

# GUIDELINES FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

The course is intended for postgraduates preparing to take their candidate examination. It also helps to get 'a permit' prior to the examination proper which includes different types of tasks based on their research and analysis of authentic English literature on the subject. This textbook provides a step-by-step practice for postgraduates who need to demonstrate professional English language competences both orally and in writing in the course of taking these two academic challenges.

The basic aim of this course is to master an algorithm of information retrieval structuring it in line with established international standards of English academic writing and the general format of university postgraduate training.

## STAGE I. GETTING 'A PERMIT'

### **Step 1. Individual reading. The Executive Summary.**

Postgraduates select and do a considerable amount of reading (min. 250 pages) on their chosen research subjects. A list of literature is to be provided. Then they write summaries on each piece of work (an article or a chapter of a book directly related to the subject). The summaries should critically present and analyze the source literature in a concise form (about 200 words each). They should be supplemented with quotations, extracts with most aptly reflect the core of the matter.

All the written pieces are collected in a file.

Samples of Executive Summaries are provided in Supplement 1 (see pages 4-6).

### **Step 2. The source material Presentation.**

Postgraduates present their critical assessment of the literature on the subject orally on a regular basis (once a month) in class in portions of approximately 50 pages. They give 15-20 minutes presentations according to a detailed outline using the necessary clichés and phrases.

The list is provided in Supplement 2 (see pages 7-10).

#### A suggested outline

1. Author, title, publication data, volume.
2. Subject matter; the work's place within a broader scientific context – conceptual, dwelling on minor points, descriptive or illustrating, etc.
3. Aims and objectives.
4. Key points in terms of the research subject matter.
5. Critical assessment.

### **Step 3. The Thematic Glossary.**

Postgraduates compile thematic glossaries: approximately 250 units of terminological word-combinations picked out from the texts which best reflect the content under analysis. The units are organized in the alphabetic order and supplied by a contextual Russian equivalent and a reference to the unit's first occurrence in the text (page, title of the article or book, website, etc.). The lists should be circulated among other members of the group so as to provide language inputs for better comprehension of presentations and enlarging the vocabulary in general.

For samples see Supplement 3 (see pages 11-12).

### **Step 4. The Literature Review.**

This task is a final stage in processing and presenting the information contained in the source materials. The Review opens with defining the sphere of scientific interests and, most important, setting the project in the frame work of existing knowledge. In other words, postgraduates should state what has been done. Thus, the Review should provide a critical assessment of the state of art and suggest possible further directions of research. The literature may be presented in a chronological, thematic or "opposing opinions" format. The total volume is 2,5-3 pages.

See Supplement 4 (pages 13-32).

### **Step 5. The Abstract.**

An abstract is a brief summary of the research, describing core problems or issues. The goal is two-sided: to state the aim to be achieved and place it within a broader context of the already conducted theoretical and empirical studies. The Abstract also dwells on particular areas of scientific interest, gives a foundation for the choice of the topic and tentatively forecasts possible outcomes. On average it should not exceed 250-300 words.

See Supplement 5 (pages 33-35).

### **Step 6. The Research Results Presentation.**

Oral presentation should be supported by visual aids (PowerPoint Presentation, etc.) and last not more than 7-10 minutes. They include several clear-cut stages:

1. Opening (greeting, introducing self);
2. Outline (stating aims, introducing the main parts);
3. Main body (presenting the subject matter, introducing the main definitions, making the major points, supplying explanations and illustrations);
4. Closing (summary up the information, drawing general conclusions, expressing gratitude, inviting questions). Slides should highlight the key points, provide tables and graphs as illustrations, generalize or summarize the information. Do not overuse slides: 5-7 would be sufficient.

For reference see <http://www.econ.msu.ru/ds/1660> (Занина Е.Л., «Эффективное использование слайдов при проведении научной презентации»).

## **STAGE II. TAKING THE CANDIDATE MINIMUM EXAMINATION.**

The examination consist of 2 parts: written and oral. The former is a written translation of a text on Economics (2 500 – 3 000 signs) from English into Russian using a dictionary. 50 minutes is allotted. The latter is an oral presentation of the research project in front of the Examination Board (7-8 minutes) supported by visual aids (PowerPoint Presentation, etc.).

The final grade is calculated on the basis of points corresponding to each task (step).

Step 1 – 10 points maximum

Step 2 – 10 points maximum

Step 3 – 10 points maximum

Step 4 – 10 points maximum

Step 5 – 10 points maximum

Step 6 – 10 points maximum

Examination – 40 points maximum