



Regulation for the Final Exam

Master's Degree Program in International Relations, Politics & Trade (FULLY ONLINE) - Class LM-52

Resolution of the LM-52 CCS of 12/04/2023 and further amendments approved by the LM-52 Class Council on April 29th 2025.

Article 1

Mode of Conducting the Final Exam for the Master's Degree

Pursuant to Article 35, paragraph 3, of the University Academic Regulations, in order to obtain the Master's Degree, the student must pass a final exam aimed at assessing the level of scientific and professional preparation achieved by the student. The final exam for the Master's Degree Program in International Relations, Politics & Trade (LM-52), hereafter referred to as the CdS, consists of the presentation of an original master's thesis and a discussion of any questions posed by the members of the Examination Commission. The University's annual academic calendar, at the beginning of each academic year, establishes the dates for at least three master's degree graduation sessions, with only one session per date:

1. Summer session (usually in July);
2. Autumn session (usually in October);
3. Extraordinary session (usually in March).

Each individual Program defines the schedule for final exams, in agreement with the coordinator of the coordinating structure, within the periods established by the University's Academic Calendar.

Article 2

Access to the Final Exam for the Master's Degree

In order to be admitted to the final exam for the Master's Degree, the student must have passed and registered the last exam within 10 calendar days from the start of the graduation exams. A student wishing to take the final exam for the Master's Degree must submit a request for the assignment of a thesis supervisor to a professor or researcher, including adjunct faculty, affiliated with the CdS. If the request is accepted, the supervisor will assume the role of thesis advisor, signing the application and indicating the subject of the thesis. The student must submit the request, complete with the supervisor's signature, to the Academic Secretariat of their relevant Course Council (hereafter CCS) by the end of the first semester of the second year of the program, and at least 6 months before the session in which the student intends to present the final exam. If the student is unable to identify a supervisor, they can submit the request for thesis assignment directly to the CCS coordinator, who will assign a supervisor. Any changes to the subject of the thesis and/or the supervisor may be approved by the CCS, following a reasoned request by the student.

Article 3

Characteristics of the Master's Thesis

The Master's thesis, which must be original, may be theoretical, experimental, or project-based, or may be an essay on a single or multidisciplinary topic (compilation thesis). The thesis must be written in English, in Times New Roman font, size 12, with 1.5 line spacing, leaving 2 cm margins at the top, bottom, and right sides, and 3.5 cm at the left margin. The total length of the final paper, including the bibliography, should not be less than 90 pages.

The Master's thesis, or part of it, may also be carried out at other institutions and public/private accredited companies, both Italian and foreign, recognized by the University of Palermo. The supervisor may be assisted by another professor or researcher, including adjunct faculty, or an external expert who will act as a co-supervisor in the preparation of the final thesis. In the event that the supervisor leaves the service for any reason, the CCS coordinator will replace them after consulting the Department and the student. The supervisor must participate in the thesis discussion during the graduation exam. If they are unable to attend, they must inform the CCS coordinator promptly, who will arrange for a substitute. Before each graduation



session, the CCS coordinator designates a co-supervisor for each thesis that will be discussed in the session. The co-supervisor is a faculty member or researcher, including adjunct faculty, affiliated with the CdS, who is an expert in the thesis subject.

Article 4 Master's Degree Examination Commission

According to the current University Academic Regulations, the examination commission for the final exam, authorized to award the Master's Degree, hereafter referred to as the Master's Degree Examination Commission, is appointed by the Coordinator of the Course Council and is composed of 7 to 9 members, including professors and researchers, with additional members possibly designated by other institutions, as required. The Commission's President is the Coordinator of the Course Council or their Delegate. Additional professors or external experts may also be part of the Commission for the final exam, in excess of the members, but limited to the discussion of theses for which they act as co-supervisors or supervisors. Other individuals may also be part of the Commission according to specific regulatory provisions. Any members of the commission who are unable to participate in the graduation session must inform the President of the CCS in writing, usually at least 48 hours before the graduation session, in order to allow for the appointment of substitute members.

Article 5 Determination of the Graduation Grade

The initial grade for admission to the final examination is based on the student's academic record and is obtained by calculating the weighted average of the exam grades (on a thirty-point scale), using the CFU assigned to each course as weights. For the calculation of the initial grade, exam grades (on a thirty-point scale) obtained in any additional courses taken beyond those required by the student's study plan—taken as "free courses"—must also be included. In calculating the weighted average, the lowest grade the student has obtained during their academic career is excluded, for courses worth up to a maximum of 6 CFU. If a course carries more than 6 CFU, the calculation is performed by assigning to the excluded course grade a weight corresponding only to the number of CFU exceeding six.

The weighted average of grades is then converted into a score out of 110 by dividing by three and multiplying by eleven. The initial grade is increased based on the number of honors received by the student, with an increase of 0.5 points for each honor, up to a maximum of 3 points.

The Master's Degree Examination Commission assigns a total score from 0 to 11 points for the final exam evaluation. The score assigned by each member is given openly. The final score for the exam is the average of the scores assigned by the individual members. The Commission has an additional point to assign to a graduate who has completed a period of study abroad under community programs (Erasmus+, etc.) or as a visiting student, provided that the student has earned at least 15 CFU during the period abroad for educational activities, internships, or thesis research.

The Commission also has two additional points to assign to a graduate who has completed their studies within the legal duration of the Master's program. The final grade, resulting from the sum of the initial vote, the score for the final exam, and any additional points, is rounded to the nearest whole number. In the case of full marks, the Commission may award honors. The proposal must be made by one of the members and requires unanimous approval. Honors may be granted to students whose initial score is not less than 102/110.

For theses on particularly significant scientific and/or applied topics, the supervisor may request a mention. This request can only be made for graduates whose initial grade is not less than 108/110, and only in the case of a Master's Degree with full marks and honors. The request for a mention, along with three copies of the Master's thesis, must be submitted by the supervisor to the Course Council Coordinator at least 20 days before the scheduled graduation date. The coordinator will appoint a commission of three professors, experts in the topic, to evaluate the thesis and propose the mention.



**Article 6
Transitional Provisions**

This Regulation comes into effect starting from the summer graduation session of the 2024/25 academic year. This Regulation will be published on the study course website within 30 days from the date of approval.