

## **Guideline for Master`s thesis on Food Sciences for Innovation and Authenticity**

The Master`s (MSc) thesis on Food Sciences for Innovation and Authenticity has to be conducted in co-tutorships between academia and industry. Industries already included in the list published in the "Manifesto degli Studi" are those that already have given availability to host students. However, other industries are also suitable. The choice of tutors from the academia is among the professors from all the universities involved in the teaching activities. Thirty-three credits are dedicated to the MSc-thesis, corresponding to the second semester of the second year.

The request of the MSc-thesis by students has to be according to the following procedure.

1. The first step for the student is to select a topic and supervisor. The topic must be selected within the disciplines included in the study program. The MSc-thesis topics can be proposed by a professor among those teaching in the study program. In such case, topics are mainly related to ongoing or planned research projects. Students interested in such topics should directly contact the leader of the relevant project, who will become their supervisor. Alternatively, topics can be also proposed by the student. In such case, students formulate their MSc-thesis topics in short written format and contact a potential supervisor. Students shall discuss the feasibility and relevance of their topic with the supervisor. If students are uncertain which supervisor should be contacted, the director of the Study programme will address them to the most appropriate supervisor.

The selection of the academic supervisor is one of the most important step for the students. The supervisor is the person that provides feedback at different stages throughout the process of preparing the MSc-thesis, provides resources to carry on the experimental thesis work, assign suitable laboratory spaces, as well as controlling the process itself. No general rules on the frequency and duration of supervision meetings exist. This depends ultimately on the individual agreement between the student and the supervisor. It is the student`s responsibility to request

the need for meetings with the supervisor. This request should be addressed in advance and in a timely manner.

2. The second step for student is to select an "industry co-tutor". The selection of the industry co-tutorship is generally proposed directly by the supervisor. In such case, the industry co-tutor is likely a person from the industry that is collaborating within the ongoing or planned research projects. Alternatively, students can also propose an industry co-tutor to the supervisor, provided that there are not commitments or parental relationships between the students and the industry representatives.

Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that the selection of the topic, supervisor and tutor must be settled by the student prior to the start of the thesis work.

In case the MSc-research is carried out abroad, adequate academic supervision and industry tutorship must be guaranteed in the respective country. In most cases by selecting the supervisor from the local university and the tutor within the respective industry organization. In the case that a supervisor cannot be obtained from the local University, the student should contact the Director of the Study programme in order to explain the reasons of such failure and to request help in finding the most appropriate supervisor.

3. The student could also name an academic "co-supervisor" and an "industry co-tutor" on the cover of their MSc-thesis. These persons should be selected among those who were directly involved in the supervision of the MSc-thesis work and approved by the academic supervisor and industry co-tutor.
4. Once the student has chosen an acceptable topic and found an appropriate academic supervisor and the industry tutor, The student has to present the thesis' title request in Cockpit at least 4 month before the graduation. Prior to the submission of the form, the student must agree with the academic supervisor and industry tutor upon the choice of the topic.

Possible changes of the topic title, supervisor and industry tutor are possible, but only in exceptional cases, when a written and well-motivated explanation is given to the Dean of the Faculty and the director of the Study Programme.

To be admitted to the final exam, the student must: a) be up to date with the payment of all fees and contributions. b) have acquired the number of training credits provided by the teaching regulations, with the exception of the credits provided for the final exam. c) send to the administrative staff a declaration by both the academic and the industrial tutors confirm the industrial interest for the developed experimental/research activity. When possible and agreed, the candidate may spend for the company selected for his/her project at least 50% of the hours required for developing the thesis (this is not mandatory). Therefore, considering that the thesis weights 33 CFU and 1 CFU of lectures is equivalent to 10 hours, the student should cover 165 hours for the company selected for developing the thesis project. The application for admission to the final exam must be submitted by the student through the specific IT platform in use at the Free University of Bolzano at least 30 days before the discussion. The application has to include the final title of the thesis and must be approved by the academic supervisor and industry co-tutor.

At least 15 days before the graduation session, the student must upload the final version of the final degree thesis in digital format (PDF A) on the specific IT platform used at the Free University of Bolzano. At the same time, the student must upload proof of successful anti-plagiarism control through the IT tools made available by the Free University of Bolzano on the authenticity of the text.

At least 10 days before the date set for the discussion of the thesis, the student must have acquired all the credits required by the study plan.

At least 7 days before the discussion session, the supervisor verifies the student's final paper, its outcome and its authenticity by the anti-plagiarism software available from the Free University of Bolzano. Afterwards, the supervisor digitally signs the form, attesting the adequacy of the thesis for the presentation to the final exam.

In case the supervisor will not digitally sign the final version of the thesis, the student has still the right to access to the final discussion, but in such case, the

thesis should be considered “not approved” and could be even rejected by the final Degree Commission.

5. The student and the supervisor should agree upon a deadline of the MSc-thesis. In any case, the deadline should be not before having completed thirty-three credits fully dedicated to the MSc-thesis and corresponding to a whole semester. To conclude the MSc-thesis, the student must submit a complete research proposal to the academic supervisor and the industry tutor. Their decision could be (a) to accept the work in its present form, (b) to request for some minor revision or (c) to request for major revision. Normally, in case of major revision, the student should repeat some of the experimental work, whereas, minor revision typically refers to some revision of the thesis writing. The student must review the thesis accordingly within one month. The revised version of the thesis should be re-evaluated by the supervisor and tutor. In case the MSc thesis proposal will be still considered inadequate by the supervisor and tutor, the supervisor should send the written comments to the MSc Course Programme director.
6. For each final exam session, a specific examination Commission is appointed. The examination Commission consists of not less than 3 and no more than 11 members, in agreement with the Ministerial Decree 270/04. The members of the Committee are appointed by the Dean. The presence of professors coming from the partner universities may be encouraged. The Commission for the final test assigns a score to the student's written report. The President of the Commission communicates it through the specific IT platform in use at the Free University of Bolzano to the Degree Commission and to the Faculty Administration.
7. The MSc-thesis should be written in English. Writing of the Master's thesis has to follow the style of a scientific paper (introduction, aim, materials and methods, results and discussion and bibliography) and following the available notes from the faculty of Agricultural, Environmental and Food Sciences.
8. The evaluation of the final thesis discussion is provided by the examination Commission during a public discussion to be held at the Free University of Bolzano. The commission has 110 points available for the evaluation. The basis for the final

vote in the final exam is the weighted average of the marks obtained in relation to the credits, as communicated by the Faculty Administration. Since the final grade is expressed in one hundred and ten, the average is then divided by 3 and multiplied by 11. The following additional points will be added to this weighted average:  $- + 0.05 * N$  points, where N is the number of credits in teaching which the student has achieved "praise". For the evaluation of the thesis the commission can assign a maximum of 10 points. If necessary, the score will be rounded up to the previous or next unit according to whether the decimal figure is between 0 and 49 or between 50 and 99. The praise is assigned for motivated curricular merits of the candidate on the proposal of the President and with unanimous consent of all members of the commission. The commission can reject the thesis if deemed insufficient. The candidate must present a new paper at a subsequent graduation / graduation session. The minimum mark for passing the final degree test is 66/110. Passing the final exam entitles you to the number of credits required by the course regulations.

9. Any cases of plagiarism will be reported by the director of the Study programme to the Rector of the Free University of Bolzano, for disciplinary measures as required by current law.