

FINAL MASTER'S THESIS (FMT): GUIDE

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BLOCK 1. TUTOR AND STUDENT GUIDE

I. INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS AN FMT?

Various kinds of work in the university field are considered as directed academic activities, including the Final Master's Thesis (FMT), which require tutoring by one of

the Master's Professors appointed as such by the respective Departmental Board in the Law Degree.

An FMT guide does not aim to propose FMT models, but rather to guide the student in producing an FMT with the appropriate format and quality.

The postgraduate Master's student has had to acquire all the competencies required in their Degree, which will be strengthened through specialization in the Master's course.

For purposes of achieving specialization, it is necessary to guide the student in their research. Essentially, two types of work are distinguished: descriptive and explanatory.

The descriptive work may consist of a broad range of didactic material including text commentaries, reports, critical essays, opinions and book reviews. All of these are useful and all are valid when evaluating learning.

In brief, it may be stated that descriptive research involves the collection of the existing information regarding the theory and the state of the question, and later organizing and presenting that information.

Some of the aforementioned sources are mixed in nature. They are split between description and a composition that is both analytical as well as critical. This is the case for opinions, which may be based on a legal judgment or order, or other source.

Explanatory research may be described as pure research. It consists of a legal problem and various hypotheses that must be verified or falsified through examination of existing or new data, with scientific rigour and a critical approach fully demonstrated in all phases of the research, and particularly in the results and conclusions.

This evolution is reflected in articles 9 and 10 of Royal Decree 1393/2007, of 29 October, which establishes the organization of official university teaching. This Decree contains both extremes, stating that the aim of undergraduate teaching is "obtaining general training", which is focused on the issuance of opinions, gathering and interpreting data, reflecting, transmitting and communicating. In contrast, the objective of postgraduate teaching is "the acquisition of the student of advanced training, specialist or multidisciplinary in character, aimed at academic or professional specialization, or to encouraging an initiation in research tasks".

The tutor must not explain every aspect of the research development process to the student. Rather, students should be guided in order to begin to conduct research, forge their own literary style, and learn to take their own decisions.

The research work is one of the most important stages in the student's journey through the University, for which reason this guide seeks to collaborate with students in outlining the aims we have identified, including the style in which research findings must be written.

The FMT is a personal work by the student that must be presented and defended orally and in public. This takes place before an Evaluation Committee, which cannot include the FMT director. Before this final stage, the student must work independently, though always under the guidance of the tutor.

The tutor guide requires the tutor to arrange work, supervision and review appointments, with a minimum of three meetings and no set maximum. Frequency of

meetings will depend on the difficulty of the chosen subject, the abilities of the student, and the availability of the tutor.

The student must attend these appointments, not only to ensure the work is progressing properly but also because it is necessary to obtain the approval of the tutor to defend the work.

For an FMT to meet the objectives established for this kind of work and in order for the student to develop training content, the research must concern a subject that is adapted to students' profiles: whether they are directed purely toward research, or toward workplace integration through an investigative/experimental work that allows them to specialize in a specific aspect of their profession.

The development of the work must be supplemented by some specific additional activity, including seminars, conferences, workshops or any other activity that the Department or tutor considers appropriate on an *ad hoc* basis in order to assist the student in developing maturity in their approach to the task of research. It would be appropriate for these learning modules to be included in a virtual space created for such purpose for the postgraduate students, and it would even fit the European context better were all the material to be made available for download in English. Among the modules, a forum for debate could also be introduced, focusing on press releases, processes begun or concluded and relating to the research topic, or any other current affairs or news that comes to light and is appropriate for online sharing. This would represent a means to create flexible knowhow networks.

An FMT cannot consist of the compilation of bibliographical resources taken from other publications on the subject and subsequent "remix" of all the articles, monographic works and data already gathered by other authors. The work must be innovative.

Though some universities establish the innovative character of the FMT as one of the key factors differentiating it from a Final Degree Thesis (FDT), it must be recalled that the EDW is aimed more at originality than at research, for which reason we cannot view this aspect as a genuinely distinctive feature. The quasi-professional requirement to acquire and properly develop competencies is what gives the FMT its "added value", due to the element of specialization involved.

II. LEARNING COMPETENCIES TO BE ACQUIRED BY THE STUDENT THROUGH THEIR FMT

Concerning acquisition of competencies, the objective is centred around the training of competent professionals and citizens, to include the range of knowledge, attitudes and skills required for their independent, effective participation in personal, social and professional life.

The general, transversal and specific competencies involve the use of interdisciplinary sources and knowledge, improving the student's skills.

1. Competencies according to Higher Education regulatory framework

In accordance with *RD 861/2010, of 2 July, amending RD 1393/2007*, on the Organization of Basic Teaching, in Master's courses and others that fall within the Spanish Framework of Higher Education Qualifications (*Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior*, or *MECES*), the following basic competencies are to be guaranteed as a minimum:

“- Possess and understand knowledge that provides a basis or opportunity for the original development and/or application of ideas, frequently in a research context;

.- Students should know how to apply knowledge acquired and have the ability to solve problems in new or unfamiliar areas within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts relating to their area of study;

.- Students should be able to integrate knowledge and address complexity in forming opinions, based on incomplete or limited information, that include reflections on the social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and opinions;

.- Students should know how to clearly and unambiguously communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and underlying reasons that justify them, to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

.- Students should possess the learning skills that will allow them to pursue their studies in a predominantly self-directed or independent manner”.

The Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education in Europe, held in Bergen on 19 and 20 May 2005, took the decision to adapt a comprehensive qualifications framework for higher education in Europe, constructed on the basis of the “Dublin Descriptors”. This framework establishes the existence of three cycles, allowing for the possibility of intermediate cycles in each national context, each of which is characterized by generic descriptions based on learning outcomes and includes guidelines for calculating the credits to be assigned to each one of the cycles.

Taking into account the Recommendation of the European Parliament and Council of 23 April 2008, which advises States on the alignment of their qualification systems, our country, as with the others involved in the Bologna Process, has committed to design and implement its higher education qualifications framework to ensure comparability with the European equivalent. The development process must include a thorough preparation of a map of national qualifications (their levels, learning outcomes and descriptions), identifying the cycle descriptions for the European integration framework.

The Committee for the definition of the Spanish Framework of Higher Education Qualifications, created by Royal Decree 900/2007 of 6 July, is the body entrusted with preparing the proposed Framework. It did so through the work carried out from its creation on 29 October 2009 until 18 May 2010, on which date the meeting was held that approved the document giving substance to the current general provisions.

According to article 7 of *RD 1027, of 15 July, on the Spanish Framework of Higher Education Qualifications (MECES)*:

“1. The Master’s level equates to level 3 of the MECES, which includes those qualifications that are aimed at the student’s acquisition of advanced specialist or multidisciplinary training, directed toward academic or professional specialization, or to promote an initiation in research tasks.

2. The features of the qualifications covered by this level are defined by the following descriptions, presented in terms of learning outcomes:

a) having acquired advanced knowledge and demonstrated, within a context of scientific and technological or highly specialist research, detailed and well-founded

understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of the methodology of work in one or more fields of study;

b) knowing how to apply and integrate knowledge, understanding thereof, its scientific basis and abilities to solve problems in new and imprecisely defined areas, including both research as well as highly-specialist professional multidisciplinary contexts;

c) knowing how to evaluate and select the appropriate scientific theory and necessary methodology for the student's fields of study, so as to form opinions on the basis of incomplete or limited information, including (where necessary and pertinent) reflections on the social or ethical responsibilities linked to the solution proposed in each case;

d) being able to predict and monitor the development of complex situations through the development of new and innovative work methodologies adapted to the specific scientific/research, technological or professional environment, in general multidisciplinary, within which students are carrying out their activities;

e) knowing how to clearly and unambiguously transmit to an audience, whether specialist or not, the outcomes of the scientific and technological research or of the most advanced innovation, as well as the most important grounds underpinning the outcomes;

f) having developed sufficient independence to participate in research projects and scientific or technological collaborations within their chosen field, in interdisciplinary contexts and, where applicable, with a high component of knowledge transfer; and

g) being able to assume responsibility for their own professional development and for their specialization in one or more fields of study.

3. The qualifications included in this level are indicated in the corresponding section of the box featured in the annex to this regulation”.

2. Competencies for the Master's Degree in Law

The competencies must correspond to those approved by ANECA for the Faculty of Law, Complutense University of Madrid, from which the general competencies and those specific to the topic or thematic area must be selected.

Among the generic competencies for the Degree are essentially the following: CG1, CG3, CG6, CG7, CG8, CG11, and CG12.

2.1.- Common competencies for all students in the Public law and Private law itinerary

Though the division between the Public and Private law itineraries is tending to disappear, we shall identify the competencies that must be acquired in each of them, in order to subsequently consider in detail the official Master's courses offered by the Faculty of Law.

a) Transversal Competencies

The term “Transversal Competencies” (hereinafter, “TC”) includes the range of attributes, abilities and attitudes that, in the field of Social, Legal and Political Sciences, are typical of the level of specialization required in Master's courses, permitting the student to be fully trained and to be developed throughout the student's training

process. We prefer the term “transversal”, since these competencies may be imparted in all the Master’s Modules and Topics, regardless of their specific legal content.

The design of the TCs in the Master’s Degree in Public law comply with the conditions regarding competencies established in RD 1393/2007, Annex 3, section 3.3, and with those added by MECES. In particular, the Degree competencies have been designed in order to guarantee:

.- **TC1:** That students know how to apply the knowledge they acquire and are able to resolve broader (or multidisciplinary) problems relating to their area of study;

.- **TC2:** That students are able to integrate knowledge and address the complexity of forming opinions on the basis of incomplete or limited information, including reflections on the social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and opinions;

.- **TC3:** That students know how to clearly and unambiguously communicate their conclusions, the knowledge and underlying reasons that justify them, to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

.- **TC4:** That students possess the learning abilities permitting them to continue to study in a manner that is, to a large extent, self-directed or independent.

.- **TC5:** That students possess and understand knowledge based on that typically associated with the first cycle, and that they broaden and improve this knowledge, which should provide a base or opportunity to be original in the development and/or application of ideas, frequently in a research context.

b) Generic Competencies

The following competencies are entitled “generic” (hereinafter, “GC”) at Master’s level, defining the training that any jurist must acquire when specializing at postgraduate level in Public law:

.- **GC1:** Students must be able to use the terminology, concepts and working tools common to Public law, at an advanced level.

.- **GC2:** Students must be able to relate the branch of law in which they are specializing with other connected legal branches within Public law, on both theoretical and practical levels.

.- **GC3:** Students must be able to resolve specialist legal problems within Public law.

.- **GC4:** Students must be able to communicate at an advanced level with other Public law specialists.

.- **GC5:** Students must master the necessary methodological skills to embark, at a later stage, upon legal research at doctoral level, or work professionally as a public lawyer.

As may be seen, the competencies imparted in this Master’s emanate from the acceptance of those competencies established in Annex 1 of RD 1393/2007 for Master’s studies, applied of course to the legal context. They involve a more advanced

level in comparison with the competencies established for the undergraduate Degrees that enable access to the Master's Degrees.

2.2. Specific Competencies common to all Public Law students:

As mentioned above, the Competencies established in Modules 1 and 4 are to be acquired by all students.

The UCM address and link at which the Competencies for the Public law Subjects can be found is:

<https://derecho.ucm.es/estudios/2014-15/master-derechopublico-estudios-competencias>

The competencies established for Module 1 contain the abilities to be acquired through the advanced study of current problems within all branches of Public law (Topic 1.1), and the work methodology of the jurist at the scientific-academic level in any of the fields of Public law (Topic 1.2), and are as follows:

2.2.1. Specific Competencies for Topic 1.1

.- **SC1.1.1.** Understanding current legal issues in Administrative law at an advanced level, and their relation to Public law as a whole.

.- **SC1.1.2.** Understanding current legal issues in Criminal law at an advanced level, and their relation to Public law as a whole.

.- **SC1.1.3.** Understanding current legal issues in Procedural law at an advanced level, and their relation to Public law as a whole.

2.2.2. Specific Competencies for Topic 1.2

.- **SC1.2.1.** Understanding issues regarding scientific knowledge at a specialist level, and their possible relation to the law.

.- **SC1.2.2.** Examining, at an advanced level and in the various fields of Legal Science, perspectives on legal research, its types, sources, phases and protocols.

.- **SC1.2.3.** Knowing the forms, methods and types of teaching incorporated following the implementation of the European Higher Education Area, with a view to future work specialized in the academic-research environment.

.- **SC1.2.4.** Knowing the kinds and forms of research management and teaching: projects, competitions, remunerative supplements, terms (*sexenios*), university career, etc.

2.2.3. Specific Competencies for Module 4 or relating to the End-of-Course Work

The competencies established for Module 4 mean that all Master's students will be able to perform work of an academic-scientific nature at an advanced level in any branch of Public law, and are as follows:

.- **SC4.1:** Ability to combine all learning outcomes acquired during the Master's course in an academic-scientific work

.- **SC4.2:** Ability to perform hermeneutics of materials to carry out advanced research.

.- **SC4.3:** Ability to focus analysis of chosen research materials on novel and specialist outcomes or approaches.

.- **SC4.4:** Ability to present research results and defend them before a specialist panel.

2.3. Specific competencies for the Private law itinerary

The Transversal and General Competencies in the Private law itinerary are the same as those in the Public law itinerary (obviously, changing the latter expression to Private law). Only the modules specific to the itinerary need to be highlighted.

The Competencies established in Modules 1 and 4, as mentioned above, are to be acquired by all students.

Those established for Module 1 contain the abilities acquired through the advanced study of current problems within all branches of Private law (Topic 1.1) and the work methodology of the jurist at the scientific-academic level in any of the fields of Private law (Topic 1.2), and are the following:

2.3.1. Specific Competencies for Topic 1.1

SC1.1.1. Competencies to understand current legal issues and problems in Civil law at an advanced level, and their relation with Private law as a whole.

SC1.1.2. Competencies to understand current legal issues and problems in Commercial law at an advanced level, and their relation with Private law as a whole.

SC1.1.3. Competencies to understand current legal issues and problems in Employment and Social Security law at an advanced level, and their relation with Private law as a whole.

2.3.2. Specific Competencies for Topic 1.2

SC1.2.1. Competencies to understand issues relating to scientific knowledge and its possible relation with law at a specialist level.

SC1.2.2. Competencies to examine views in the various fields of Legal Science on legal research, its types, sources, phases and protocols, in detail and at an advanced level.

SC1.2.3. Competencies to recognize the teaching forms, methods and classes included following the implementation of the European Higher Education Area, with a view to subsequent specialist work at the academic-research level.

SC1.2.4. Competencies to recognize the approaches to and forms of research and teaching management: projects, competitions, remunerative supplements, terms (*sexenios*), university career, etc.

The competencies established for Module 4 require all Master's students to be capable of producing an academic-scientific work at an advanced level in any branch of Private law, and are the following:

2.3.3. Specific Competencies for Module 4 or relating to the FMT. Common to Module 4 of the Public Law Master's Degree.

SC4.1: Ability to combine all learning outcomes acquired during the Master's course in an academic-scientific work.

SC4.2: Ability to perform hermeneutics of materials to carry out advanced research.

SC4.3: Ability to focus analysis of chosen research materials on novel and specialist outcomes or approaches.

SC4.4: Ability to present research results and defend them before a specialist panel.

The Private law itinerary requires the study of the following subjects: Civil law, Commercial law, Roman law, Private law and Economics, State Ecclesiastical law, Law in the Information Society, Comparative Private law, Labour and Social Security law, Philosophy of law, and History of law.

The competencies for each of these topics can be found at the following link:

<https://derecho.ucm.es/estudios/2014-15/master-derechoprivado-estudios-competencias>

Regardless of the content found at this link, the learning outcomes that are required in this Private law Topic are:

- 1: Studying the various legal-private institutions (and their economic framework) related to the disciplines comprising the basic and obligatory training content of the Study Plan, and in particular those related to Private law, in general, and Company law, in particular.
- 2: Applying theoretical knowledge to professional practice; particularly, acquiring the ability to give legal advice in law firms, public and private companies and institutions, and to provide technical representation in the administrative and procedural spheres and defence before the Courts in the various legal orders.
- 3: Detailed knowledge and study of Legal-Economic relations in the sphere of legal-private relations.
- 4: Detailed knowledge and study of the bases and fundamentals of European law, in particular the harmonization and systematization projects for Private European law.
- 5: Detailed knowledge and study of the national and international legal aspects related to the organization and management of companies, physical and legal persons, in particular company bylaws for small and mid-size companies, company tax, social security and complementary private company insurance, creditors' agreements and legal regulation of the financial markets.
- 6: Detailed knowledge and study of the legal aspects related to business and commerce from the perspective of Private International law and Civil law.
- 7: Detailed knowledge and study of legal-private institutions related to Civil law, in particular civil contractual and extra-contractual liability and Property law.
- 8: Understanding the different matrimonial systems.
- 9: Detailed knowledge and study of legal conflicts resolution systems in the legal-private sphere in general, and particularly in the social order of the jurisdiction.

- 10: Detailed understanding of ICT and law and, in particular, Data Processing and Information Technology law.

Each Department may incorporate within its Master's guide competencies associated with the subject, based on those established and approved by ANECA. If the FMT were based on a Labour law issue, for example, the student would have to demonstrate the specific ability to utilize the competencies listed below:

- .- **SC2.3.1:** Competency to manage labour law sources at an advanced level, with particular attention to the way in which they interact.
- .- **SC2.3.2:** Ability to make specialist use of hermeneutic canons that govern the interpretation of the various employment regulations.
- .- **SC2.3.3:** Advanced competency in understanding the scope of constitutional recognition of fundamental labour rights: specific and non-specific.
- .- **SC2.3.4:** Ability to undertake a critical analysis of constitutional and general case-law in the labour field, at a level more advanced than in the undergraduate degree.
- .- **SC2.3.5:** Ability to understand the measures and programmes of active and passive labour policies at a specialist level.
- .- **SC2.3.6:** Ability to analyze and understand the dynamic and changing context and nature of labour and Social Security relations in the national, community and international spheres.
- .- **SC2.3.7:** Ability to recognize and confront, as a specialist, the new challenges facing the labour legal order, including (among others) new technologies, extra-judicial resolutions, and equality.
- .- **SC2.3.8:** Ability to conduct research demonstrating a systematic understanding of the labour legal order and of its specific institutions, with a view to subsequent training in research.

2.4. Competencies for the Religious Sciences Master's Degree

This Master's course contains the same general and basic competencies as previously described, but adapted to the field in a summarized form.

Among the specific competencies is a description of particular academic and scientific goals to ensure the student can:

- .- **SC.1.** Explain the peculiarities of the different religions that, to a large extent, have defined and define humanity.
- .- **SC.2.** Analyze sources using the fundamental principles of phenomenology and anthropology of religions.
- .- **SC.3.** Systematize and explain the fundamental historical bases of religions.
- .- **SC.4.** Apply the theories and methodology used in the study of religions.

.- **SC.5.** Work with the information-gathering instruments and techniques used in Religious Sciences, including bibliographic search engines, archive inventories and IT tools applied to the study of religions.

.- **SC.6.** Define issues and carry out research projects that may contribute to knowledge and debate on religious problems.

At the following link:

<http://derecho.ucm.es/estudios/2014-15/master-religiones-estudios-competencias>

There is no list of specific competencies for the FMT, as in Module 4 of the MDPub and of the MDPriv. As such, the specific competencies are understood to be those that must be reflected in the FMT presented for evaluation.

2.5. Competencies for the Master's Degree in Contemporary and Comparative Spanish Law (imparted in Puerto Rico)

The competencies for this Master's course follow the previously mentioned current regulations in Spain.

It is set forth as content particular to this Master's course that students shall be enabled to acquire a series of competencies, both generic and specific to the postgraduate study they are undertaking, and that are to be imparted adapting both the methodology and the infrastructures of the centre to fundamental rights and equality of opportunity between men and women (as established by Law 3/2007, of 22 March, for the effective equality of women and men), principles of equality of opportunity and universal access for persons with disabilities (Law 51/2003, of 2 December, on equality of opportunities, non-discrimination and universal access for persons with disabilities), and values specific to a culture of peace and democracy (Law 27/2005, of 30 November, on encouraging a peaceful education and culture).

The FMT involves the attainment of 16 ECTS credits.

2.6. Competencies for the Master's Degree in International Law

This refers to the provisions established by law as regards Competencies, and specifies that the FMT involves the attainment of 18 ECTS credits, among the 60 awarded in total for the Master's course.

2.7. Competencies for the Master's Degree in Parliamentary Law

Contains the general competencies from 1 to 8, and following the clarification that the Master's course does not entitle the student to practice regulated professions, the specific Competencies are as follows:

.- **SC.1.** Ability to analyze the institutions and concepts related to Parliamentary law, Elections and Legislation.

.- **SC.2.** Ability to interpret and analyze cases relating to fundamental rights.

.- **SC.3.** Ability to use constitutional principles as criteria for interpreting the legal order.

.- **SC.4.** Ability to obtain legal information through networks and communication techniques (legislation and case-law databases, bibliographies).

.- **SC.5.** Ability to organize and select information from a range of cases and precedents, but also from articles and monographic works, to obtain an overview allowing for the construction of responses to new situations.

.- **SC.6.** Ability to manage legal sources.

.- **SC.7.** Ability to draft legal briefs: issue orders, draft proposed resolutions and provisions, classify briefs and process issues.

.- **SC.8.** Ability to construct legal grounds.

.- **SC.9.** Ability to create and structure regulation.

Students must attain at least 60 ECTS credits: 36 credits in mandatory subjects, 18 elective credits, and 6 FMT credits.

2.8. Competencies for the Master's Degree in Advanced Tax and Financial Law Studies

This Master's course does not specify competencies or FMT credits.

2.9. Competencies for the Master's Degree in Environment: Human and Socio-Economic Dimensions

This Master's course adopts general competencies 1 to 11, and establishes the following specific competencies:

.- **SC.1.** Ability to analyze the institutions and concepts related to Parliamentary law, Elections and Legislation.

.- **SC.2.** Ability to interpret and analyze cases relating to fundamental rights.

.- **SC.3.** Ability to use constitutional principles as criteria for interpreting the legal order.

.- **SC.4.** Ability to obtain legal information through networks and communication techniques (legislation and case-law databases, bibliographies).

.- **SC.5.** Ability to organize and select information from a range of cases and precedents, but also from articles and monographic works, to obtain an overview allowing for the construction of responses to new situations.

.- **SC.6.** Ability to manage legal sources.

.- **SC.7.** Ability to draft legal briefs: issue orders, draft proposed resolutions and provisions, classify briefs and process issues.

.- **SC.8.** Ability to construct legal grounds.

.- **SC.9.** Ability to create and structure regulation.

The FMT involves the attainment of 10 ECTS credits out of a total of 100:

<http://derecho.ucm.es/estudios/2014-15/master-medioambiente-estudios-estructura>

3. Evaluation of Competencies

The FMT director or tutor must evaluate the competencies in order to approve the work.

The evaluation is not aimed at evaluating the work following a review of the final written version. Rather, it covers the overall efforts of students from the beginning of their directed activity and reflects their research ability, the autonomy required for this kind of work in which the tutor only operates at a guidance level, and their compliance with deadlines in the systematization of the matter. The FMT must display scientific rigour and maturity, in both academic and professional terms.

III. CONTENT OF AN FMT

As the FMT is a written work, the student must demonstrate the ability to write correctly, this element constituting one of the evaluation elements in the final evaluation system.

1. Structure of the FMT

With good expository clarity, the student has to achieve the content described in the following structure, which represents the real goals to be attained:

a) Objective

This section must explain the research topic, the reasons for choosing it, and the aim behind pursuing research on that matter (regardless of whether other superior or related matters are later discovered).

A summary should be provided in Spanish and in English to assist the Academic Committee in its work, in addition to an index.

b) Methodology

This consists of explaining the method selected to carry out each stage of the research, duly justified where appropriate.

This section should specify how the data-gathering was carried out so as to locate bibliographic resources, both doctrinal and case-law based, in order to understand the issue in detail. Additionally, it should explain the criteria for systematizing and structuring the topic, demonstrating its analytical and critical character.

c) Main Body: Exposition

The main body of the FMT is the systematic exposition of the research work, using footnotes, detailing debates regarding different doctrinal approaches, contrasting case-law solutions, and involving vigorous personal critical evaluation.

The content of the FMT may be accompanied by graphs or any other resource, highlighting the use of personal or external sources.

d) Conclusions

Final considerations do not only constitute an organized summary of what has already been set out. Rather, they offer an opportunity to provide innovative and personal proposals regarding the issue.

Nonetheless, conclusions should always contain the main research outcomes, with a good basis in reliable data.

2. Basic rules of presentation

2.1. Length

The minimum number of pages is 80, and the maximum is 120.

2.2. Presentation of Cover

The cover must include the title of the FMT with the greatest precision possible, that is, exactly as it was registered; student's first and second names; tutor's first and second names; and the date.

2.3. Sources and References

One of the most reliable resources in demonstrating the absence of plagiarism is always providing references for authors and sources of information, opinions and data. Cut-and-paste is one of the most common methods of working in an information age where powerful internet search engines are available, for which reason the student must automatically and always note the source of any reference in order not to unintentionally or involuntarily commit plagiarism.

Footnotes must hence be included, and there must be a bibliography at the end of the thesis.

The referencing style should be that established by Complutense University, Madrid:

http://www.ucm.es/data/cont/docs/24-2013-11-20-APA_Normas_resumen.pdf

<http://biblioteca.ucm.es/prog/galeriacat.php?id=3212&idp=21087&accion=n&u=3213&p=3207&t=6&v=5&j=1&r=alfin>

But that used by Universidad Carlos III is also accepted:

http://portal.uc3m.es/portal/page/portal/biblioteca/aprende_usar/como_citar_bibliografia

2.4. Formal criteria

Works must be presented in Times New Roman font, of font size 12 for the main body of text and 10 for the footnotes.

The text must have line spacing of 1.5, with footnotes of single/simple spacing.

The structure or nomenclature must respect the following scheme: I.1.A)

I. RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. European Union regulatory framework

A) Its practical application in member states

IV. FINAL EVALUATION BY THE ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

The examining Panel or Committee shall be composed of at least three members, who shall ideally but not necessarily be PhD holding faculty members who teach on the Master's course. When the number of FMTs so requires, various Panels may be constituted, the distribution of which shall be determined by the Master's degree coordinator.

Panel members must have a copy of the FMT at least ten days before the date of its public presentation and defence.

During the presentation of the work, a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 30 minutes shall be available to explain its general thrust. Candidates may use a PowerPoint presentation, providing an index, the defence itself, or similar information.

On completion of the presentation, the Panel members shall pose questions or make suggestions, to which the student shall then respond. The Panel shall subsequently and immediately retire to deliberate in private.

The Committee will evaluate the written work and oral presentation, in the proportions established by each Department.

The mark shall always be numerical and, where a mark of 10 is issued, the Panel may recommend to the Centre Coordinator that a distinction (*Matrícula de Honor*) be awarded.

Among the evaluation criteria are the following:

- a) fulfilment of material criteria.
- b) fulfilment of formal criteria.
- c) originality of work.
- d) use of methodology appropriate to a research work.
- e) analytical and critical character of the work.
- f) scientific proposals in results and conclusions.
- g) quality of oral presentation of the work.

The completion of the Final Master's Thesis is necessary, since 18 compulsory credits are allocated in this respect for all Public law and Private law Master's degree students out of the 60 ECTS credits that must be attained for each one of these Master's degrees.

Having attained the FMT credits, the rules for possible publication must be taken into consideration:

"Without prejudice to the application of the Regulations on the Guidelines for Final Master's Theses (FMT), approved by the Governing Board of Complutense University, Madrid (*Reglamento de Directrices sobre el Trabajo Fin de Máster (TFM)*), BOUCM nº 15, 15 November 2010), at the Meeting of the Faculty of Law held on 1 October 2014, two rules relating to FMTs were approved, to be applied in all Official Master's Degrees imparted by the Faculty and that, together with the Teaching Guidelines for this subject in each of these degrees, comprise their regulation.

The rules approved at the Faculty Meeting of 1 October 2014 are as follows:

1.- To be published through the UCM e-prints, FMTs for Official Master's Degrees of an academic nature at the UCM Faculty of Law must have been granted a minimum score of 8 marks out of 10 by the evaluating Panel.

As regards the Official Master's Degree in Access to the Legal Profession (*Acceso a la Abogacía*), the FMT Panel shall determine the interest and appropriateness of publishing the work through UCM e-prints. The theses that meet the conditions shall be published at the request of the student/s who have presented them. The following details shall be included on the cover: title of the work, name of author/s, name of tutor/s, title of the relevant Master's Degree, department/s and/or Institution/s in which the work was completed, group/intake in which it was presented, names of members of the evaluating Panel and mark attained.

2. If the tutor does not approve the FMT, in the following two days the student may request from the Departmental Board in the case of Departmental Master's Degrees, or from the Master's Degree coordinator in the case of inter-departmental Master's Degrees, that another professor be appointed to review the initial opinion. The Departmental Board or a body it may delegate for the purpose, in Master's Degrees offered by a sole Department, or the Master's Degree coordinator in inter-departmental Master's Degrees, shall appoint a professor as soon as possible and, in any case, within a period of two days from the receipt of the student's request. In the case of inter-departmental Master's Degrees, the coordinator shall inform the Department concerned. The appointed professor shall read the work and decide, within a maximum term of five days, whether to confirm the decision of the tutor or to approve the work. In the case that the tutor's decision is confirmed, the student may appeal before the Rector within a term of five days from the confirmation. In the case that the appointed professor decides to approve the work, this professor shall assume the tutorship of the FMT for purposes of its subsequent presentation and defence and, if applicable, its publication through UCM e-prints."

BLOCK 2. TUTOR GUIDE

Once the competencies to be shown by the student and the nature of the final product required are known, the tools are available to begin the work with the student, through tutorial action.

The tutor should be fully aware of the need to plan the FMT process with the student, without the interference of other teaching and research commitments to be met through the academic year, to ensure that the student is not at a disadvantage in the maturing of their learning.

I. PHASES IN TUTORIAL ACTION

1.- Tutorial Action Commencement Stage: between two and four weeks



The first interviews are aimed at contextualizing the academic and personal situation.

It is necessary to understand the student's profile, their personal concerns and abilities, not only through their results in a specific Master's Degree subject, but through their academic record, their age and their professional orientation, if they have one.

Following this early, ground-setting phase, the tutor should be prepared to propose a subject that is adjusted to the particularities of the student, or to guide the student on whether a subject the student has in mind is appropriate, always seeking to procure the interdisciplinary character of the subject and a useful combination between the research and helping to practice the profession or workplace integration.

The FMT student should feel comfortable with the research topic, or at least motivated by some other factor. Otherwise, the FMT will represent no more than the fulfilment of an administrative step to be completed in the simplest manner possible.

After the proposal is made by one of the parties, and accepted by both, and following a consideration of the possibility of carrying it out, on the basis of sufficient sources and available time, another practical challenge must be considered: creating a realistic and reasonable timetable, in terms of both completing the FMT and guaranteeing tutorial action.

2.- Development Phase: between 18 and 24 weeks



The student must carry out data-gathering and will require guidance from the tutor in delimiting material or, on the contrary, obtaining more information due to the originality of the topic and the consequent scarcity of publications relating to it.

Having read all the information, the student will begin to demonstrate their ability to learn and whether they have acquired all the competencies pertaining to the Undergraduate Degree and Postgraduate Master's Degree.

During this period, the student must show their hermeneutic ability with materials, with a style appropriate to advanced postgraduate research.

A month before the delivery date for the FMT, the student must have obtained novel, specialized outcomes, which have not required the effective authorship of the FMT tutor (as unfortunately occurs in some cases).

The student may lack expository clarity, and it may not be possible to complete a draft correction task without the tutor completely rewriting the work. Students may also have the ability to draft and write well, but without critical, reasonable and persuasive dissection of the material.

During this phase it becomes clear whether the student is performing the research with the necessary maturity. If not, always offering an optimistic perspective, it is appropriate to advise the student to present the work at a later stage, since due to their abilities or to the difficulty of the work, more time is required for its completion.

In any case, the student must never abandon the FMT. There are administrative reasons such as the payment of fees for the FMT subject, academic reasons such as the compulsory nature of attaining the FMT credits that indicate the acquisition of specific competencies, and personal and/or vocational reasons, such as the obligation to support the student through ongoing feedback, seeking an improvement in their abilities without making impossible and dispiriting demands, but always motivating them to achieve their potential.

Students must deliver what they consider to be their final product to the tutor, being aware that the tutor will deliver what might in ethical terms be considered a humbling experience, and in academic terms, an in-depth critical correction, which will require students to reformulate all, a large part or a smaller section of their work.

Students' abilities, their learning outcomes, are not only demonstrated by the dispassionate and rational acceptance of the problems found by the tutor, but also by the rapidity with which students find solutions.

3.- Definitive delivery phase: between four and six weeks



Having arrived at the third and final stage of the tutorial action timetable, involving the practical demonstration of the student's abilities, it is possible that the definitive draft of the FMT has not been achieved.

It is therefore necessary to encourage the psychological wellbeing of the student, to ensure they can freely express their personality and overcome a difficult phase. The

refusal of a tutor to accept the final version of the thesis, though it may be fair and well-grounded, may cause the student to feel discriminated against, such that the emotional effect and degree and nature of the supposedly unfavourable treatment received by the student and situation in which they find themselves inevitably become the tutor's responsibility.

The tutor should not fall into the trap of believing that young students possess an innate ability to detect all deception. Rather, they are fertile ground for sowing the seeds of emotional security, the ability to overcome difficulties, and the competitive spirit. Responsible tutors do not have the academic obligation to take these factors into consideration, but it should be remembered that being responsible implies placing students, as people, within a family and cultural context, with specific school and university backgrounds, the knowledge of which (obtained through tutoring and with the student's consent) can help the tutor to determine the appropriate means by which students' work can be constructively criticized, without committing any moral or ethical sins.

In this regard and given this context, the tutor may need to begin a process of acceleration of their tutorial work, supported by other dynamic and external means, so that the student does not feel ignored or discriminated against by the tutor's views:

- . The guidance of other students, now studying at PhD level, who have completed the FMT, or without having yet defended the FMT, have successfully concluded it.

- . Arranging interviews with other colleagues from the Departmental Board, who may be able to find points of support to resolve problematic issues for a specific student in delivering an appropriate FMT.

In fact, if the tutor does not approve the FMT, another colleague on the Board or the Coordinator may revise it, to provide a second opinion, and with the final report of the official tutor.

In the case that the FMT is approved, the tutor must continue their guidance activities, now directed toward the preparation of the report and of the oral presentation and defence of the FMT. Proposals must be made and, at the same time, open questions must be posed in order to continue lines of research and resolve doubts.

Oral communication, with legal terminology and clear development, is one of the evaluation factors for the evaluating Panel, for which reason it is necessary to work with the student to manage stage fright, in addition to offering tools to strengthen students' oratory weaknesses.

Practice is useful, preparing a simulation of the presentation and reviewing answers to possible questions or suggestions from the members of the evaluating Panel, and advising students not to limit themselves to answering but also to posing more questions, in the manner of a debate.

II. REASONS FOR A GUIDE

This tutorial action block in the FMT guide is intended as no more than that: a guide, or model, designed to assist tutors without excluding different tutorial designs, ranging from the most "constructive" to those with minimal student contact.

The design outlined is simply based on a teaching methodology adjusted to the Bologna Plan, involving important personal and academic decisions and actions, which

results in more hours than those officially recognized for FMT tutors. For this reason, the responsible tutor may choose another more flexible or less work-intensive method, within the limits of the rules established in this respect.

However, it must be noted that educational innovation should not amount to a paternalistic model that places undue emphasis on guiding the student. Rather, the aim is to encourage students to make efforts that are as proactive and autonomous as our own.

The educational innovation is in fact an intense concern, never to be seen as misplaced, on good outcomes for the student. This should always involve rational opinions, never inappropriate, focusing on the need to train good researchers and excellent professionals, as a task that is key to university teaching, the function of which is not limited to passing on the merits of the research and teaching staff, but extends to acting as a spur for developing the merits of those entrusted to our academic direction to acquire competencies that will prove useful to them and are necessary for their successful performance in the professional environment.

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