

Guidelines for Thesis Preparation

(Sapienza University of Rome – Medicine and Surgery Course)

Preface

The thesis represents the final academic endeavor of the Medicine and Surgery degree program. It is a moment of academic and personal maturity where students demonstrate their ability to integrate knowledge, apply scientific reasoning, and communicate research findings effectively. These guidelines provide a comprehensive framework for students of Sapienza University of Rome, guiding them from the thesis conception to graduation day.

1. Approach to the Thesis

1.1 Types of Thesis

There are two principal categories of thesis work:

- **Compilatory (Curricular) Thesis:** A comprehensive synthesis of existing literature. It involves collecting, analyzing, and organizing data from scientific articles, reviews, books, and other relevant sources. Systematic reviews, if supported by adequate statistical analysis, may be considered equivalent to experimental theses.
- **Research (Experimental) Thesis:** An original study designed to explore new findings, confirm existing hypotheses, or contribute to the advancement of knowledge. It requires defining a research question, applying appropriate methodologies, analyzing data, and interpreting results critically.

2. Preparatory Phase

Students should begin exploring possible thesis topics and supervisors during their 4th and 5th years, ideally through elective internships. The Thesis Form must be filled out and signed by the supervisor by November 30th of the 6th year, allowing the student to begin research activities. The Thesis Form must be sent, by the deadline indicated, to the Department where the internship will take place and, for information, to the academic office (medicinachirurgia.flm41c-u@uniroma1.it).

The thesis title must be finalized before submitting the Graduation Application ('Domanda di Laurea').

3. Thesis Structure

The thesis must follow a clear and standardized academic format, ensuring coherence, clarity, and adherence to scientific conventions. The following sections describe in detail the structure and formatting requirements.

3.1 Title Page

The title page should include:

- University name and department
- Title of the thesis (in English and Italian)
- Type of study (e.g., experimental, retrospective, systematic review, meta-analysis, case report, compilatory)
- Candidate's full name
- Supervisor and Co-supervisor(s)
- Degree program
- Academic year and graduation date

3.2 Table of Contents

The Table of Contents lists chapters and subchapters with corresponding page numbers. It should be placed immediately after the title page and should not be numbered.

3.3 Abstract

A structured abstract of 300–400 words must summarize the Introduction, Objectives, Materials and Methods, Results, and Conclusions. It should offer a concise yet complete overview of the study.

3.4 Keywords and Abbreviations

Include up to five keywords and a list of all abbreviations used. Each abbreviation must be defined at first use.

3.5 Main Text

The main body of the thesis must follow the IMRaD structure:

- Introduction: Background and rationale of the study, current knowledge, and research gap.
- Materials and Methods: Study design, sample description, inclusion/exclusion criteria, data collection procedures, and ethical considerations.
- Results: Clear and objective presentation of data, supported by figures and tables.
- Discussion: Interpretation of results in comparison with the literature, highlighting implications and limitations.
- Conclusions: Summary of findings and contributions to the field.

3.6 Tables and Figures

Tables and figures should be placed after the text, one per page. They must include:

- Group size and statistical indicators (mean $\pm$ SD, confidence intervals)
- Statistical significance (p-values)

- Indication of the statistical test used (e.g., t-test, ANOVA, Chi²)

Figures must be self-explanatory, with legends detailing abbreviations and units.

3.7 Bibliography

References should follow the National Library of Medicine (NLM) format:

- Journal Articles: Author(s). Title. Journal Name. Year; Volume: Pages.
- Book Chapters: Author(s). Title of Chapter. In: Editor. Book Title. City: Publisher; Year.

All cited works must be relevant and verified.

3.8 Formatting

- Font: Arial, Calibri, Cambria, Times New Roman, or Tahoma (12 pt)
- Line spacing: 1.5 or double
- Margins: Top 2.5 cm; Bottom 2 cm; Left 2 cm; Right 2 cm
- Page numbering: bottom right
- Word limit: 15,000 (including abstract and bibliography)

4. Finalization Phase

The finalization phase involves several administrative and academic steps leading up to graduation. It is crucial to carefully follow all deadlines and requirements published annually in the 'Promemoria Laureandi' document

<https://www.uniroma1.it/it/pagina/promemoria-laureandi>.

4.1 Applying for Graduation (“Domanda di Laurea”)

Students must apply for graduation through Infostud. Once accepted, the student is assigned to the next available graduation session. The exact date is typically announced about one month before the session.

Before applying, make sure to:

- Have no more than four pending exams (check the Promemoria Laureandi for exceptions)
- Pay all required fees:
 - Graduation fee
 - MMG Internship fee
- Regional tax (see Sapienza’s official website for instructions)
- Qualifying Degree fee (based on ISEE)

Required documents include your ID, student number, thesis form signed by the supervisor, and proof of payments. Deadlines are published every February on the Laurearsi section of the course website.

4.2 Submitting the Thesis

Thesis submission deadlines vary for each session and are listed in the Promemoria Laureandi. Typically, submission is required a few weeks before graduation. Students must

upload a PDF version of the thesis on the platform and ensure the title matches the one on Infostud. The supervisor must approve the final version before submission.

4.3 Final Checks

Before the graduation date, verify that:

- All exams are registered and completed
- 8 ADE credits are correctly recorded
- All 3 TPVS (professional training) booklets are signed
- The thesis is officially submitted and approved
- You are enrolled in the correct graduation session

4.4 Graduation Day

The graduation session is a formal academic event, typically held in person and live-streamed online. Be sure to:

- Arrive 45 minutes before the session
- Prepare a PowerPoint presentation (maximum 10 slides)
- Be ready to answer questions from the examination board
- You may bring up to 6 guests
- After the proclamation, it is customary to wear a laurel crown ('corona d'alloro') as a symbol of academic success

4.5 After Graduation

After graduation, students can pursue medical specialization in Italy through the national SSM exam or apply for residency programs abroad.

A. Residency Programs in Italy (SSM Exam)

The national SSM exam consists of 140 multiple-choice questions and determines national ranking for residency placement. The call for applications is published annually in May on the MIUR website, with registration via www.universitaly.it. The exam is held in late July, and graduates who complete their degree before the exam date are eligible to participate. Residency programs last 4–6 years depending on specialty.

B. Specialization Abroad

Students interested in international specialization should research the entry requirements of their desired country well in advance. Below are some common examples:

- ****UK:**** Two-year Foundation Programme (F1, F2) via ORIEL. GMC registration required. From 2024, the UKMLA exam will be mandatory.
- ****France:**** ECN national ranking exam held in late June; registration via CELINE platform (CNG).
- ****Spain:**** MIR exam (200+10 questions). Ranking combines test score and academic GPA (10%). Specialization lasts 4–5 years.

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- **Germany:** Apply directly to hospitals after obtaining Approbation. Residency lasts 5–7 years with standardized salaries.
- **Ireland:** Apply to the Medical Council (PCR process). May require clinical assessment and one-year internship before specialization.
- **Australia:** Pathways include Standard (exam-based), Specialist, and Competent Authority (UK graduates). Internship + residency required.

⚠ Note: Application requirements change frequently. Always verify details with official national authorities before applying.