

Approved
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24 July 2023

OSCE Academy in Bishkek

Academic Regulations 2023-2025

MA in in Liberal Arts and Sciences
Specialization in Human Rights and Sustainability Programme

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

All students are requested to *sign a written statement* (Appendix 3) as confirmation that they have read and clearly understood all provisions of the Academic Regulations and the Code of Conduct and will not breach these rules under any circumstances. This statement is signed in addition to the contract regulating financial matters between the Academy and a student.

§1 PURPOSE

The present regulations are designed to effectively organize and manage activities within the OSCE Academy's MA in Liberal Arts and Sciences with specialization in Human Rights and Sustainability Programme as well as specify the requirements for award of a Master of Arts degree.

§2 ENROLLMENT

Candidates admitted to the MA Programme must be enrolled at the OSCE Academy on a full-time basis for the whole period of their studies. Enrolled students must not be employed full-time throughout the duration of the programme or be enrolled in another full-time academic programme.

§3 LANGUAGES

The working languages of the Academy are English and Russian. The language of instruction for the MA programme is English.

§4 LENGTH AND STRUCTURE

The academic year of the MA in Liberal Arts and Sciences with specialization in Human Rights and Sustainability Programme lasts 18 months and is divided into semesters:

- 1) Fall 2023 and Winter 2024 during which students take core required courses at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek. In addition, students may attend various public lectures and round tables.
- 2) Spring/Summer 2024, students conduct their internships and write their independent research studies.
- 3) Fall 2024 students will continue their studies in one of the partner universities during one semester and conduct research for their MA theses.
- 4) Winter and Spring 2025, students write and submit their MA theses, take Comprehensive State Examinations, defend their MA theses and submit their individual works.

§5 DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

In order to qualify for the MA degree, students must fulfil the programmes' credit requirements, have a GPA of more than 2.00, and meet other commitments set by the Academy.

MA in Liberal Arts and Sciences with specialization in Human Rights and Sustainability Programme Graduation Requirements	
Full-term Courses and Modules	54
Internship	12
MA Thesis and State exam	20
Research Work	34
Total Credits to be earned (min)	120

§6 MA THESIS PROPOSAL

MA Thesis Proposal's purpose is to provide students with critical feedback and guidance on the quality of their proposals. Students must prepare and submit their MA thesis proposals before the deadline set by the Academy. The final version of the MA thesis proposal must be 10-12 pages long and include all elements of a research proposal, such as an introduction, statement of a problem, purpose and significance, methods, a draft literature review, research questions/hypotheses, corresponding references, as well as a tentative timeline for further work on the thesis project.

Please consult the *MA Thesis Guide* for more information at: <https://www.osce-academy.net/en/programmes/masters/>

§7 MA THESIS

An MA thesis demonstrates a student's ability to conduct original research and report its findings in a formal and academically appropriate manner. The process of implementing thesis projects advances students' research, analytical, and writing skills. As a result, a student should be able to produce an independent work demonstrating comprehensive understanding of the subject investigated, application of appropriate research methods, and ability to present results of the research in a clear and precise manner.

In an attempt to write an MA thesis, a student should seek advice and guidance of a thesis supervisor. It is a student's responsibility to find a supervisor based on field of his/her research interest. The Graduate Education Department may recommend possible thesis supervisors upon request of a student.

The body text of the MA thesis (excluding prefatory pages, notes, bibliography, and appendices) is expected to be 18,000–25,000 words for MA in Liberal Arts and Sciences with specialization in Human Rights and Sustainability Programme (MAHRS) students. If the thesis exceeds the specified maximum length, the supervisor and external examiners will not read further than the specified limit and shall, therefore, not take into account any work beyond the specified limit when

grading the paper. If the thesis is shorter than the required word count, it will not be accepted for evaluation by the Academy.

The thesis must be written according to the requirements specified in the Chicago Manuscript Format and the MA Thesis Guide. The thesis must be properly referenced and include a bibliography listing sources used in the research. If the thesis does not comply with the Chicago Manuscript Format, it will not be accepted for evaluation by the Academy.

Students must submit electronic (in both Word and PDF formats) copies of their theses by the specified deadline. All copies must follow the format described in the MA Thesis Guide. More information on the MA thesis is detailed in the MA Thesis Guide.

§8 INTERNSHIP

An internship is an important practical educational experience and is considered as a prerequisite for a successful start of a student's future career. During an internship, students engage in practical activities related to their fields of professional or academic interest and have an opportunity to put in practice knowledge gained from their studies.

The internship will be a chief exercise to train a student's professional skills in working matters and habits relevant to their future occupation. Students interested in pursuing an academic career afterward will be encouraged to pursue internships with partners strong in academic inquiry and with scholars interested in supervising the student's thesis project.

Students enrolled to MAHRS programme are expected to have their internships of minimum 2 months (depending on bilateral agreements between students and agency) and should be concluded by the end of the Summer semester 2024. Only those students who have successfully completed their internships are allowed to take the Comprehensive State Examinations (see the paragraph below).

It is a student's responsibility to find a suitable institution for internship and complete it. The Academy does not organize internship placement but offers guidance, support, and contacts of relevant host institutions within its growing network of academic partners.

An internship is to be undertaken on a voluntary and gratis basis, i.e. a student should not request any remuneration or compensation of any costs from an internship provider. If the internship provider would still like to offer remuneration or compensation in any form, the student must immediately inform the OSCE Academy about such circumstances, as employment of any kind does NOT constitute an internship. Further information and requirements are presented in the Internship Regulations: <https://www.osce-academy.net/en/programmes/masters/>

In addition to their internships, students are obliged to plan accordingly and conduct their independent research studies.

§9 COMPREHENSIVE STATE EXAMINATIONS

The Comprehensive State Examinations (CSE) consist of two components: 1) the State Examination aimed to test students' knowledge on at least two main subjects that they have taken during the entire period of their academic programmes; and 2) MA thesis defense.

In order to qualify for the Kyrgyz state diploma, as well as the Academy's certificate, all students are required to pass the CSEs. The CSEs are held at the beginning of the second Winter semester (February 2025) by the committee specially convened for this purpose. Students are informed about the date and general topics of the State Examination one month in advance. The minimum passing grade for the CSE is C- (see *Appendix 1*).

An CSE that is evaluated below C- and is, therefore, failed can be retaken twice within the following two years after graduation. More information is detailed in the MA Thesis Guide at: <https://www.osce-academy.net/en/programmes/masters/>

§10 DEADLINES

Students are expected to submit assignments by deadlines set by their course instructors. Failure to meet a deadline may lead to lower performance evaluation or even a penalty to be determined by the course instructor.

All students must meet the MA thesis submission deadline. In case of emergency, such as an illness or special family circumstances, a student can apply for an academic leave and submit his/ her thesis the following year (please see §14 for more information). If, as a result of such an emergency, a student cannot meet the deadline, s/he must immediately contact the Thesis Supervisor, Thesis Seminar instructor, and Head of the Graduate Education Department. In the event of a medical emergency, a student must present certification from a reliable health service (More information and the request template can be found in Appendix 8).

§11 ACADEMIC HONESTY

The OSCE Academy's students are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Therefore, such actions as falsification of one's research results and findings; stealing words or ideas of another author and presenting them as one's own, including advertent or inadvertent failure to use quotation marks for direct quotations; using other people's production and intellectual property without accurate indication of sources; submitting another student's work as one's own or cheating in an examination; allowing another student to commit or assisting him/ her in committing an act of academic dishonesty corrupt the process by which knowledge is gained and advanced and contradict the principles of academic ethics and intellectual integrity.

Cheating

Cheating is an act or an attempted act of deception through which an individual seeks to unjustifiably demonstrate that he /she has mastered the subject matter in an academic project, or an attempt to gain an advantage for oneself or others, usually academic, by the use of unfair and unauthorized means and practices. Examples may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- copying from another student's test paper;
- allowing another student to copy from one's test paper;
- using course readings, other materials, or electronic devices brought to class, but unauthorized for reference or use during a test;
- collaborating during a test with another person by receiving or providing information without the instructor's permission;
- using or possessing specifically prepared and unauthorized materials during a test;
- inventing or falsifying data, evidence, references, experimental results or other material contributing to any student's assessed work, or student's deliberate use of such materials.

In any of the above-listed or similar cases, students should be reminded that cheating is an academically fraudulent action and represents an offence against the OSCE Academy's discipline. Any student found to have cheated or attempted to cheat in an assessment may be deemed to have failed that assessment and disciplinary action may be taken. Submitting the same piece of work in more than one class is considered cheating.

Plagiarism

All work submitted for assessment by a student is accepted on the understanding that it is the student's own effort without falsification of any kind. Plagiarism is the act of copying or including into one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another author, for one's own benefit. It is academically fraudulent and is, therefore, regarded as an offence against the *OSCE Academy's Academic Regulations* and *the Code of Conduct*. Any case of plagiarism, that may occur at whatever stage of a student's course of study, whether discovered before or after graduation, will be investigated and handled appropriately by the Academy's management.

Students are expected to offer their own analysis and presentation of information gleaned from research or any other outcomes of knowledge production, even when group exercises are carried out. In addition, students are required to acknowledge all help and other external assistance that they have received. This should be done both in a formal list of acknowledgements in a written work and at appropriate places and sections of the work. Any failure to adequately acknowledge or properly reference other sources in submitted work, as well as accurately and appropriately acknowledge external help and assistance received, will result in the non-award of the *Master of Arts* degree by the OSCE Academy.

In so far as students rely on sources, they should indicate what these are according to the appropriate convention accepted in their discipline. Innocent misuse or citation of material without formal and proper acknowledgement can constitute an act of plagiarism, even when there has been no deliberate intent to cheat on the part of a student. Work may be plagiarized if it consists of close paraphrase or unacknowledged summary of a source, as well as word-for-word transcription or translation.

When an individual submits work that includes words, ideas, or data of others, the source of such information must be acknowledged through a complete, accurate, and specific reference and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks or any other accepted citation practices.

Such sources, *inter alia*, include electronic information and internet resources, in particular. By placing his/ her name on a piece of work, a student certifies the originality of all parts of the work that are not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgment. Plagiarism would, thus, include representing as one's own any academic exercise or research findings prepared totally or in part by another author or party. An individual will not be charged with plagiarism if there is an explicit and unequivocal acknowledgment demonstrating that a student:

- quotes another person's actual words;
- uses another person's ideas, opinions, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased or summarized in a student's own words;
- borrows facts, statistics, or other graphic, audio-, and video-materials, unless such information represents common knowledge.

The Academy's management and lecturers reserve the right to verify authenticity and originality of all pieces of work submitted. If an instructor suspects that a written work contains evidence of plagiarism or/ and cheating, he or she will immediately notify the Head of the Graduate Education Department. Evidence of suspected plagiarism or/ and cheating should be collected in cooperation with the Head of the Graduate Education Department and a requisite report should be prepared. Based on this report and consultation held with participation of both the Head of the Graduate Education Department, the instructor will decide whether a case of plagiarism or/ and cheating is minor or significant. Any plagiarism (stealing of ideas and word-for-word copying with proper acknowledgement of a source, any possible manipulations or changes made to the original text, providing incorrect information about a source, and other various cases regarded as plagiarism in the academic community) occupying less than *10 per cent* of the overall paper word count shall be considered minor, while everything above this amount shall be deemed as a significant case of plagiarism ensued by serious consequences. If the case of plagiarism or/ and cheating is minor, the instructor will, at his/ her discretion and upon discussion with the Academy's management, determine the penalty for such action by giving an additional assignment or deducting a certain percentage from a student's total grade. Besides, a written reprimand (see Appendix 4) will be sent on behalf of the Graduate Education Department. In case a student is sent more than two written reprimands, the Academy reserves its right to apply more severe academic sanctions, including expulsion from the programme. If the plagiarism or/ and cheating is significant, it will entail failure of the MA Programme by a student and his/ her consequent expulsion from the Academy. This decision will be taken by the OSCE Academy Director and the Head of the Graduate Education Department upon a consultation with the instructor. The decision shall be final and non-appealable. A resulting report and an official letter will be sent to the student by e-mail.

Fabrication

Fabrication is falsification of research or other findings and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- citation of information that has not been taken from the source indicated;
- listing in a bibliography sources that have not been actually consulted by a student;
- fabrication of non-existent data, citations, or other information for research or other academic projects and purposes.

The lists above are provided for illustrative purposes only and should not be construed or interpreted as restrictive or exhaustive descriptions of various forms of misconduct constituting academic dishonesty. Every case will be investigated and handled with due diligence and care.

Measures Helping to Prevent Academic Dishonesty

The following measures could be undertaken by students to prevent potential cases of academic dishonesty:

- Prepare thoroughly for examinations and assignments; this includes attending classes actively and attentively.
- Take precautions to prevent other students from copying your examinations or assignments.
- Use a recognized guide/ manual providing reliable instructions on how to properly cite sources in your papers. Consult with individual lecturers when in doubt.
- Discourage dishonesty among other students.
- Refuse to assist students who cheat.

Academic Sanctions

Sanctions shall be imposed on students committing acts of academic dishonesty. This also includes expulsion from the MA programme in case of severe violations of academic honesty principles and rules. Academic sanctions include:

- requiring a student to redo/ resubmit an assignment, test, or project;
- lowering a grade for the assignment, test, or project;
- a verbal reprimand;
- a written reprimand (see Appendix 4);
- expulsion from the MA programme (more information is provided in §15, Expulsion from the MA Programme).

§ 12 GRADING

It is the policy of the OSCE Academy that the responsibility for grading lies solely with the faculty and that students have the right for fair and impartial assessment of their academic performance.

Faculty members are expected to evaluate students' academic performance based on their professional judgment. Faculty members have the responsibility to clarify course requirements, grading procedures, and expected standards of academic performance to evaluate all students' performance equitably and based on fair and consistent grading criteria.

The OSCE Academy's Grading Guide (Appendix 1) shall be used for all courses and modules, including the Comprehensive State Examinations (CSE).

Grades for diplomas issued by the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education and Science are presented in a

numerical format. Consequently, the Academy's letter grades will be converted to numerical grades according to the format provided in Appendix 1.

A GPA (Grade Point Average) is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned by a student by the total number of credit hours attempted. A student's Grade Point Average may range from 0.0 to 4.0. P/NP (Pass/ No Pass) courses are not factored in a student's GPA. I (Incomplete) does not result in receiving grade points and does not have an effect on the GPA.

Any student with a GPA below 2.00 fails the programme and shall not be allowed to take the CSEs. Further information on the grading principles followed by the Academy is provided in the OSCE Academy's Grading Guide presented in Appendix 1.

Students' academic achievements are assessed based on the methods determined by a course instructor with endorsement of the Head of the Graduate Education Department. Methods of assessment may include, but are not limited to, tests, papers and essays, presentations (oral and/ or written), and examinations (oral and/ or written, mid-term and/ or final).

The minimum passing grade for a full-term course and module is D-. Any full-term course or module evaluated with an "F" can be retaken twice within the deadlines set by the course instructor in agreement with the Head of the Graduate Education Department. In case if an exam is retaken successfully, a student will be able to continue his/ her studies at the Academy (more detailed information on the retake procedures is presented in Appendix 5)

For the CSE, the lowest passing grade is C-. Grades for the CSE are awarded by the CSE Committee. When assigning a grade for a MA thesis, the Committee will rely on written comments of the supervisor, written evaluations (reviews) provided by independent reviewers, the student's final presentation, and the overall quality of the paper.

If an MA thesis and/ or an CSE is evaluated with a grade lower than C- (and is, therefore, considered as failed), it can be retaken two times within the following two years. More detailed information on the retake procedures is presented in Appendix 6.

§13 GRADE REVIEW

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Academic Regulations and related policies, as well as requirements for courses and modules. A formal grade review is available only with regard to a **final course grade**.

A formal grade review can be initiated under the following circumstances:

- if a contested grade reflects discrimination of any kind, i.e. it has been given based on a student's race, gender, nationality, color, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other grounds other than academic performance;
- if a contested grade has been assigned based on standards and assessment methods inconsistent with those specified in the course syllabus and presented by the course instructor at the beginning of the course, and/ or these standards and assessment methods

are different from those applied to other students.

In case if a student decides to submit a grade review request, s/he shall follow the procedure presented below:

- The student shall consult with the respective course instructor and express his/ her concerns about the final course grade. Consultations could be initiated by the student in writing or by scheduling an official appointment with the course instructor.
- In case the grievance has not been resolved through the consultation, the student shall submit a written request for a grade review (see Appendix 7).
- The grade review involves convening of a review panel which will review the case and make the final decision.

A review of the MA thesis grade or the CSE grade is further explained in the MA Thesis Guide at: <https://www.osce-academy.net/en/programmes/masters/>

§ 14 ACADEMIC LEAVE

An academic leave is a period of time during which a student is released from academic courses. An academic leave can be granted only once, up to one year upon approval of the Director of the OSCE Academy. Given that the OSCE Academy charges no tuition and fully funds students' expenses related to their travel to and stay in Bishkek, there are several conditions under which a student may be granted an academic leave:

- An academic leave is granted in exceptional cases when a student faces an emergency situation (such as a severe medical condition or family hardship). Appropriate evidence must be provided (The template for the academic leave request is available in Appendix 8).
- To be eligible for an academic leave, a student should complete at least one semester and have a GPA of minimum 2.00. An academic leave request will not be considered until all grades of the first semester are announced.
- An academic leave is granted only once, up to one year and is effective from the date when the request has been formally approved. If a student fails to appear at the Academy immediately after the academic leave end date, s/he will be expelled without any further consultations. The Academy reserves the right to request reimbursement of its expenditures made to support the student (please see the Grant Contract for further legal stipulations).
- Scholarship (all types of financial allowances) is not available for the period of an academic leave. The scholarship will be resumed once the student returns on the expected academic leave end date and on the terms agreed upon and stipulated in the Academy's order granting the academic leave.

§ 15 EXPULSION FROM THE MA PROGRAMME

A student may be excluded from the MA programme based on the reasons listed below:

- failure to fulfill course and curriculum requirements;
- failure to meet the OSCE Academy's regulations and rules;

- failure to meet the requirements of the OSCE Academy's Code of Conduct;
- breach and/ or failure to properly comply with the provisions of the Grant Contract;
- based on a student's own request to leave the MA programme (more information and the request template are available in Appendix 9)

Expulsion procedure:

- The OSCE Academy issues an expulsion order within three working days upon discovery of one or several conditions serving as grounds for a student's expulsion. A student who has received this order is requested to confirm his/ her understanding of its content by signing a requisite statement.
- Upon expulsion, a student will receive his/ her academic transcript in accordance with the OSCE Academy's format after fulfilling the de-registration protocol requirements. The expelled student's right to use the email associated with the OSCE Academy shall be terminated accordingly.
- The expelled student retains the right to be re-admitted to the OSCE Academy subject to the following requirement: successful completion of the first two semesters with a GPA minimum of 2.00. A decision regarding re-admission of an expelled student shall be made by the OSCE Academy's management based on availability of student vacancies in a particular MA programme and sufficient funding.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to support the core mission of the OSCE Academy by creating a safe, friendly, and inspiring learning environment, as well as safeguarding the Academy's staff, students, property, and activities. Every student is required to comply with the provisions of the Code of Conduct. Students should sign a written statement confirming that they clearly understand all provisions of the Code and will not breach them under any circumstances.

§1 RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

- All students have the right to take part in the academic process, activities, and events regardless of their gender, race, citizenship, language, culture, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or other personal status.
- All students have the right to freely express their opinions provided this does not infringe on the rights of others.
- All students have equal rights of access to the Academy's IT and library facilities, unless these have been suspended due to violations described below.
- If students feel that they have been unfairly treated by staff members, lecturers, or other students, they have the right to seek redress through the Student Representatives, the Head of the Graduate Education Department, or the Director. Any such request should be made in writing and clearly state the case or the problem and, when possible, provide supporting evidence.

§2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Students must:

- be honest and act in good faith;
- show respect to staff members, lecturers, and other students;
- accept responsibility for their actions and consequences of these;
- attend all courses they have subscribed to (both full term and modular);
- inform the Academy's management about any part-time job taken during an academic year (students are enrolled on a full-time basis and cannot be employed full-time by any other organization);
- notify in advance the course instructor and Graduate Education Department in writing about the inability to attend classes in case of illness, due to family or other circumstances;
- provide appropriate confirmation (medical certificate) in case of missing the classes due to illness;
- arrive for classes on time and not leave earlier without permission from the lecturer;
- meet deadlines for all tasks and assignments;
- prepare for and actively participate in class activities, while respecting other students and giving them equal opportunities to contribute to in-class discussions;
- be considerate to the needs and rights of others when using the library, computer room, and canteen.

§3 DISORDERLY/ OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOR

As members of the OSCE Academy's community, students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of conduct and ethics. The Academy will take disciplinary action against any student guilty of physical abuse, drunkenness, lewd or indecent conduct, disorderly behavior, or other violations posing a threat to safety and security of any member(s) of the Academy's community. Students are advised to seek to resolve all disagreements, disputes, or conflicts through peaceful settlement.

§4 SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND HARRASSMENT

Students should be fully aware that any kind of unwelcome verbal, written, or physical misconduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment and will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, undesired bodily contact, name-calling, lewd jokes, display of pornography, and making offensive gestures or suggestions. Students breaching this rule may receive penalties ranging from warning letters and fines to expulsion from the programme.

§5 VANDALISM, MUTILATION, AND THEFT

All acts of vandalism, mutilation and theft of library books, stealing of personal property of staff members, lecturers or other students, or other similar violations will be dealt with by the Academy's management. A student found guilty of such actions is liable to expulsion from programme, and the Academy reserves the right to seek appropriate legal remedy.

§6 SMOKING/ ALCOHOL/ DRUGS/ GAMBLING

The Academy's building is a smoke-free area. Fire detectors are installed in each room and a false fire alarm may cause unnecessary organizational and financial costs. Therefore, smoking is allowed only in the Academy's yard. A breach of this rule will result in disciplinary action against violators.

Students are not allowed to attend classes under the influence of alcohol. Students breaching this rule will be expelled from the Academy.

Students should not produce, use, sell, or distribute illegal drugs on the premises of the Academy. Students breaching these rules will be expelled, and proper legal action will be sought.

Gambling is prohibited on the premises of the Academy. Breaches of this rule will result in disciplinary action against violators.

§7 USE OF MOBILE PHONES

Students are advised to exercise tact, discretion, and sound judgment in the use of mobile phones, particularly during lectures, seminars, and public events. Students are encouraged to switch off or mute their mobile phones when in the library and computer room. Mobile phones must be switched off during all classes and may only be used with the explicit permission of the course instructor!

Breaches of this rule will result in disciplinary action against violators.

§8 USE OF COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Academy students and other authorized users are advised to use the Academy's computers appropriately. Serious misuse of the Academy's computers or the Academy's network will lead to suspension of computer accounts and perpetrators will be denied network access. Depending on the severity of each individual case, further disciplinary action ranging from fines, exclusion from examinations, and expulsion from the Academy to legal action will be taken. Users are also reminded that unauthorized access to or interception of computer programs or data may be regarded as serious criminal offences under the OSCE Rules and Regulations, as well as the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic. For further details regarding acceptable use of computer facilities please consult the Computer Room Usage Guidelines. The guidelines can be found in the computer room and will be explained by the staff.

The use of laptops during classes is allowed only for in-class activities and only with the explicit permission of the course instructor.

§9 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct is a violation of the Academy's policies that could take different forms ranging from tampering with grades to participating in distribution of test or examination assignments, in whole or in part, before administration of this test or examination. Other examples of such behavior may include:

- stealing, buying, or otherwise obtaining an unadministered test in whole or in part;
- selling or giving away an unadministered test in whole or in part, including the test key;
- bribing or attempting to bribe any other person to obtain an unadministered test, any information about the test, and its key;
- buying or otherwise acquiring another student's course paper and submitting it as one's own work, whether altered or not;
- entering the OSCE Academy's building or office, or accessing any of its computers or systems for the purpose of changing a grade in a grade register, a test grade, or grade for any other evaluated work;
- approaching course instructors with a request to change a grade without a legitimate reason and circumventing the established procedures (see the Grade Review Procedure in the Academic Regulations).

§10 LITTERING

Students are encouraged to keep the Academy's premises and public areas clean and tidy. Cooperation and understanding of the need to dispose of garbage to litter bins or other designated facilities are expected.

§11 SERVICE ROOMS

Rooms with a sign “staff only” are intended for the use of staff, and students may not enter and use such premises.

§13 LIBRARY

Students must respect and take care of the resources offered to them in the library (books, journals, newsletters, CDs, etc.). If a student wishes to borrow library items, they should be registered in the logbook and returned by the date indicated by the librarian. Printed materials should be returned in their original condition. Any mutilation of library materials, such as making notes with a marker, pen or pencil; tearing out pages; folding or staining pages, etc., is not allowed. Stealing library resources is strictly forbidden. Breaching these rules may entail fines as compensation for resources damaged or lost (e.g., an amount equivalent to a fivefold price of the book destroyed or lost).

Smoking, eating, drinking, talking, or otherwise causing unnecessary disturbances in the library are prohibited. To ensure equal access to the Academy’s library resources for all students, borrowed library items should be returned at least three days before any exam or test and cannot be reissued within that three-day period.

§14 CONFIDENTIALITY

Throughout and upon completion of the Grant Contract period, students should maintain confidentiality and discretion with regard to all matters related to the Academy, its donors and partners. This provision also applies to matters related to the reputation of the Academy as an OSCE-affiliated institution and potential implications that may arise for the institutional reputation of the OSCE, as a whole.

APPENDIX I

GUIDELINES FOR GRADING

The table below outlines the grading system applied for full semester courses, modules, and internship:

Letter Grades	Grade	Grade Points	Grade Percentages
A	Excellent	4.00	Above 92.49%
A-	Excellent	3.67	89.50% – 92.49%
B+	Good	3.33	85.50% – 89.49%
B	Good	3.0	82.50% – 85.49%
B-	Good	2.67	79.50% – 82.49%
C+	Average	2.33	75.50% – 79.49%
C	Average	2.0	72.50% – 75.49%
C-	Average	1.67	69.50% – 72.49%
D+	Poor	1.33	65.50% – 69.49%
D	Poor	1.0	62.50% – 65.49%
D-	Poor	0.67	59.50% – 62.49%
F	Fail	0.0	Below 59.50%
I	Incomplete	Not used in computation of GPA	
P	Passed for a degree credit, only on a pass/fail basis	Not used in computation of GPA	

Note: These grading guidelines are to be used for all courses offered at the Academy and will be reflected in students' transcripts.

The table below describes the grading system for the Comprehensive State Exams (MA Thesis and State Exam):

The grades for diplomas issued by the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education are presented in a numerical format. Consequently, letter grades will be converted to numerical grades according to the standards of the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Letter Grades	Grade	Numerical grades	Grade Points	Grade Percentages
A	Excellent	5	4.00	Above 92.49%
A-			3.67	89.50% – 92.49%
B+	Good	4	3.33	85.50% – 89.49%
B			3.0	82.50% – 85.49%
B-			2.67	79.50% – 82.49%
C+	Average	3	2.33	75.50% – 79.49%
C			2.0	72.50% – 75.49%
C-			1.67	69.50% – 72.49%
F	Fail		0.0	Below 69.50%

GRADING CRITERIA FOR COURSES

The following guidelines provide a general description for different quality categories of students' papers that might be associated with various ranges of grades. The purpose of this categorization is to ensure general consistency across the faculty rather than to provide precise specifications. Academy courses should encourage vigorous intellectual exchange, expression of various viewpoints, and ability to present ideas effectively and cogently.

[A-, A] Excellent performance: strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base; high level of motivation.

[B-, B, B+] Good performance: evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; regular attendance of classes; productive contribution to discussions by sharing thoughts and questions that demonstrate familiarity with the material; interest in other students' contributions.

[C-, C, C+] Average performance: understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material; acceptable but uninspired work, not seriously faulty but lacking style and vigour; meeting the basic requirements of preparedness and regular attendance; rare participation in class discussion.

[D-, D, D+] Poor performance: inconsistency in attendance and preparation for classes; lack of participation in class discussions; lack of respect to other students' contributions.

[F] Inadequate performance: little or no evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of sources.

I (Incomplete) – indicates that a student has not completed course requirements (a part of course requirements) due to acceptable reasons, such as an illness or a family emergency. These reasons should be reported to the Head of the Graduate Education Department, the lecturer and confirmed with an appropriate certificate in case of an illness. The grade "incomplete" is given by a lecturer in consultation with the Head of the Graduate Education Department, and in this case the student, the Head of the Graduate Education Department, and the lecturer agree on a timeframe and actions to be undertaken by the student to complete the course (or section) requirements. The student's failure to fulfill the aforesaid actions by the end of the agreed timeframe will result in "F" grade for the course.

P (Pass) does not allow a student to receive additional quality points. "Pass" has no impact on a student's GPA but is required as confirmation for obtaining credits for some types of academic activities or assignments (e.g., internship or an MA thesis) as may be prescribed by the programme's curriculum. Failure to receive "Pass" for such activities results in no credits earned for such assignments and overall failure of the academic programme.

GRADING CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

(To be applied to essays, exams, and research papers)

[A] Outstanding: a paper has distinctive ideas, perfectly organized, and is of exceptional quality; a thorough and thoughtful treatment of the topic presented in a logical and convincing manner; the paper has a clearly articulated thesis; the ideas are original and complex; sources are used carefully and appropriately to support the original argument; careful attention is paid to language and to details of expression and presentation.

[A-] Excellent: a paper has mostly excellent ideas and content is organized suitably; the paper is well-structured, with clear themes supported by evidence; the ideas are original and complex; sources are used carefully and appropriately; careful attention is paid to language and to details of expression and presentation. Occasional lapses in expressions, in the development of ideas, or in the handling of evidences/ or sources.

[B+] Very Good: a paper is thorough and thoughtful but lacks originality, comprehensiveness or insight; effective and appropriate structure; mostly relevant evidence is used to support the main argument; the writing style is less fluid or sophisticated than the 'A' papers; attention is paid to language and to details of expression and presentation but with only a few lapses.

[B] Generally Very Good: a paper is well-reasoned and well-organized but with little originality; effective and appropriate structure; mostly relevant evidence is used to support the main argument; ideas are well developed and can be easily followed but occasional errors may distract from the content; the writing style is less fluid or sophisticated than the 'A' papers; attention is paid to language and to details of expression and presentation but with only a few lapses.

[B-] Good: a paper is well-reasoned and well-organized but with little originality; clear and appropriate structure; mostly relevant evidence is used to support the main argument but difficulties with incorporation of sources into the line of the argument is evident; ideas are well developed and can be easily followed but occasional errors may distract from the content; attention is paid to language and to details of expression and presentation but with some lapses.

[C+] Average: a paper is well-reasoned and well-organized, and shows competency on the subject matter; adequate structure, but there are problems or limitations in logic, argumentation, insights, or organization; the main argument shows good critical skills and originality of thought, but that struggles with problems of expression and presentation. Overall, ideas need to be developed in proper depth but can be followed.

[C] Satisfactory: a paper is well-reasoned and well-organized, and shows competency on the subject matter; adequate structure, but there are significant problems or limitations in logic, argumentation, insights, or organization; errors in expression and presentation distract from the development of content. Overall, ideas can usually be followed but need further exploration and deeper development.

[C-] Satisfactory: a paper is well-developed but lacks coherence: either because of distracting

lapses in language that make ideas difficult to understand or lack of connections and transitions between ideas; support from sources is weak and not developed enough; nevertheless, this paper meets basic requirements.

[D+] Poor: a paper shows a serious attempt but with limited success; there is no clear focus or thesis holding the paper together; evidence is scanty and not clearly linked to the main argument; the handling of evidence raises some concerns; attention to language and presentation is wavering and uncertain; errors in grammar, punctuation; or spelling distract from the content, but these appear in only a minority of sentences.

[D] Poor: a paper shows an attempt but with limited success; there is no clear focus or thesis holding the paper together; evidence is scanty and not clearly linked to the main argument; the handling of evidence raises serious concerns, as the evidence is too unsubstantial or too unrelated to the main idea; attention to language and presentation is erratic and uncertain; errors in grammar, punctuation; or spelling distract from the content, but these appear in only a minority of the sentences. This paper contains more errors and/ or less satisfying development of the content than 'D+' paper.

[D-] Very poor: a paper neither demonstrates understanding of the material nor articulates any coherent argument about it; the paper might wander among several ideas without developing any single one; there is no thesis; the paper relies on quotations rather than developing original ideas; attention to language and presentation is erratic and uncertain; errors in grammar, punctuation; or spelling distract from the content.

[F] Fail: a paper fails to address the assignment in fundamental ways and reveals serious writing problems. The paper is plagiarized from another source.

APPENDIX 2

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VISA AND REGISTRATION

Please, read the instructions very thoroughly as it is essential that you follow this guidance. Even if you believe you know the regulations applicable to you, please, accurately follow the instructions below. We ask each student to read these guidelines and sign the declaration, confirming his/ her awareness of the rules.

1. Students are expected to arrive in September. Those students who plan to arrive in Kyrgyzstan before the indicated dates must appropriately inform the OSCE Academy in advance. The Academy will buy tickets from your home city to Bishkek, please do not book tickets yourself. Due to the restrictions of border crossing all students with citizenship of Tajikistan are expected to arrive in Bishkek following the permission by the respective Kyrgyz state authorities and after receiving a special invitation from the OSCE Academy.

2. All students, with exception of students who are citizens of the ten countries listed in the paragraph below, must obtain electronic visas (e-visa). This applies even to citizens of those countries that have visa-free access to Kyrgyzstan for a limited period of time.

2.1. Exception is made for citizens of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Vietnam, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) who do not need visa to enter and stay in Kyrgyzstan. Citizens of these countries still need to register upon arrival in Bishkek, so, please, see the registration guidelines.

3. The Academy will provide you with a two-month student electronic visa (e-visa) <http://evisa.e-gov.kg/index.php>

4. Upon your arrival in Bishkek and at the OSCE Academy, your e-visa will be extended for a year and then prolonged later for the rest of your study period. The extended visa will be a multiple visa.

- All foreign students need to be registered within five days upon their arrival. This means you need to contact the Academy's Junior Administrative Assistant as soon as possible, preferably the next day after your arrival. The duration of stay allowed without registration may be different for some countries, which have individual agreements with the Kyrgyz Republic. Please come to the Academy as soon as you arrive in Bishkek so that the Academy could process your registration in a timely manner.

- The Academy will assist students with obtaining visas only on two occasions: 1) at the start of the Programme and 2) when extending your visa until the end of the academic period. If you have to obtain an extra visa due to the passport validity issues, it is your own responsibility to obtain a new entry visa. The Academy will not provide assistance to students in such cases.

Please always check your visa and registration documents after obtaining the Kyrgyz visa. The OSCE Academy is here to help you (since you study full-time and do not have time to handle all visa and registration formalities); however, it is a student's responsibility to get registered on time, maintain proper visas, and find information about the requirements for leaving the Kyrgyz Republic and being admitted to your home country.

APPENDIX 3

DECLARATION

Herewith I confirm that I have read the OSCE Academy's Academic Regulations, Code of Conduct, Instructions for Obtaining Kyrgyz Visa and Registration and am familiar with the OSCE Academy's Grading System.

I understand that any breach of the Code of Conduct and violations of the Academic Regulations may lead to disciplinary action and my expulsion from the Master of Arts Programme of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 4

WARNING LETTER

Template

«.....» 20.....

MA in Politics and Security Programme

MA in Economic Governance and Development Programme

WARNING LETTER

Student's name: _____

Please be informed that the OSCE Academy has decided to give you a written warning on the following basis:

1. Plagiarism _____

§ 11, Academic Regulations: Plagiarism is the act of copying or including into one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another author, for one's own benefit. It is academically fraudulent and is, therefore, regarded as an offence against the OSCE Academy's Academic Regulations and the Code of Conduct. Any case of plagiarism, that may occur at whatever stage of a student's course of study, whether discovered before or after graduation, will be investigated and handled appropriately by the Academy's management.

2. Missing classes _____

§2, Code of Conduct: Student fails "to notify in advance Programme Assistant about inability to attend classes in case of illness or a family circumstance".

3. Being late for classes/skipping classes _____

§2, Code of Conduct: Student fails "to arrive punctually for classes and leaves earlier without permission of a lecturer".

4. Other Articles of the Code of Conduct _____

We have decided to impose the following penalty: Type of warning:

Note: in the case of further breach of the Code of Conduct and/or Academic Regulations, the OSCE Academy reserves its right to apply more severe academic sanctions, including EXPULSION from the programme.

Head of Department of Graduate Education
Signature Date

APPENDIX 5

EXAMINATION RETAKE PROCEDURE

In accordance with Paragraph 10 of the *Regulation on Ongoing and Interim Assessment of Students of Higher Educational Institutions in the Kyrgyz Republic*, approved by Government Decree No. 346 dated May 29, 2012, a student who has received an unsatisfactory grade (“F”) has the right to two attempts for retaking failed examinations. The minimum passing grade for all courses and modules at the OSCE Academy is “D-”. A retake is not allowed if a student has received a passing grade for an examination.

A retake of an unsatisfactory grade “F” is conducted in accordance with the procedure stated below:

- 1) After a student is notified that s/he has received an unsatisfactory grade, the student has the right to submit, within three working days, a letter to the course instructor (could be prepared in any format the student chooses to use) via e-mail containing a request to organize a retake. Within three working days upon the receipt of the request, the instructor shall inform the student about the period during which the student is expected to prepare for the retake, as well as the specific date and time of the retake. During the retake, the student is to be given an assignment similar to the one used for the previous examination in terms of complexity, volume, and duration. The lecturer shall evaluate the examination assignment and communicate the result of the retaken examination to the student via e-mail within five working days from the date of the retake.
- 2) In case of receiving an unsatisfactory grade (“F”) after the first retake, the student has the right for the second retake. A request for the second retake (please refer to the template below) should be submitted by the student to the Head of the Graduate Education Department no later than three working days from the date of receiving an unsatisfactory grade “F” for the first retake. The second retake is organized by the Director of the OSCE Academy through convening an evaluation committee within five working days upon receipt of the student’s request. Members of the evaluation committee set the date and time for the second retake. The assignments and questions for the second retake shall be prepared by the course lecturer based on the course syllabus. The grade conferred by the committee is final and unappealable. In case of receiving an unsatisfactory grade for the second retake, the student shall be expelled from the OSCE Academy on the grounds of his/ her academic failure and shall fulfill the relevant terms and conditions as stated in the Grant Contract.
- 3) A retake is not allowed in case a student failed to attend a course examination without providing acceptable reasons and not informing a lecturer before the exam.

Application Template for Examination Retake

Attn: Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek

(full name)

from _____,
(full name)

student of the Master's Programme in

20__ - 20__ academic year

Hereby I would like to request your approval for my second examination retake for _____
course for the following reasons _____ (indicate the reasons).

This request contains the copies of the previous two examination papers (____ pages) with the grade conferred by the instructor.

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 6

PROCEDURE FOR RETAKING THE COMPREHENSIVE STATE EXAMINATIONS

In accordance with the *Regulation on the Final State Examinations of Graduates of Higher Educational Institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic*, approved by Government Decree No. 346 dated May 29, 2012, those students who have received an unsatisfactory grade for their master's thesis defense and/ or state examinations have the right to retake the Comprehensive State Examinations. A student is allowed to have only two retake attempts within the two (2) years following the date of the first failed examination.

To retake the Comprehensive State Examinations, a student is required to:

- 1) submit an application (please refer to the template below) to the Head of the Graduate Education Department with a request for reinstatement. The application can be submitted in person or via e-mail in the PDF format. Applications for retaking the Comprehensive State Examinations are accepted during the period from August 1 to September 30. Applications submitted before or after the specified period will not be considered.
- 2) If the request is approved, the OSCE Academy issues an order regarding the student's reinstatement and permission for him/ her to retake the Comprehensive State Examinations. The agreement with the master's thesis supervisor should be submitted by the student to the Head of the Graduate Education Department within ten working days upon the date of the aforesaid order.
- 3) Scholarship and other expenses related to the student's retake of the Comprehensive State Examinations are not covered by the OSCE Academy.

Application Template for Comprehensive State Examination Retake

Attn: Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek

(full name)

from _____,
(full name)

student of the Master's Programme in

20__ - 20__ academic year

Hereby I would like to request your approval for my reinstatement as a student of the MA Programme in _____ and allow me to retake the master's thesis and/ or Comprehensive State Examinations.

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 7

Application Template for a grade review

Attn: Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek

(full name)

from _____,
(full name)

student of the Master's Programme in

20__ - 20__ academic year

Hereby I would like to request your approval for a grade review for
_____ course for the following reasons
_____ (indicate the reasons).

This request contains the copies of the examination paper (____ pages) with the grade conferred by the instructor.

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 8

ACADEMIC LEAVE PROCEDURE

An academic leave request should be submitted to the Head of the Graduate Education Department in person or via e-mail in the PDF format. Following the student's request and the official note prepared by the Head of the Graduate Education Department, the OSCE Academy will issue an order granting the academic leave request.

To be granted an academic leave, a student is required to:

- 1) Immediately notify the Head of the Graduate Education Department about the student's inability to continue studies. The notification should be sent via e-mail.
- 2) Enclose an academic leave application (please refer to the template below) and documents confirming the exceptional circumstances of the student. All documents should be sent via e-mail in the PDF format.
- 3) Upon its consideration of the academic leave request, the OSCE Academy, within three working days, shall inform the student of its decision via e-mail.
- 4) If the request is approved, the student is granted an academic leave for a period of up to one year. At the end of the academic leave period, the student should contact the Graduate Education Department to complete formalities related to his/ her return from the academic leave.
- 5) If the request is found invalid, the student is expelled from the OSCE Academy for academic failure and non-attendance of classes without the right for reinstatement. The expelled student shall reimburse the OSCE Academy's expenses in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Grant Contract.

Academic Leave Request Template

Attn: Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek

(full name)

from _____,
(full name)

student of the Master's Programme in

20__ - 20__ academic year

ACADEMIC LEAVE REQUEST

Hereby I would like to request your approval for my academic leave in connection with _____ (provide the reasons) for the period of one year starting from _____ 20__.

This request is substantiated by the following enclosed documents (list the documents confirming your exceptional circumstances):

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 9

PROCEDURE FOR VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FROM A MASTER'S PROGRAM

A voluntary withdrawal application should be submitted to the Head of the Graduate Education Department in person or via e-mail in the PDF format. Following the student's application and the official notification (memo) by the Head of the Graduate Education Department, a withdrawal order shall be issued by the Academy with the requirement for the student to refund tuition for the Program. The issued order shall be sent to the withdrawing student within three working days.

Voluntary Withdrawal Letter Template

Attn: Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek

(full name)

from _____,
(full name)

student of the Master's Programme in

20__ - 20__ academic year

WITHDRAWAL LETTER

This is to request your approval for my withdrawal from the Master's Programme in

_____ in 20__ - 20__ academic year from the OSCE Academy in Bishkek **at my own free will** starting from _____ 20__.

I agree to reimburse the tuition costs in accordance with the terms and conditions of Grant Contract No. dated _____ 20__.

Signature _____

Date _____