



**UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA**
del Sacro Cuore

**GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE UNDERGRADUATE FINAL DISSERTATION
IN THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS**

1. General criteria and purpose of the final dissertation
2. The choice of the final dissertation and the role of the supervisor



1. General criteria and purpose of the final dissertation

Students completing their undergraduate degree programme must prepare a dissertation, the assessment of which is the responsibility of a Faculty professor, identified as supervisor for the final degree examination. The supervisor's assessment allows the student to:

- 1) Acquire the necessary credits to complete their study programme (**3ECTS**);
- 2) add points between 0 and 3 to the basic score (on a scale with grades up to 110) to determine the final graduation grade.

The supervisor may propose a distinction, if the student has already achieved the minimum basic mark of 107 and if the final dissertation is considered to be of particular quality. The distinction is not automatically awarded for exceeding a mark of 110, and must be motivated, by forwarding a request to the Faculty Secretariat, together with the mark award form.

The grading scale for the final dissertation is determined as follows:

- a) 0 points for a dissertation which has been completed but which has not reached an appreciable threshold in terms of completeness and achievement of objectives (in this case, the student is nevertheless admitted to the degree whose final mark will coincide with the base mark);
- b) 1 to 2 points for a dissertation which has been completed but has reached a barely appreciable threshold and is predominantly descriptive;
- c) 3 points for the dissertation which, by virtue of its completeness, the mastering of concepts and language used, the rigour of its method and the quality of its critically developed content, as well as the achievement of the explicitly predefined objectives, has reached the maximum assessment threshold in terms of marks.

The undergraduate final dissertation should provide the graduating student with an opportunity to develop and enhance the knowledge and skills that have been acquired during the overall three-year study programme.



2. The choice of the final dissertation and the role of the supervisor

The final dissertation is a moment of synthesis in the university career. The choice of subject area and topic (i.e. the title of the dissertation) should therefore be made well in advance, starting from the beginning of the third year, after deciding in which direction to complete the course of study, also through the selection of elective courses and the relative curriculum of the specific field of study chosen. The final examination may in any case be chosen in a discipline only if it is included in the study plan.

The choice must be formalised by the student approximately 3 months before graduation, provided that he/she has at least 140 ECTS excluding Languages and Theologies, after contacting the professor in the discipline of interest.

From an administrative point of view, the student must fill in and enter into the system the assignment form for the final examination.

Candidates may ask their supervisor for methodological advice or for more in-depth information on the content of the topic. These indications are intended to resolve the student's difficulties in researching sources, organising and directing them, and formulating a clear answer to the question or problem he or she is asked to address.

2.1 The start and development of the project

The student and the supervisor together formulate a problem or question relevant to the theme and the chosen subject area, which the final dissertation sets out to answer.

The topic addressed must have well-defined boundaries. Whatever the approach agreed with the supervisor, the content must refer to a few specific aspects on a subject of certain interest and useful for improving or completing the knowledge of the student. The student, starting from the skills at his/her disposal, accepts the indications of the supervisor and undertakes independent research of material with which to enrich his/her knowledge bases, verifying the reliability of the sources to which s/he has access. This opportunity for comparison allows the student to collect and focus on the professor's indications, aimed both at correcting formal errors or errors in method, and at faithfully maintaining the work within the agreed guidelines and boundaries.

It is expected that the work does not include translations or transcriptions of texts, in accordance with the regulations governing the protection of copyright and anti-plagiarism. The work must be a personal product of the student, assessable for the ability to express a



rational synthesis of the sources used, an autonomous style of exposition, the formulation of observations and judgments on the subject addressed, and effective communication in written form. These assessment criteria will therefore guide the supervisor in determining the points from 0 to 3 to be awarded for the dissertation.

2.2 The structure of the dissertation

The dissertation should be concise and in the order of 30 to 40 pages, with the aim of producing a document that brings together relevant information, demonstrating the ability to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions.

In summary, when drafting the final dissertation, care should be taken to:

- provide the reader with a table of contents;
- prepare an introduction to the work that clarifies the object of investigation, the chosen working method and the specific aims of the work;
- structure the work into appropriately numbered and titled parts in a manner consistent with its content and thus being able to describe it correctly;
- declare the sources to the reader through the use of notes and a carefully drafted general bibliography;
- draw up a conclusion that summarises the results achieved and the issues/problems remaining open, and which also includes any points for independent reflection.

Note:

- Any tables and figures included in the text should have a heading in the descriptive caption (e.g. Fig. 5, Tab. 3) that allows them to be recalled in the text of the dissertation. In this sense, it is preferable not to write "the following table" or "the preceding figure", because layout requirements may require them to be moved, making it difficult to understand the reference.