COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE FOR PREPARING THE BACHELOR'S/MASTER'S DEGREE THESIS

(prepared by the Department of Management)

Index

This guide for preparing the final examination and the Bachelors thesis is an official document from the Department of Management. Its purpose is to provide useful information regarding:

- The procedure to follow for requesting a thesis supervisor (Bachelor/Master) amongst the professors of the Department of Management;
- The standards of reference for preparing the final examination/thesis in terms of editing, bibliographic references, and using tables and graphics;

- Tips and advice for a proper planning for thesis work.

1.1 Procedure for preparing the thesis proposal form for the Department of Management

To declare a professor from the Department of Management as a thesis supervisor, one must complete the online procedure described below. Unless otherwise specified by the professor's university webpage, a preliminary meeting with the professor is encouraged for Bachelor students and required for Master students before completing said procedure. Students should of course consult the professor's page before making contact. The date of the preliminary meeting must be indicated during the online procedure.

The procedure:

1. Enter your username and password to access the Personal Area

2. Click on "Segreteria Studenti Esse3" (Student Secretary)

3. Click "Proposta tesi on line" (Online thesis proposal)

4. Click "Accedi applicazione" (Access application)

5. Click "Compila una nuova domanda di tesi" (Create a new thesis request)

6. Choose the department

7. Complete the form

8. Choose the professor

9. Click "invia proposta" (Send proposal)

The deadlines for students submitting the form and for professors to respond are reported in the table below:

Periods for form submission	Professor responses
15 April - 15 May	16-25 May
1 - 30 September	1-10 October
10 – 31 January	1-10 February

The professor will respond via internet with an acceptance, refusal, or a request for modification. Within 15 days of receiving the teacher response, the student must complete the procedure in the online system, by clicking "Conferma" (confirm).   After this period, the proposals that have not been confirmed will be automatically refused.

1.2 Procedure for the graduation request

To be defend your thesis and be included in the list of graduates, one must complete an online graduation request.   This request can only be completed after the thesis proposal has

been accepted through the procedure described above and its content has been established in collaboration with one's thesis supervisor.

In completing the graduation request, keep in mind the following University matters:

- Verify the payment of University taxes and fees for the current year (including possible late or missing payments). An additional check of payment status will be performed by "Settore Carriere L e LM" (Bachelor and Master Career Services) as part of the graduation approval;

- Complete all required fields of the University's online graduation request form, indicating the exams still to be taken or passed exams that have not yet been registered.   For any anomalies, one must provide a written explanation in the form of an attached text file (saved in .pdf, .doc, or .jpeg with the name "Segnalazioni_Student Number_First Name_Last Name");

- Be sure to indicate the name of the thesis supervisor in the graduation request.   If the information is not requested during the online procedure, send an email to provafinale@unive.it explaining this. Without the name of the supervisor, the request cannot be completed;

- If enrolled in a Master under the former system, an abstract must be submitted with the graduation request;

- Complete the questionnaire *AlmaLaurea* at: http://www.almalaurea.it/en;

- Once the graduation request is confirmed in the Personal Area (labelled "Conseguimento titolo" [Diploma attained]), a summary of the inserted information will be shown indicating the request was submitted.   This page should be printed and kept as a receipt of submission;

- Verify that the thesis supervisor has consented by logging in to the Personal Area and going to "Upload tesi di laurea e verifica accettazione relatore" (thesis upload and check supervisor approval) > "Stato della tesi" (state of the thesis) > "si" (yes);

- Purchase a 16€ *marca da bollo* before the university deadline (Personal Area > Servizi Segreteria Studenti - ESSE3 [Student Secretary] > Pagamenti [Payments]). If this is your third graduation request or more, an 80€ payment will be required, to be paid by following the same procedure;

- If you have not already done so, activate your university email account (StudentNumber@stud.unive.it) for all communications from the *Bachelor and Master Career Service Centre* ("Settore Carriere student L e LM") regarding the status of your graduation request.

If you complete the online request but then later decide to delay your graduation date, you must complete the online request again in a later term.

With the exception of third year Bachelor students and second year Master students who plan to graduate in the summer session, one cannot be lacking more than 24 credits at the time of filing the graduation request.   The final examination and required internships do not figure in the 24 credits. Only students graduating in the summer session can submit a request without regard for the number of missing credits.

Prospective summer graduates must pass all missing exams in the first exam session of the summer.

2.1 Getting started

The final examination and thesis should demonstrate a student's capacity to develop a professional project or make a meaningful scientific contribution relating to a concept that was studied as part of the degree coursework.

Given the variety of themes that can be analysed, there is no perfect model that students must follow in writing their thesis.   Still, one must keep in mind that thesis attests to a student's ability to independently analyse an idea at an advanced level; it can therefore be considered a first step into the professional world.

The thesis is a personal project generally based on one or more of the ideas addressed during one's coursework. Choosing the topic of the thesis is the first step.   This decision

must take into account one's professional and academic goals and interests as they fit into one's completed coursework. After choosing a topic, one must determine which professors in the department are suitable for effectively supervising the project, based on their own academic specialities. Students are advised to go to the office hours of professors who might be interested in supervising the project before completing the thesis proposal form described in paragraph 1.1.

The student must choose, in collaboration with the supervisor, the specific theme of the final examination and thesis along with the appropriate methodology. Once the idea for the thesis has been established, the student should meet again with the supervisor to plan the project in a more detailed way.

Keeping in mind the established theme of the thesis, the student should prepare a conceptual outline detailing the specific ideas that will be addressed. In formulating one's research hypotheses, it is a good idea to thoroughly analyse all aspects of the topic, with possible consideration to current and past social and economic aspects.

Next, students should concentrate on reviewing the literature in the field (textbooks, articles, other projects, etc.).   It is often a good idea to begin with a few textbooks and then go deeper into the current literature in order to understand how one's theme has been studied in the past. For the literature review, one can also consult the news articles and other digital resources available on the university website (see paragraph 3.8).

For Bachelor degrees conducted in Italian, the thesis can be written in Italian or English.   For Bachelor degrees conducted in English, one must write the thesis in English.

2.2. The final examination for the Bachelor

The final examination for the Bachelor degree consists of a written document (a paper of a few dozen pages), essentially completed in autonomy.   The nature of the document is decided with the thesis supervisor who agrees to help the student prepare the project, and who ultimately approves the final examination.

Although the final examination for the Bachelor degree is just a brief research project, students must still formulate a working hypothesis based on their research activities. The objective of the project must be clearly stated in the introduction.

Regarding the specificity of the project, students can also present findings from either their own internships or experimental research.

For the Bachelor thesis, it is preferable that students choose a specific idea to analyse in a profound way rather than simply describing a frequently studied topic in a general way.

2.3. The Master thesis

The Master thesis is a complex task that requires a greater effort and time commitment than the Bachelor thesis.   It can be considered an authentic research project specifically tailored to the goals of the student; to this end, it requires a higher level of interaction with the thesis supervisor. The Master thesis must also include a specific problem, along with a literature review that is much more detailed and extensive than the one conducted for the Bachelor thesis.

The Master thesis must be carried out with a deeper knowledge of the methodology commonly used in the corresponding discipline.   The finished product is characterized by a high level of originality and advanced scientific knowledge.

3.1 The title and index

The title of the final examination/thesis must be capable of expressing the theme and perspective of the research project; it must also be concise and precise (the thesis supervisor can be helpful here).   The title does not need to be decided right away, but it can be a good place to start.

To begin writing and verifying the coherence of the one's ideas, it is helpful to establish a provisional index to show one's supervisor in order to plan the necessary steps. The index

becomes a guide for the research, even if it must be modified as the project takes shape. The final index must appear at the beginning of the thesis following in the following format:

_____

Chapter 1. Chapter Title ……………………………..……….......... pag. 12

    1.1. Title of sub-chapter …………………………………………….pag. 34

        1.1.1. Title of paragraph (if present).. ………………….pag. 56

        1.1.2. Title of paragraph (if present)………. ………….pag. 78

    1.2. Title of sub-chapter …………………………………………..... pag. 90

Etc.

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It is important to keep in mind that each chapter begins with a sub-chapter and also that a chapter should not be excessively subdivided.

3.2. The writing process

Once the general plan for writing each chapter has been established, it is useful to prepare an outline of ideas (in either a list or a chart) in which you insert references to the literature while imagining possible critiques from an audience of non-experts.

Students are advised to avoid over-fragmenting the chapters by adding too many sub-chapters or paragraph divisions, particularly when these subdivisions contain just a few lines of text.

It is often best to write the introduction and conclusion after writing the chapters than contain the description of the research project.

While writing the thesis, use only short, linear sentences consisting of 1) subject, 2) verb and 3) possible complements[1]. It is best to minimize the use of adverbs as they generally weigh down the text without adding any significant value.

[1] It may be helpful to procure a good book on grammar and syntax to avoid making major mistakes; often in common speech, certain words are used incorrectly.

Moreover, pay attention to verb tenses: using different tenses to describe the evolution of your topic may sometimes be important, but it should only be done with great attention.

Furthermore, one should not use too many exclamatory sentences or questions (exceptions are allowed in some cases, if done correctly).

All technical terms must be defined, as the reader's understanding cannot be taken for granted. The same holds true for acronyms; the words must be written out at least the first time they are used in the thesis. Pay attention also when "paraphrasing" works which are written in a foreign language: other than potentially constituting plagiarism, direct translations can be confusing and incoherent. When referring directly to a text written in English, one must translate with great care, by reconstructing the sentence in Italian rather than providing a literal translation. One should also avoid using words in a different language when a widely accepted equivalent exists in Italian.

When using words in a foreign language that are not commonly used in Italian, it is a good idea to write them in *italics*.

Furthermore, when the literature defines a certain word (example: capital, work, income, etc.), it is preferable to use those words rather than constantly repeating a definition of the concept. A concept should always be referred to with one name, even if that name must be repeated.   It may sometimes be useful to explain more important or difficult concepts several times so that the idea is easily accessible to the reader.

According to most professors, a research project should use impersonal pronouns rather than the first person.   Others may have a different opinion, so it is best to ask your supervisor his or her preference.

One must carefully defend value judgments with references to scientific literature.   Similarly, one cannot jump to hasty conclusions resulting from ignoring or underestimating important conceptual nuances in the literature.

3.3. The structure of the final examination and thesis

A thesis should include the following parts. The list represents a general scheme: each discipline may have different norms.

_____

Title page
Acknowledgements (optional)
Index
Introduction
Chapter 1
………
Chapter N
Conclusion
Appendix (If any)
List of abbreviations, figures, tables (almost exclusively in the fields of mathematics/statistics)

Bibliography/List of references

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Some general guidelines may be useful: the title/cover page must precede the text and contain the first and last name of the author, the title of the thesis, the academic year, the name of the thesis supervisor, and the name of the department and the university.   This page is not numbered.

The acknowledgements section can be added to thank people who made significant contributions to the project; this section goes at the beginning of the thesis so that they are seen immediately by the reader.   The index must provide a detailed presentation of the chapters and subchapters with indications of their corresponding page numbers. The Appendix section should contain documents that are necessary for illustrating the ideas of the text but that are too obtrusive to be put in the middle of a chapter.   If the case of multiple appendices, they should be assigned letters or numbers and put in the order in which they are referenced in the text (Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C…).   The bibliography should contain the list of references in alphabetical order based on the name of author and inserted at the end of the document.

3.4. Introduction and conclusion

The introduction and conclusion, unless otherwise directed by the thesis supervisor, should be prepared after the thesis is completed, when all the ideas are clearly defined, problems have been identified and directions for future research can be proposed. These sections should constitute a clear, synthetic summary of the work, referring the reader to specific chapters for further descriptions of the ideas. Specifically, the introduction presents the

ideas to be addressed and the methodology used as a way to stimulate the reader's interest. The conclusion, on the other hand, presents the problems addressed in the work with a clear explanation of the results; no new concepts should be presented in the conclusion.

3.5. Notes and bibliography

As a scientific document, the thesis must provide precise documentation for every assertion of significance. "Citing" means giving credit to another person for their thoughts, words, and data. The function of bibliographic citations can be summarised in the following way:

- Recognizing the origin of a statement, datum, or figure;

- Demonstrating that one's personal ideas fit in a larger context by evoking the relevant literature;

- Validating one's own ideas by referencing similar ideas from a respected authority;

- Indicating the existence of dissenters;

- Giving readers the possibility to explore the references to search for further information about the theory, methodology, or data discussed in the thesis.

Thus, every idea introduced in the thesis must be supported by theoretical arguments or empirical data and adequate bibliographic references. No ideas should be inserted without proper citation: this does not mean you should copy text directly, but rather reword it in a way that indicates understanding. When quoting a text exactly, it necessary to highlight the borrowed text (with quotation markers, for example) and insert the proper citation.
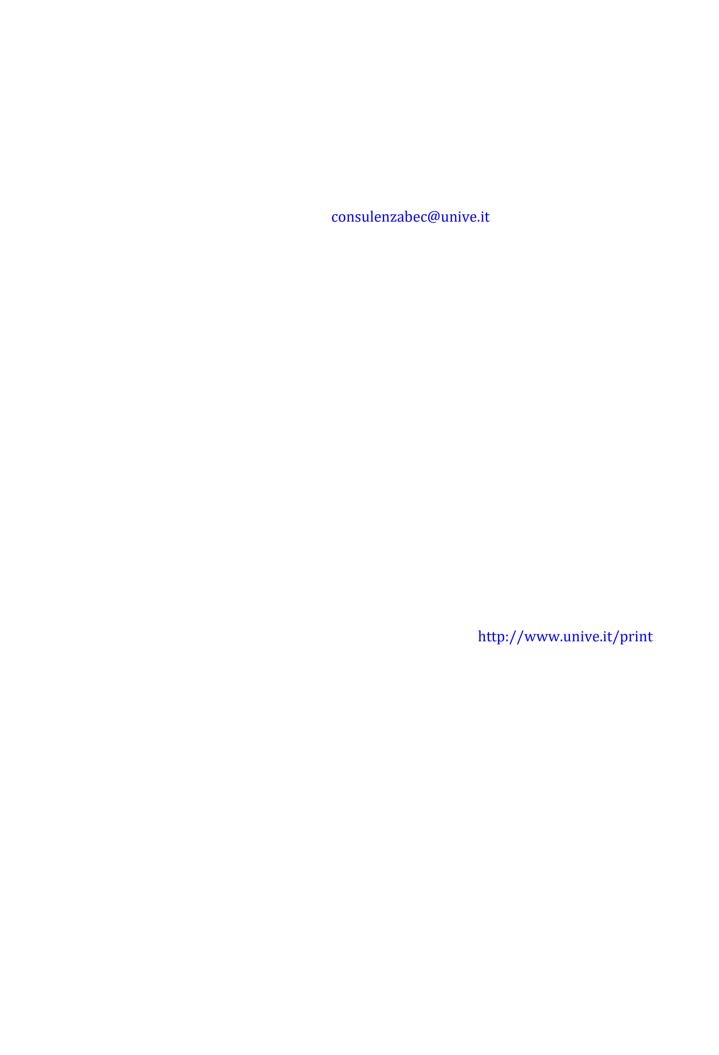
2 Regarding plagiarism, Art. 6 of the Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia Ethical Code states: *"Members of the university community are obliged to respect the norms regarding plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as the total or partial attribution of another person's ideas, research, or discoveries to one's self or to another author, or omitting a citation either intentionally or by accident."* All cases of plagiarism will be dealt with by the Disciplinary Council of the University.

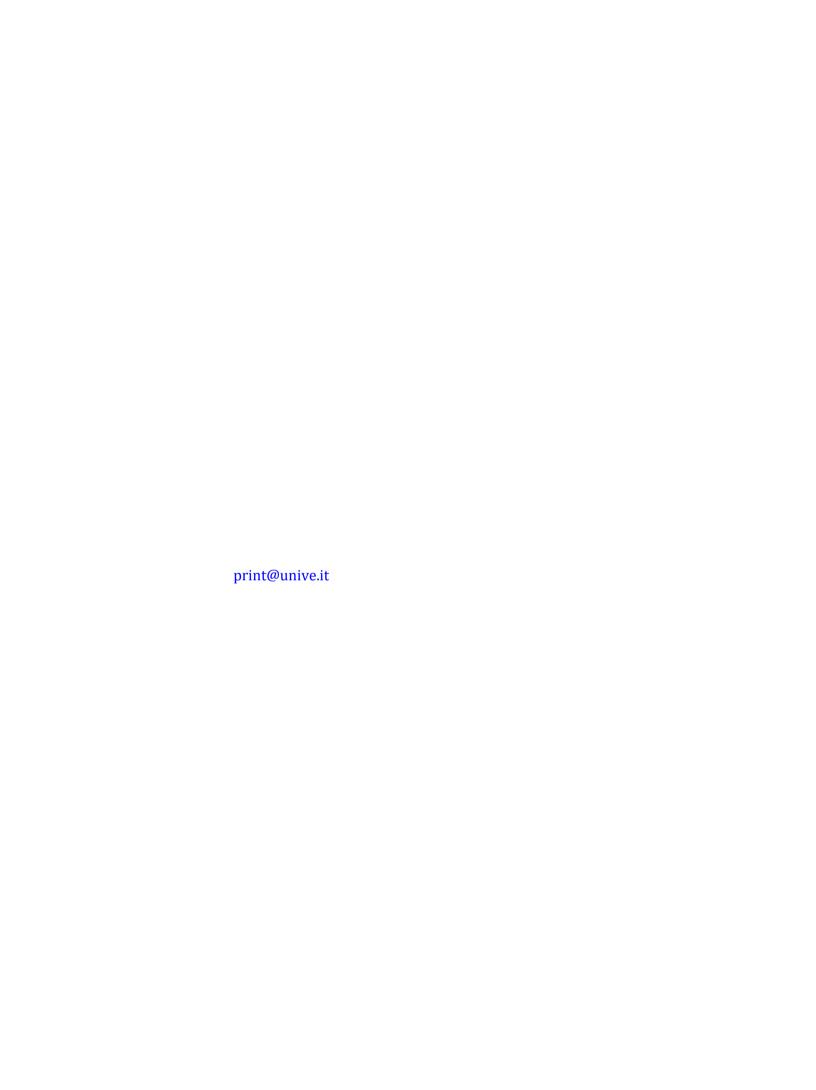http://www.unive.it/pag/fileadmin/user_upload/SBA/documenti/Istruzioni_Proxy.pdf

http://www.unive.it/pag/fileadmin/user_upload/SBA/documenti/Guida_all_uso_del_catalogo_e_all_Area_personale.pdf

http://www.unive.it/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=38919

consulenzabec@unive.it

ddbec@unive.it

http://aire.cab.unipd.it:9003/unive/a-z/unive

10) Phaidra: Phaidra is a project of the University Library System (SBA) which aims at creating an open access digital archive for the perpetual preservation of historical, scientific and didactic documents concerning Ca' Foscari University, from its beginning to the present time. The various types of items (monographies and periodicals, photographs, audio/video files, ...) come from the libraries, departments, centers and the historical archive of the University of Venice. The digitalizing service of the University Library System (SBA) has scanned and described the documenting and photographic materials of the Historical Heritage of Ca' Foscari University, with the purpose of promoting and spreading the history of the University, also in view of its 150° anniversary in 2018.

This digitalizing process of the materials envisages the creation of digital collections finalized to a wider fruition of the various resources.

Currently, the digital collections of Phaidra are:

A. History of Ca' Foscari (https://phaidra.cab.unipd.it/collections/storia_ca_foscari)
It presents the milestones in the history of the University, showing events and episodes which are also related to the history of Venice and of Italy (wartime, institutional events, didactics, cheerful moments, eminent personalities, etc.).

B. Ca' Foscari Events (https://phaidra.cab.unipd.it/collections/ca_foscari_eventi)
It is a collection of photographs, videos, texts of speeches and documents which characterized events of great scientific, historical, social and cultural impact, held at the University.

C. Ca' Foscari – Orient&Teach (https://phaidra.cab.unipd.it/detail_object/o:72829)   It presents the alternative means for the orientation and spread of teaching and

research, of innovative and experimental didactics, and the use of technologies to create and disseminate knowledge.

D. "Carte del Contemporaneo" Archive (Contemporary documents)
https://phaidra.cab.unipd.it/collections/carte_del_contemporaneo)

It deals with documents of contemporary authors born or living in the Veneto region, such as Ernesto Calzavara, Pier Maria Pasinetti, Armando Pizzinato and Carlo della Corte. The documents, which were acquired during the years 2006-2011, are currently conserved in the archive of "Centro Interuniversitario di Studi veneti" (CISVe – Interuniversity Centre for Venetian Studies).

E. Special funds (https://phaidra.cab.unipd.it/collections/ca_foscari_fondi_speciali) It collects rare and ancient books of Ca' Foscari: a collection of antique editions, valuable and rare, which were acquired or donated to the libraries of the University by professors or students.

For more information, please write to: phaidra@unive.it

4.1 Uploading the thesis

Before the final uploading of your thesis, it is necessary to check that the text is well prepared in all its details, and that the sequence of its parts is correct. It is suggested to read the text many times, to verify the absence of mistakes, to listen to its rhythm, and to be sure that each part fits in with the entire discourse.

It is important to always verify the numeration of pages: the number should appear on the external side of the page, or at the centre. The first page of each chapter has to start with an odd number, leaving - when necessary - a white page on the left.

Finally, make sure that the formatting is uniform in the whole work, and that the texts are aligned correctly.

Is it also suggested to keep abreast of the latest information on deadlines and current regulations, checking the website of the University.

Once the work is concluded and **the supervisor's approval is obtained**, the student will have to upload the file with his or her thesis in the Personal Area, under the heading "Upload tesi di laurea e verifica accettazione relatore" (thesis upload and check supervisor approval), which can be found in the menu called "Servizi Segreteria Studenti – ESSE3" [Student Secretary] (go to "Laurea"> Degree). The thesis upload must be planned within the specific sessions whose dates are published in the University website before each session (see deadlines at the following address: http://www.unive.it/pag/11103/).

Once the file is uploaded, it is not possible to withdraw from the degree exam. In case of withdrawal, the student will have to submit a new request to graduate in another session. Information at: http://www.unive.it/pag/11107/

After the upload deadline has passed, the University will check all uploaded documents using the COMPILATIO.NET software. The results of the check will be displayed in the student Personal Area > "Upload tesi di laurea e verifica stato domanda laurea" (Upload thesis and check request to graduate status). If a significant percentage of text resembles other sources, the student's supervisor will establish whether incorrect use of sources has been made and may decide to postpone the student's thesis defence to the next degree exam session.

4.2 Evaluation and oral defence of the Bachelor thesis

The supervisor will give a grade to the student's final exam, which will be sent to the student's University e-mail address.

Once the degree has been officially rewarded, the graduate may download the diploma with the degree grade from his or her online Personal Area (> Servizi Segreteria studenti – ESSE3 [Student Secretary] > Certificati [Certificates] > Autodichiarazione di laurea con voto [Self-declaration of graduation with grade).

Students will receive their diploma on the Graduation Day, which is scheduled after each session.

As far as the degree in Economics and Management (Economia aziendale) is concerned, the final exam will be evaluated with points from 0 to 6, which will be added to the final grade. The criteria established by the Department for the evaluation of the thesis are the following:

⬜ 1 point if the student's weighted average of his or her grades in equal or higher than 27;

⬜ from 0 to 5 points for the value of the thesis. In particular:
  o 5 points for an outstanding thesis (equal to 30 with honours in an exam)
  o 4 points for a very good thesis (equal to 28 or more)
  o 3 points for a good thesis (equal to a grade between 24 and 27)
  o 2 points for a satisfactory thesis (equal to a grade between 20 and 23)
  o 1 point for a sufficient thesis
  o 0 points for a hardly sufficient thesis.

The attribution of an eventual bonus is calculated automatically according to the rules laid out in the attached table. For all degree programmes, the award of honours to the final grade is at the discretion of the supervisor. The attribution of the award is limited to the cases in which the sum of the weighted average, the points of eventual bonuses and the grade of the final exam is equal or higher than 110. In fact, the degree grade is calculated by adding the grade of the final exam and eventual bonuses to the weighted average calculated in hundred-and-tenths.

4.3 Evaluation and oral defence of the Master thesis

During the periods established for each session by the University, the thesis defence takes place before a committee made up of university professors and experts who will jointly assess the quality of the thesis and propose a final grade. The composition of the committee and the calendar of the final exams is published in the website of the University two weeks before the beginning of each session (see calendar at: http://www.unive.it/pag/11103/)

The degree grade is calculated by adding to the weighted average, calculated in hundred-and-tenths, the points of the thesis and eventual bonuses given by the committee, according to the rules laid out in the attached table.

On the day of the oral defence, upon official proclamation, the President of the committee will give each graduate his or her diploma.

Graduates may request the services of a university-approved photographer to take pictures or videos. These services are at the expensive of the student. For more information: laurea@veneziavision.it.

Once the degree has been officially rewarded on the day of the oral defence, the graduate may download the diploma from his or her online Personal Area.   Diplomas procured in this way are considered legal and valid, and automatically come with a digital stamp. The original diploma with a stamp and signature will still be available at the office "Settore Carriere L e LM" (Bachelor and Master Career Services).