

HEMAP - Health Economics, Management and Policy

Curriculum of the 2nd cycle degree in Economics & Public Policy

Master Thesis Guidelines

For graduation in academic year: 2025-2026

1 Essentials

In order to earn an Economics & Public Policy – HEMAP final degree students will have to acquire 120 credits:

- 60 credits for compulsory courses during their first year
- 30 credits for compulsory courses during their second year
- 12 credits for elective courses/seminars/internship during their second year
- 18 credits for their master thesis.

The master thesis should be prepared under the guidance of a supervisor (relatore).

A good thesis is the result of the **following ingredients**:

hard work by the candidate on a **well defined** project under the expert advice of a supervisor

Hard work is a student's task. Expert advice is the responsibility of the HEMAP faculty. A successful thesis involves both. The MTC aims to facilitate this process.

1.2 Goals of the master thesis

The master thesis is an individual piece of **research** on a topic approved by the supervisor. The assignment is an opportunity for students to explore an area of health economics and management in depth. The essential requirement of a master thesis is that it demonstrates that students have fully understood the state of the art in health economics and management. A thesis cannot be a simple report on a traineeship or other professional experiences without additional academic/research content, although these experiences may provide a useful starting point in developing a research question.

The objective of the thesis is to show that the student is able to perform scientific research individually and to report the study and its conclusions in a clear way. It likewise serves as a practice for those intending to pursue doctoral studies after their successful completion of the program.

1.3 Some definitions: Supervisor (relatore) and co-supervisor and discussant

Every graduating student needs a formal supervisor (relatore). Only full professors, associate professors, assistant professors (researchers) and contract professors holding a teaching position within HEM can act as formal thesis supervisors. Foreign teachers and lecturers of seminars cannot be a supervisor unless provided by a specific agreement.

A co-supervisor is a teacher who may help the student prepare the dissertation. Foreign teachers, lecturers of seminars and external experts can act as co-supervisors.

In exceptional circumstances a supervisor may request a thesis is also evaluated by a discussant. Any such requests are then evaluated by the Academic Coordinator of the program.

1.4 Topics and thesis proposal

Students may choose to major in a topic related to a teaching activity belonging to their study plan (*piano di studi*).

Students are asked to submit their thesis proposal to the supervisor upon completion of their first year and in any case by Monday January 22nd, 2026, but they are advised to think about the topic of their work well in advance. The proposal should be submitted using the pdf form via email. The proposal should contain:

- Provisional title
- Name of potential supervisor
- The background to the problem
- Goals and research questions
- Research methods
- Data sources and accessibility (if relevant)
- Reference to relevant literature sources
- Detailed timetable

The proposal is assessed by the supervisor and feedback is given by February 5th. Students can start their thesis work as soon as they receive approval from their supervisor.

1.5 Student admission grade

At the end of their study plan students are admitted to the final defense of their thesis. Notice that exam grades are on an 18–30 scale, while the final grade is on a 66–110 scale. The admission grade then averages the exams grades and converts it into the 66–110 scale.

Grades obtained during the study plan are combined into the admission grade as follows:

$$\text{Admission GRADE} = \frac{110}{30} \times \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{\#ACTS} ECTS_i \times GRADE_i}{120 - 18 - K}.$$

IMPORTANT: Courses and activities providing an assessment on a pass/fail basis (*idoneità*) such as laboratories, seminars or internships do not contribute to the admission grade. # of credits assigned to these activities (that contribute to the 120 ECTS) are indicated as K in the formula above. ACTS designates all the activities contributing to the 102 ECTS with full assessment. 18 ECTS are granted for the thesis. For every exam that the student passed with honors (*lode*) 0.33 points are added to the Admission GRADE.

The value resulting from previous calculations is rounded up to the nearest integer value.

The student admission grades will be published on your SOL page a few days before the graduation date.

1.6 Thesis defense and final grading

The HEMAP final examination consists of the defense of the master thesis in front of a Committee composed of at least 3 professors of the School of Economics and Management. The commission can grant a maximum of 6 points to the dissertation, which are added to student's admission grade. Up to two (2) further points are granted to candidates who graduate by the end of their second academic year. Therefore, for students enrolled in the academic year 2024–25 the following further points will be granted:

Defense session	Further points
July 2026	2 points
October 2026	2 points
December 2026	2 points
March 2027	1 point

2 Content & layout

2.1 Typical content of the master thesis

The thesis topic must be related to one of the subjects covered by HEM courses and it is chosen according to the personal and academic interests both of the student and of the supervisor.

2.2 Length

In general, the length of the thesis should be about 50 pages/20,000 words including notes, tables and attachments.

The thesis should be uploaded through the “Studenti on line” web page. For the final dissertation, usually students print one or more copies of the thesis, one for the Committee and/or the supervisor and one to keep (family, friends).

It is recommended that the thesis is formatted as follows:

- Line spacing: between 1 and 2 lines
- Paragraph spacing: at least 6 points
- Font: Times New Roman
- Margins: 2-2-2-2

These formatting guidelines are not mandatory, but if a different format is chosen, this needs to ensure easy readability.

For the title page, you will need a frontespizio. A template for the frontespizio is provided in the Annex to this document. Note: the use of the UNIBO logo is NOT allowed in the cover.

2.3 Structure

The following sections are usually required in the thesis:

- Title page: this should contain the title, the name of the supervisor, and the student registration number (matricola)
- Table of contents
- Table of figures (if applicable)
- Summary / Abstract
- Introduction / Background
- Main part (methods, discussion, results)
- Conclusion
- References
- Appendices (if applicable)

References and plagiarism

Accurate referencing and bibliography are important elements of the thesis (and all academic writing). Students should adopt a standard citation system (e.g. Harvard, Vancouver, etc.) and bibliography format. The precise citation system is not important, but a consistent system should be used throughout the thesis.

The university takes plagiarism very seriously, and failure to properly reference sources may have legal implications. All concepts and statements taken from the literature should be appropriately reworded and referenced. Exact quotes should be clearly highlighted (e.g. between inverted commas or through a different font) and the source should include the page number. On-line sources are admissible when they are appropriate and meet the required scientific standards (and should be accurately referenced in the text), but generic sources such as Wikipedia are not necessarily scientific and critically assessed and should be used with extreme care and parsimony.

3 Deadlines and formalities

3.1 Application deadlines and graduation sessions

The application for admission to the final dissertation must be submitted **on-line** at this link: <http://www.studenti.unibo.it>.

The deadlines for the application vary according to the graduation session. The graduation sessions for students are planned following the graduation schedule of second cycle degrees at the School of Economics and Management in the Bologna campus. Application sessions and graduation deadlines and are published on the Programme Website <http://www.hem.unibo.it> (Studying > Final exam > Graduation)

Useful contacts:

Registrar Office. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 09,00–11,15; Tuesday and Thursday 14,30– 15,30 segecosta@unibo.it. Ph.: +39 051 20 99 244

Helpdesk Cesia (IT Services): From Monday to Friday 09,00–13,00 and 14,00–17,00 helpstudentonline@unibo.it Tel.: +39 051 20 99 882

3.2 Graduation and tuition fees

If students graduate within the third session of the academic year 2023/2024 (March 2025) they do not have to pay the tuition fees for a.y. 23/24. If they pay the tuition fees for a.y. 23/24 and they graduate within the session of March 2025, they will be refunded after graduation, except for the amount of the duty stamp. For a refund of the regional fee students should contact ER.GO. (<http://www.er-go.it/>).

Students who fail to graduate within the third session of a.y. 2023/2024 (March 2025) must pay the full annual contribution for the a.y. 2023/2024.

3.3 Certificates and parchment/diploma

Certificates of graduation may be downloaded by “autocertificazioni online” a few days after the defense, while the parchment (*pergamena* - the original handwritten diploma) will be ready a few months after the graduation date. At the appropriate time, graduate students will receive a notice sent to the last address provided, inviting them to collect the document.

ALMA MATER STUDIORUM - UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

HEMAP - Health Economics, Management and Policy

Curriculum of the 2nd cycle degree in Economics & Public Policy

[Dissertation title]

DEFENDED BY

Your first and last name

Your student no.

SUPERVISOR

Prof. [Supervisor's first and last name]

Graduation session of [Month]

Academic year [2025/2026]