



Double Degree AFEPA - Cremona campus

Vademecum for Decentralised Students - Academic Year 2024/25



The following definitions apply:

- **Centralised students** are those selected for the AFEPA Programme via an application presented through the AFEPA centralised portal, and who enter the programme at the beginning of their first year;
- **Decentralised students** are those who start their M.Sc. programme as regular students in one of the four universities of the AFEPA Consortium (UBonn, SLU, UCL, UCSC) and are admitted to the AFEPA Programme during their first year after a selection process carried out by their first-year university.

CATEGORY OF STUDENTS	
Centralised AFEPA students with a scholarship – first year at UCSC, second year at university outside Italy	Students who applied for and were awarded an AFEPA EMJMD scholarship and who will attend their first year of studies at Università Cattolica and their second year at another partner university in the network.
Centralised AFEPA students without a scholarship – first year at UCSC, second year at university outside Italy	Students who applied for but were not awarded an AFEPA EMJMD scholarship and who will attend their first year of studies at Università Cattolica and their second year at another partner university in the network. This set of students can apply for an Erasmus+ scholarship for their period of second-year mobility although there is no guarantee a scholarship will be granted.
Centralised AFEPA students with a scholarship – first year at university outside Italy, second year at UCSC	Students who applied for and were awarded an AFEPA EMJMD scholarship who will attend their first year of studies at a partner university in the network and their second year at Università Cattolica.
Centralised AFEPA students without a scholarship – first year at university outside Italy, second year at UCSC	Students who applied for but were not awarded an AFEPA EMJMD scholarship and who will attend their first year of studies at a partner university in the network and their second year at Università Cattolica.
Decentralised AFEPA students on mobility – second year including thesis at university outside Italy	Università Cattolica students enrolled in the M.Sc. in Agricultural and Food Economics and who will attend the first year of studies at the Università Cattolica Cremona campus and the second year at a partner university in the AFEPA network. This set of students can apply for an Erasmus+ scholarship for their period of second-year mobility.

Tuition



- For each academic year, students involved in the AFEPA Master's programme pay their annual university tuition fees directly to Cattolica, in order to remain formally registered as students in Cattolica and to obtain their Master's degree from both partner institutions.
- While attending their second year in one partner institution:
 1. they may be asked to pay additional administrative fees, in line with the relevant regulations of that institution;
 2. they might benefit from an Erasmus+ Scholarship administered by Cattolica.

Course selection and study plan



Decentralised AFEPA students follow Student Services matriculation procedure.

A competition notice for the AFEPA Double Degree Programme is published each academic year in February.

Students present their candidature and, if selected, they prepare their application for the partner university abroad (usually in April-May). The application procedure generally requires the preferred elective courses at the university abroad to be stated. Students can consult the academic advisor (Prof. Paolo Sckokai / Prof. Claudio Soregaroli) regarding their choice of courses at the partner university abroad and after that, they should share the approved Study Plan with the International Office.

Please be aware that Decentralised students are obliged to upload the Study Plan in the Icat page.

At the end of each semester of the second year at a partner university abroad, students obtain a Transcript of Records (ToR) from the partner university and submit this to the International Office at Università Cattolica.

UCSC will be able to then upload results to student records. The office will either convert the grade to a grade out of 30 or enter a grade of 'approved', in consultation with the relevant academic advisor.

Thesis

The main points concerning the M.Sc. thesis preparation and submission at UCSC can be summarised as follows:

- Graduation takes place **four times a year**, on four fixed dates (July, October, December, April). Each year, the graduation calendar is posted on the University website.
 - On graduation day, students defend their thesis (via a presentation and discussion of the content with an official graduation committee) and they officially obtain their degree on that same day.
 - Graduation is based on a final grade that considers the Grade Point Average (GPA) of all exams (excluding final thesis) and an evaluation of the content and presentation of the thesis. The thesis is evaluated with a dedicated grading system and the result is transferred to the partner University. UCSC will eventually issue the Degree including a comprehensive final grade (out of 110).
 - For regular M.Sc. students, the typical steps of the thesis preparation are as follows:
 1. Students choose their topic and supervisor during the 1st semester of the 2nd year;
 2. Around **6-7 months** before the expected graduation date, students submit a "Thesis topic approval" form to the Registrar's Office. The supervisor approves the topic by signing the approval application.
 3. Around **45 days** before graduation date, students submit a "Thesis title" form to the Registrar's Office. The supervisor approves the application by signing the form.
 4. Around **10 days** before graduation date, students submit a PDF file of their thesis via Blackboard.
 5. **Deadlines** for each of the previous steps (points 2, 3 and 4 above) for each graduation date are posted on the University [website](#).
 6. Students defend their thesis on **graduation day** as described above.
- Some specific rules apply to AFEPA students:
1. Decentralised AFEPA students choose their main supervisor at the 2nd year partner university, but at the same time they

are required to choose a supervisor at UCSC. Students submit their thesis to both supervisors and both of them must approve it.

2. Each partner University has a specific template for writing the thesis. Although the content of thesis is the same, students are asked to prepare two versions following the template of each University.
 3. UCSC International Office will ask AFEPA students for the names and contact details of both of their thesis supervisors and the date when the thesis will be defended.
- Students must follow the same procedural steps. In particular, they must adhere strictly to the deadlines for points 2, 3 and 4 above. If not, graduation may be delayed.
 - When choosing their thesis topic, AFEPA students may use the idea/project presented during the 1st year summer school, if deemed appropriate by the supervisor. In any case, the topic of the Thesis must be in line with the content of the AFEPA Programme, which is focused on policies at the interlink between agriculture, food and environment. Some link to these issues is expected in the topic of the thesis.
 - UCSC AFEPA students can defend their thesis in one of the following modalities:
 1. during the AFEPA summer school/in another AFEPA session;
 2. at their second-year university;
 3. during graduation day at UCSC.
 - If an AFEPA student's defence takes place in modality 1 or 2, the UCSC supervisor must attend the defence and report the results/evaluation to the committee during the following graduation day. The Graduation Committee will consider this evaluation in awarding the UCSC degree. The degree is always awarded on Graduation Day, even if the student is absent.
 - If students defend their thesis in modality 3, the supervisor from the AFEPA partner university awarding the Double Degree is expected to attend the defence on Graduation Day, generally by being connected online.

Contacts

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