



MRES THESIS GUIDELINES (2026-27)

INTRODUCTION

To successfully complete the MRes Program, students must obtain a total of **60 ECTS** by fulfilling the following requirements:

- Research Seminar – 10 ECTS
- Elective Courses – 30 ECTS
- DEE Seminars – 10 ECTS (attendance is compulsory)
- MRes Thesis – 10 ECTS

The MRes thesis is a compulsory component of the program and is worth **10 ECTS**. It should demonstrate the student's ability to understand economic research and to produce a paper that meets academic standards of writing and presentation.

Students are encouraged to develop their thesis from research undertaken in the Research Seminar or other MRes courses. In all cases, the thesis topic must be approved by a faculty member.

Recommendation: Although the minimum requirement is to have two faculty members on the thesis committee, students are strongly encouraged to discuss their research with additional faculty members working in their field of interest. The earlier you involve faculty members in your research, the more valuable their guidance and feedback are likely to be.

COMPETENCES TO BE DEVELOPED

The MRes thesis aims to develop the following competences:

- Critical attitude
- Ability to synthesize information
- Application of knowledge
- Analytical thinking
- Methodical working
- Information gathering
- Oral communication

LENGTH AND STRUCTURE

The thesis should be between **15 and 30 double-spaced pages**, using a standard font and page layout.

Given the research-oriented nature of the program, the thesis should follow the structure of a



scientific research paper and be written in a format suitable for publication in a specialised academic journal.

CONTENT

The thesis may take one of the following forms:

i) Analytical Review of a Research Topic

A well-structured and analytical discussion of a particular line of economic research based on several related academic papers.

The thesis should not simply summarise published articles. Instead, it should make an original contribution by, for example:

- evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of a particular line of research;
- discussing how the literature relates to other areas of economic theory or empirical research;
- explaining why competing or complementary theories cannot be distinguished using the available evidence; or
- proposing what additional data or empirical strategies would be useful for assessing the validity or applicability of different theories.

ii) Original Research

A piece of original theoretical and/or empirical research.

Possible approaches include:

- A. Starting from a policy question and addressing it theoretically or empirically.
- B. Starting from a stylised empirical fact and developing and/or empirically testing a theory that explains that fact.

The thesis may build upon research previously undertaken during the MRes program or elsewhere. However, it must clearly constitute a distinct and original piece of work.

TIMETABLE

By 15 April, students should send the following information to the MRes Coordinator:

1. The title of the MRes thesis.
2. An abstract of **200–500 words**.
3. The names of the two members of the thesis committee:
 - the faculty member who approved the thesis topic (supervisor); and
 - a second faculty member acting as an additional reader.

All committee members must hold a PhD. They will attend the thesis defence and jointly evaluate the thesis.



At least **one week before the public defence**, students should send a PDF copy of the thesis to the MRes Coordinator and to both committee members (preferably from around **20 June onwards**).

Please also send a copy of the email to the GPEFM Secretary.

PUBLIC DEFENCE

Students should agree on the date and time of the public thesis defence with both members of their thesis committee.

The thesis defence must be held in person, and both committee members must be present.

The GPEFM Secretary will reserve a room and announce the defence to the Department. Faculty members and graduate students will be invited to attend.

The defence should last approximately **30 minutes** and should normally take place **between mid-June and mid-July**. In all cases, the defence must be held **no later than 15 July**, except in duly justified exceptional circumstances approved by the MRes Coordinator.

EVALUATION

The MRes thesis will be jointly evaluated by the two committee members, who will complete an evaluation report and assign either a **Pass** or **Fail** grade.

A **Pass** will be recorded in the official UPF academic records as **8/10**.

Students who receive a **Fail** grade will have one final opportunity to submit and defend a revised version of the thesis during the first week of September.