MASTER IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION & LANGUAGES- MIBAL

UNIVERSIDAD DE ALMERÍA

FINAL MASTER THESIS
Student Guide
2024-2025

1. Introduction

A master´s project enables you to delve into an area of interest and to further apply the concepts covered by coursework. It provides an opportunity to integrate and deepen your knowledge and to develop your mastery of the subject. This guide provides both students and professors with basic guidance in preparing the report, presentation, and defense of the master´s project.

2. Prerequisites of the master´s project

The student must have passed all the courses of the curriculum before the defense of the master´s project, except for the internship credits. The submission and defense of the project require the previous approval of the supervisor.

3. Submission

The student must submit the final version of the project to:

a. ARATIES, through its online platform. The student must submit a pdf file. The first page of the pdf document must include: author, title, degree (Master in International Business Administration & Languages), and supervisor.

b. The master´s coordinator: the student must submit 3 bound hard copies of the project.

The master´s project will be submitted with a minimum of 10 days before the date of the defense of the project. **The submission deadlines for the academic year 2024-25 are as follows:** June 17th, 2025 (Ordinary call) and July 9th, 2025 (Extraordinary call).

4. Presentation and defense of the master´s project

The defense of the project, in front of an evaluation committee, will be held by the student through the oral presentation of the main contents and conclusions, for as long as the committee has specified. After their presentations, students will answer any question posed by the evaluation committee.

There will be an ordinary examination call in May and an extraordinary one in July. Additionally, a call could be held in November. This additional call must be requested to ARATIES (CAU) by the student during October and will require a new enrollment fee.

The dates of the defense for the academic year 2024-25 are as follows:

- Ordinary call: June 26th, 2025.

- Extraordinary call: July 17th, 2025.

- November: to be scheduled (usually the last week of the examination period).

5. Evaluation Committee

The evaluation committee will consist of three members. The members must teach in the master. It will be also possible to include in the committee non-university professional experts in the field and/or professors of other Spanish or foreign universities. The three members of the committee must be knowledgeable about the language in which the project is defended.

6. Language

The MIBAL is taught mostly in the English language. Therefore, students should submit their projects in this language. Since French and German are the other languages included in the curriculum of the master, the project could be presented, exceptionally, in these languages.

In any case, the students must submit and present the project in a different language than their mother tongue.

7. Tasks of the supervisor

The tasks of the supervisor include assisting the student in determining the concrete topic of the TFM and the methodology to follow; offering guidance throughout the process; resolving doubts and, finally, controlling and guaranteeing the quality of the project.

The first and foremost quality filter for presenting the project was undertaken by the supervisor. The approval of the supervisor implies that he/she knows the contents of the project, he/she considers timely both the objectives and the methodology and conclusions, that the project is worthy to be defended in front of the evaluation committee, and complies with the ethical and originality requirements.

If a project is not ready to be presented, the best for the student, the supervisor, and the evaluation committee, is that the student reviews the work, improves their weaknesses, and presents it in the next defense call.

8. **Planning: tentative intermediate deadlines**

These tables resume the planning to be accomplished by the students depending on which evaluation call they want to present the master´s project. If students do not fulfill the intermediate deadlines they could not present the project in the planned evaluation call.

<u>Ordinary Call, 2025</u>

➢ **30/01/2025: Topic and Supervisor selection.**

➢ **14/02/2025: deadline 1: proposal.** The student will send his/her proposal for the master´s project, by email, to the supervisor. The proposal must include: 1) Title, 2) Abstract, 3) Index, and a brief explanation of the main sections (3-5 lines), 4) some references, 5) Doubts and questions to be answered by the supervisor, 6) examination Call for the defense (May, July, or November). **Feedback from the supervisor.** The supervisor will send his/her feedback within 15 days (1 March), specifying the topic and proposing the contents to be developed.

➢ **31/03/2025: Deadline 2: first draft.** The student will send a first draft of the project, or he/she should inform the supervisor of his/her decision to present the project in July or November. If the student does not submit the draft on time, he/she could not present the project in the May Call. **Feedback from the supervisor.** The supervisor will send the feedback within one month, with a revision of the work and suggestions and recommendations that help the student to make progress. If this first draft does not meet the minimum level of required quality, the supervisor could decide that the project is presented in the next evaluation call (July).

➢ **25/04/2025: Deadline 3: second draft.** The student will send a second and more complete draft of the project, including the changes and improvements proposed by the supervisor in the previous revision. If the student does not submit the draft on time, he/she could not present the project in the May call. **Feedback from the supervisor.** The supervisor will send the feedback within one month, with a revision of the work and suggestions and recommendations that help the student to make progress. If this second draft does not have the minimum level of required quality, the supervisor could decide that the project is presented in the next evaluation call (July).

➢ **23/05/2025: Deadline 4: final version.** The student will send the final version of the master´s project. If the student does not submit the document on time, he/she could not present the project in the May call. **Feedback from the supervisor.** If everything is ok, the supervisor will approve the defense of the project within a week, including, in case, the last suggestions and recommendations. If this final version does not have the minimum level of required quality, the supervisor could decide that the project is presented in the next evaluation call (July).

➢ **03/06/2025-17/06/2025: SUBMISSION TO ARATIES**. The student will submit an electronic copy of the project through the online platform of ARATIES. He/she will also submit 3 bound hard copies of the project to the master´s coordinator.

➢ **26/06/2025: PRESENTATION AND DEFENSE**

Extraordinary call, 2025

➢ **30/01/2025: Topic and Supervisor selection.**

➢ **14/02/2025: deadline 1: proposal.** The student will send his/her proposal for the master´s project, by email, to the supervisor. The proposal must include: 1) Title, 2) Abstract, 3) Index, and a brief explanation of the main sections (3-5 lines), 4) some references, 5) Doubts and questions to be answered by the supervisor, 6) examination call for the defense (May, July, or November). **Feedback from the supervisor.** The supervisor will send his/her feedback within 15 days (March, 1st), specifying the topic and proposing the contents to be developed.

➢ **14/04/2025: Deadline 2: first draft.** The student will send a first draft of the project, or he/she should inform the supervisor of his/her decision to present the project in November if the student does not submit the draft on time, he/she could not present the project in the July Call. **Feedback from the supervisor.** The supervisor will send the feedback within one month, with a revision of the work and suggestions and recommendations that help the student to make progress. If this first draft has not meet the minimum level of required quality, the supervisor could decide that the project is presented in the next evaluation call (November).

➢ **15/05/2025: Deadline 3: second draft.** The student will send a second and more complete draft of the project, including the changes and improvements proposed by the supervisor in the previous revision. If the student does not submit the draft on time, he/she could not present the project in the July call. **Feedback from the supervisor.** The supervisor will send the feedback within one month, with a revision of the work and suggestions and recommendations that help the student to make progress. If this second draft does not have the minimum level of required quality, the supervisor could decide that the project is presented in the next evaluation call (November).

➢ **16/06/2025: Deadline 4: final version.** The student will send the final version of the master´s project. If the student does not submit the document on time, he/she could not present the project in the July call. **Feedback from the supervisor.** If everything is ok, the supervisor will approve the defense of the project within a week, including, in case, the last suggestions and recommendations. If this final version does not have the minimum level of required quality, the supervisor could decide that the project be presented in the next evaluation call (November).

➢ **26/06/2025- 9/07/2025: SUBMISSION TO ARATIES**. The student will submit an electronic copy of the project through the online platform of ARATIES. He/she will also submit 3 bound hard copies of the project to the master´s coordinator.

➢ **17/07/2025: PRESENTATION AND DEFENSE**

Exam Retaking Extraordinary call (November)

➢ **31/01/2025: Topic and Supervisor selection.**

➢ **14/02/2025: deadline 1: proposal.** The student will send his/her proposal for the master´s project, by email, to the supervisor. The proposal must include: 1) Title, 2) Abstract, 3) Index, and a brief explanation of the main sections (3-5 lines), 4) some references, 5) Doubts and questions to be answered by the supervisor, 6) examination call for the defense (May, July, or November). **Feedback from the supervisor.** The supervisor will send his/her feedback within 15 days (March, 1st), specifying the topic and proposing the contents to be developed.

➢ **01/07/2025: Deadline 2: first draft.** The student will send a first draft of the project. If the student does not submit the draft on time, he/she could not present the project in the November call. **Feedback from the supervisor.** The supervisor will send the feedback within one month, with a revision of the work and suggestions and recommendations that help the student to make progress. If this first draft does not have the minimum level of required quality, the supervisor could decide that the project is presented in the next evaluation call.

➢ **15/09/2025: Deadline 3: second draft.** The student will send a second and more complete draft of the project, including the changes and improvements proposed by the supervisor in the previous revision. If the student does not submit the draft on time, he/she could not present the project in the November call. **Feedback from the supervisor.** The supervisor will send the feedback within one month, with a revision of the work and suggestions and recommendations that help the student to make progress. If this second draft has not meet the minimum level of required quality, the supervisor could decide that the project be presented in the next evaluation call.

➢ **12/10/2025 (tentative date): Deadline 4: final version.** The student will send the final version of the master´s project. If the student does not submit the document on time, he/she could not present the project in the November call. **Feedback from the supervisor.** If everything is ok, the supervisor will approve the presentation of the project within a week, including, in case, the last suggestions and recommendations. If this final version does not have the minimum level of required quality, the supervisor could decide that the project is presented in the next evaluation call.

➢ **7/11/2025 (tentative date): SUBMISSION TO ARATIES**. The student will submit an electronic copy of the project through the online platform of ARATIES. He/she will also submit 3 bound hard copies of the project to the master´s coordinator.

➢ **15/11/2025 (tentative date): PRESENTATION AND DEFENSE**

9. Quality of the master´s project

Students must take into account that a master´s project requires the acquisition of skills related to the integration, analysis, and application of knowledge in a single project, in which they should specifically demonstrate their ability to analyze information, evaluate alternatives, and, present and defend their results and conclusions in a reasoned way.

The evaluation committee will focus on two aspects:

- Analysis of the final written project report.
- Oral presentation and defense of the project by the student, including the capacity to respond to the evaluation committee.

Only if the supervisor considers that the project has reached a sufficient level of maturity and quality, and he/she gives his/her approval, the student could present the project.

10. Ethics, originality, and plagiarism

The project must be entirely original. Any violation of this principle, attempted cheating, copying, or unethical behavior by the student will result in a numerical grade of zero for the evaluation call in which the project has been presented, and this information will be reported to the academic Committee of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at the University of Almeria.

11. Style guidelines

Length of the master´s project: 25 pages minimum; 50 pages maximum, including references and tables. A maximum of 10 pages of Anexes is allowed.

Font size: 12 point

Spacing and margins: 1.5 spaced. The left, right, top, and bottom margins will be 2.5 cm each.

The different sections will follow a hierarchical numbering, for example:

1. Introduction.
2. Theoretical framework
   2.1. General aspects of the theory of resources and capabilities.
3. ……………

<u>Required sections:</u>

- Abstract: The project will include, at the beginning, an abstract with 8 lines at the most, in both English and Spanish languages.

- Introduction: it must include the master's project objective, justification, and relevance, and how the project is designed to achieve the objective. It is not a theoretical or introduction section to the topic.

- Methods

- Conclusions and recommendations

- References

<u>References:</u>

References should be integrated within the text in the main body of the project, and at the end, in a final references section.

In the references section, the references should be listed and ordered alphabetically. All these references should have been cited in the text. For example:

- Barney, J. B. (1986). Organizational Culture: Can It be a Source of Sustained Competitive Advantage?, *Academy of Management Review, 11* (3), 656-665

Within the text, the references should be inserted in the correct place, including in brackets the author's surname and year of publication, for example:

... Organizational culture is an element that may be key to gain competitive advantage (Barney, 1986) ...

<u>All the references should be formatted following the **APA 7th editio**n guide</u> for references format both within the text and in the references list.