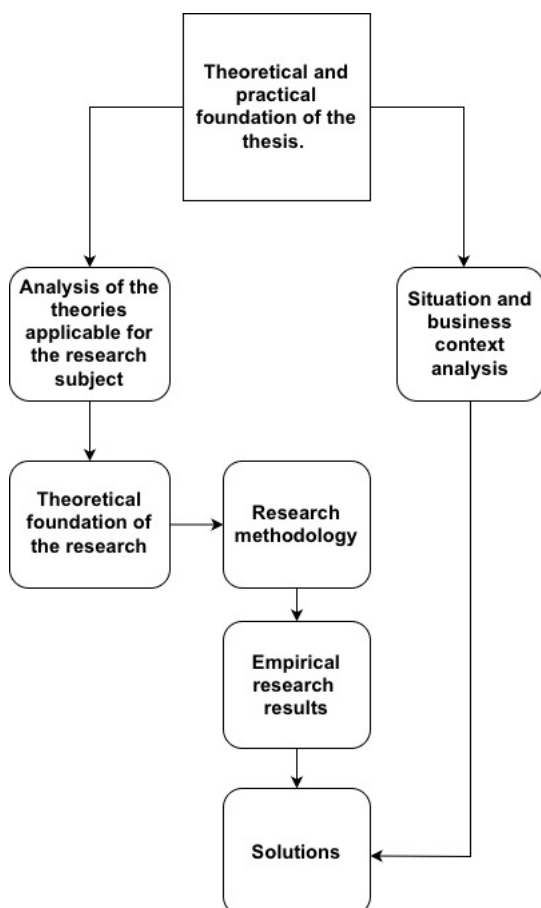


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startup.

The thesis consist of 3 major part, which should be interrelated and lead to achieve main objective.
The logical framework of the thesis:



1. **Theoretical and practical foundation of the thesis.** The goal of the problem analysis of the start-up/ company/ecosystem is to formulate the problem and choose how to solve it. This part has two major subparts:

- 1.1. **Analysis of the theories applicable for the research subject.** In this part, the authors describe all possible concepts and developments related to the analyzed topic. For example:

The thesis topic is "Scaling of the start-up UnicornAPP in the US market." For this specific topic, you should analyze theories, models, and frameworks from scientific literature related to the scaling process. Basically, you answer the question, what are the ideal models to scale startups? Findings from this part will be transferred to the research part, where you will build a research framework to test how, in an actual situation, a company scales according to ideal models. What is missing? etc. This part creates possibilities for developing very structured research. In this part you should review scientific articles.

1.2. **Situation and business context analysis.** In this part, students provide an analysis of the internal situation of a start-up/company or organization and an analysis of its external environment. In the case of the ecosystem, an analysis is done, including main definitions, an overview of the ecosystem, an analysis of networks, and support measures. The goal of this part is to identify and define the practical problem of the thesis and to substantiate the importance of the problem. An analysis of the situation must be based on the described models, which the student decides. For the problem analysis, students use all available methods, like SWOT, PESTEL, and other existing analysis models, which fit the thesis. Students decide what situation analysis frameworks best suit the thesis topic. In the problem identification part, students can use case analysis and benchmarking. The conclusion of the analysis should lead to empirical research.

2. **Research methods and empirics.** Empirical research requires collecting empirical data to achieve the thesis goal. The optimum scope of the empirical research must be defined by available time. Any unrealistic expansion outside the subject matter and objective of the empirical study must be avoided. Data collected and used for an FBT should be public, or a student must be sure that data can be used for academic purposes (provided in FBT and presented during public defense).

This section usually comprises the following two subsections:

2.1. Description of the methodology of the empirical research

The description of the methods of empirical research must contain the aim and objectives of the research and the order of the stages of the research. The choice of the practical research method (primary vs. secondary, quantitative vs. qualitative, experimental) must be clearly justified. The selection of the data collection method (surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, experiments, content analysis, data analysis, etc.) must be explained; the research sample(s) must be justified, and the sampling procedure must be described; and the logic of preparation of the research instrument (questionnaires, focus groups scenarios, observation sheets, etc.) must be described. If students want to validate MVP, the hypothesis and validation process should be described in this part.

A standard structure of the section "Research methodology" may be as follows:

- Objective and tasks of the study;
- Theoretical foundations of the research (concepts defining procedure)
- Approach of the research and data collection method;
- Samples and sampling procedure;
- Explanation of the study instruments used;
- Data analysis methods.

2.2. Presentation and analysis of the empirical research results

This section should describe the data collection process (including the problems encountered) and the model of the process analyzed, i.e., the process map and relevant attributes of the process.

Students who use qualitative surveys have to provide the systemized script of the interview in the annexes ("Questions-respondents" matrix, "Interview guide" and "List of Respondents" are recommended).

Acknowledging limitations of the research is beneficial and can also be added, as "Limitation of the Research"

- 3. Managerial solutions/ Action plan/Final prototype.** This part should contain specific action plans for start-ups and practical suggestions and prototypes based on data analysis results from previous parts. It should only reflect findings in your research. Students could provide the final prototype. Also, students should validate final proposals with the stakeholders (customers, managers, etc.) and justify their validity. The managerial solutions section must present specific process improvement proposals for solving the problem analyzed, which must be specific and properly substantiated. This is the most practical and essential part in the thesis process, which should highlight students' ability to develop solutions and validate them. Limitations can also be added to this part.

Conclusions. This section must contain a list of the results of each of the sections of the final thesis. The conclusions must show that the author has reached the objectives and achieved the goal of the thesis. Not solved objectives (if there are such of them) must be listed also.

Bibliography. All literature sources quoted and/or referred in the thesis must be included into the bibliography. In contrary, sources which were not quoted and/or referred in the thesis itself must not be included in the bibliography. The bibliography of FBT is supposed to contain at least ten academic informational sources. Bibliography must comply to the APA standard.

Annexes. Annexes should include statistical, sociological, and legal information, internal company documents, and other examples of the data sources or data collection tools, like sample questionnaires and primary and secondary data tables used during research, systemized data of qualitative survey.

AI usage

All course participants must comply with the ISM University of Management and Economics Artificial Intelligence Policy published on the e-learning platform.

Students may use AI tools to enhance their understanding of the topic, identify relevant theories, and find applicable examples. AI-generated information must be cross-verified with credible sources. AI tools may also be used to improve efficiency in working with literature sources or data analysis, as well as to improve the quality of written English, including grammar and style. AI-generated content is not considered a reliable academic source and should not be cited as such. The submitted paper must be written by the student. The inclusion of AI-generated text in the final submission is not permitted. All usage should be declared in introduction under the section AI usage.

4. PREPARATION PROCESS OF FINAL BACHELOR THESIS

Preparation of Final Bachelor Theses is carried out in stages, at the end of each of which students report to their academic advisers on the work completed. A detailed time schedule of practical work and preparation of final theses with approved dates is provided in Annex 1. A detailed description of the preparation process of Final Bachelor Theses is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Preparation process of Final Bachelor Thesis

Item No.	STAGE	COMMENTS
1.	Seminar on the concept of FBT and of applicable requirements	During the seminar, students are introduced to the practical work and preparation of FBT, defence procedure, assessment criteria, and fields of research and subject matters from which they may choose. Requirements for FBT are also presented.
2.	Choosing a field of research for Final Bachelor Theses	Students choose the desired research topic and subject matter from the proposed list and upload the completed questionnaire to the e-learning system.
3.	Assigning of academic advisers	Students are informed about the academic advisers assigned.
4.	Academic advisor consultation 1	Academic adviser assist student in the formulation of the preliminary problem and topic of the thesis and in the identification of the main objective of final thesis.
5.	Preparing the INTRODUCTION and of PROBLEM AND SITUATION ANALYSIS of FBT	Student prepares the analysis of situation (the first) section of final thesis. Data collected during the internship may be used.
6.	Submitting the INTRODUCTION and PROBLEM AND SITUATION ANALYSIS to academic advisers	Student submits electronic and/or thesis versions of their introduction and analysis of situation to their academic advisers.
7.	Academic adviser consultation 2	Academic adviser indicates any shortcomings of the situation analysis and helps the student to formulate the objective of the empirical study and choose appropriate research methods.
8.	Presenting FBT topics at a seminar and defence of the topics	The seminar is held to hear the student's 5-minute presentation on the problem, goal and objectives of the

		thesis. The seminar is attended by the head of the field of research, academic advisers, and students.
9.	Approval by the Study Committee	The Study Committee takes decisions on whether the problem and the topic are appropriate for final thesis. Student is informed about approved final thesis topics.
10.	Repeated defence of the topic	If the topic was not approved, the student is invited to present his/her topic once again. If a topic is not approved again, the Study Committee takes a decision concerning further preparation of the relevant thesis.
11.	Research adviser consultation 1	Research advisers, based on the consultation schedule, provide consultations concerning research methods and research progress to registered students.
12.	Research adviser consultation 2	Research advisers, based on the consultation schedule, provide consultations concerning interpretation of research results to registered students.
13.	Performing an empirical research, preparing the description	Student performs the empirical research, i.e. collect, analyse and interpret empirical data.
14.	Submitting the section EMPIRICAL RESEARCH to academic advisers	Student submits an electronic or printed version of the section of empirical research to the academic adviser.
15.	Academic adviser consultation 3	Academic adviser indicates any shortcomings of the empirical research and advise the student on managerial solutions.
16.	Preparing the ACTION PLAN/MANAGERIAL DECISIONS and CONCLUSIONS	Student briefly describes the theoretical models used to make the managerial decisions, and prepares specific suggestions for solving the problem of the thesis.
17.	Submitting the ACTION PLAN/MANAGEMENT DECISIONS and CONCLUSIONS to academic adviser	Student submits present electronic or printed version of managerial decisions to the academic adviser.
18.	Academic adviser consultation 4	Academic adviser specifies any shortcomings of the FBT.
19.	Submitting the definitive version of FBT to academic advisor	Student submits the definitive version of FBT in electronic or printed format to the academic adviser.
20.	Preparing the review of FBT	Academic adviser prepares the review of FBT in a written form. Electronic versions of the review is sent to the head of the research field.
21.	Submitting the FBT to the studies department	Electronic version of a thesis, named as Surname_Name_VD_2012 is uploaded onto e-learning system in assigned folder. Two printed and stitched copies of final theses, signed by the author, are presented to the studies department. Thesis should be uploaded onto e-learning system in advance to the submission of printed version. On submission of the thesis to the Study Department, students also submit signed author's declaration (Annex No. 2).
22.	Peer review seminar	It is advisable for the students to hold an independent seminar.
23.	External review of final theses	External reviewers prepare their written reviews on the thesis.
24.	Approval by the Study Committee	A meeting of the Study Committee is held, where the decision on the suitability of final thesis for the defence is taken.
25.	Defence of FBT	Defence of FBT is held according to the schedule prepared by the Study Department.



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