

**POLITECNICO DI MILANO**

**SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE URBAN PLANNING CONSTRUCTION  
ENGINEERING**

**FINAL EXAMINATION ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS FOR THE  
LAUREA – L (EQUIVALENT TO BACHELOR OF SCIENCE) PROGRAMME IN  
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN**

Under Art. 3 of the final examination Additional Regulations for the Laurea - L (equivalent to Bachelor of Science) and the Laurea Magistrale - LM (equivalent to Master of Science) of the School of Architecture Urban Planning Construction Engineering. Given that:

\_the Architectural Design study programme ends with the Graduation Examination, which consists of a *Final Examination* to which, in curricular terms, 4 ECTS credits are attributed;

\_the *Final Examination* consists of the public discussion of the final paper in the degree exam session;

\_after passing the *Final Examination*, the BSc qualification is awarded (Doctor of Architectural Design);

the following is specified:

**Art 1. *Final Paper type and features***

The *Final Paper* deepens the three-year programme architectural subjects. The preparation and capacity of deepening, critical awareness of the connections between the disciplines must be evident along with expertise in architectural language and forms. The *Final paper* comprises: *Critical essay* and *Thematic portfolio* or

***Critical essay***

The *Critical Essay* is written with the help of a Supervisor the student chooses from among the study programme professors. It may be done individually or by a maximum of two graduating students.

The essay consists of an in-depth text of approximately 60,000 characters. Relevant images must accompany it, and it must cover an architectural topic proposed by the applicant and previously agreed with the Supervisor, relating to the three-year programme subjects.

The paper format shall not exceed A4 (horizontal or vertical) and shall be organised as follows.

**Cover:**

The cover page will bear the title (with a possible sub-title), which must briefly and illustrate the chosen topic, framework information (University, school, study programme, academic year, applicant name and surname and identification number, Supervisor name and surname) and a significant and relevant image (or composition of images).

**Paper organisation and content:**

1. abstract: written in about 1000 characters, it will contain a brief outline of the topic choice and the disciplinary areas involved;
2. text: the essay will be developed in a written text with adequate iconographic support complete with the necessary captions and possibly accompanied by further original graphic works; references and cross-references to examples and projects pertinent to the topic will be developed through analytical readings and visual interpretations; texts and images will be freely composed by the applicant; given the paper type, the text will be dominant; the volume may be

divided into parts, chapters, paragraphs, the organisation of which must be coherent with the table of contents structure;

3. Bibliography cited and consulted, webliography and the image sources are essential references for the paper assessment.

**Critical essay assessment procedure**

The critical essay is subject to Supervisor approval.

The *Critical essay* must be uploaded on the University web portal according to the academic calendar deadlines. The Supervisor will be responsible for approving the *Critical Essay* and validating the registration for the graduation examination. In the absence of registration validation, the applicant will not be admitted to the examination.

***Thematic Portfolio***

The *Thematic Portfolio* is produced individually and autonomously by the student, without a Supervisor. **The *Thematic Portfolio* is subject to formal verification by the Verification Board indicated by the Head of the Bachelor Programme. The Verification Board members are responsible for assessing the completeness of the *Thematic Portfolio*, while the Degree Examination Board will assess its content on the graduation exam day.**

The work consists of an in-depth study of an architectural theme chosen by the applicant, among the three-year programme disciplines and developed from a limited number of design and study experiences considered relevant to the selected topic, significant and suitably documented.

The work consists of written and graphic material in horizontal A3 format and organised as follows.

**Cover:**

The cover page will bear the title (with a possible sub-title), which must briefly and illustrate the chosen topic, framework information (University name and logo, school, study programme, academic year, applicant name and surname and identification number) and a significant and relevant image (or composition of images).

**Paper organisation and compulsory content of the tables**

1. **abstract:** of about 1000 characters, it will contain a brief explanation of the topic's choice and relate to the disciplinary fields concerned;
2. **table of contents:** it will be structured as a summary, containing brief reasoned summaries of the contents of each chapter or part of the paper, highlighting the logical and thematic links with the other chapters or parts;
3. **A3 tables:** preparation, the chosen topic will be developed, in written and graphic form integrating the critical analysis in each page (min. 500 characters, max. 1000 characters for each table) using 10-15 tables with the images and compositions of images related to the selected works, accompanied by the necessary captions. **Each table must show the course name (studio - or programme), the paper subject, the professor(s), and the working group members.** These captions may be accompanied by original graphics (diagrams, graphs, etc.) which link the learning experience with the topic discussion. References and cross-references to examples and projects relevant to the topic will be developed through analytical readings and graphic interpretations. Texts and images may be freely composed by the applicant; given the paper type, the iconographic part will be dominant; the tables sequence will be consistent with the table of contents and three to five course and laboratory experiences must be covered
4. **brief conclusion:** a paper (minimum 8,500/maximum 10,000 characters) in which the applicant critically describes the study subject and its state-of-the-art in the chosen thematic field and new knowledge acquired. The *Final paper* must explain the main architectural, design and bibliographic references adopted;
5. **bibliography:** bibliography cited and consulted, webliography and image sources are essential references for the paper assessment. For information on setting Bibliography, see the guidelines published on the web portal of the Architectural Design L programme.

**Thematic Portfolio assessment procedure**

The Board will examine the completeness of the *Thematic Portfolio* according to points 1 to 5. For this purpose, the *Thematic Portfolio* must be uploaded on the University web portal within the deadline indicated in the academic calendar for each degree exam session.

In the five days following the deadline for the submission of the *Thematic Portfolio*, the **Verification Board** members will check the correspondence of the *Thematic Portfolio* with the guidelines contained in these Regulations. Graduation exam registration will be validated if approved. If not approved, gaps will be reported to the applicant, who can adjust the *Thematic portfolio* and reload it on the same portal within five days.

**The Board members will not approve *thematic portfolios* which do not comply with one of the points listed from 1 to 5, and the applicant will not be admitted to the graduation exam.**

For further information on the Thematic Portfolio drafting method and contents, please refer to the list of questions available on the web portal of the Architectural Design L programme.

#### **Art. 2. Final paper language**

The *Final paper* (*Critical essay* or *Thematic portfolio*) will be written in Italian or English, according to the official language of the applicant's study plan. If the paper is written in Italian, the title and the abstract must be also written in English. At the applicant's request the Course Coordinator (for the *Thematic Portfolio*) or the Supervisor (for the *Critical Essay*), the *Final paper* may be translated into a further language of the European Union or, in the case of double degrees or joint degrees, into the languages provided for by the related agreements, but will be discussed in Italian or English.

#### **Art. 3. Final examination registration**

The applicant must register for the Final examination by the deadline, via the University's web portal. Admission to the Final examination is subject to the achievement of the ECTS credits required by the Educational rules - regulations, and the registration validation by the **Verification Board** members (for the *Thematic Portfolio*) or the Supervisor (for the *Critical Essay*).

#### **Art. 4. Final Paper Presentation and discussion during the Final Examination**

The *Final paper* will be publicly presented by the applicant and discussed during the *Final Examination*, in the language in which it was written (Italian or English). The presentation and discussion will take place at the table in front of the Board.

The *Final paper* must be printed on paper in at least two copies to be presented to the Board during the final examination.

Any further written and graphic, modelling, audio-visual or multimedia works relevant to the topic shall be presented at the table, using devices provided by the applicant. The presentation and discussion of each work will last 20 minutes at the most.

#### **Art. 5. Final Examination Assessment**

The score attributable by the Board to the *Final paper* varies from -1 to +8 points, regardless of the type of paper submitted (*Thematic portfolio* or *Critical essay*). The score awarding is based on the paper assessment, the oral presentation and the applicant's answers to the questions posed by the Board members.

#### **Art. 6. Calculation of the graduation score**

Regardless of the type of *Final paper* presented (*Thematic portfolio* or *Critical essay*), the score,

expressed out of 110, is made up of the sum of the average score obtained during the graduating student's career, calculated according to the University criteria, and the score assigned by the Board to the *Final examination*.

**Art 7. Honours**

Honours may be awarded if the **Operational Board** agrees and if the sum of the applicant's career average and the score awarded by the Board is greater than or equal to 111/110, before rounding.

**Art. 8. Degree Examination Board Composition**

The Boards are composed of a minimum of three members, one of whom acts as Chairman and one as Secretary, plus a deputy member, to be called upon if the standing members cannot attend.

For any matters not covered by these Regulations, the provisions of the *final examination Additional Regulations for the L and LM* of the School of Architecture Urban Planning Construction Engineering shall apply.

## **ANNEX 1 GUIDELINES FOR EDITING THE REFERENCES INCLUDED IN YOUR FINAL WORK**

### **Notes**

It is requested that students use “endnotes,” numbered in order of appearance and listed individually at the end of their critical text. Please use the guidelines of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS) citation style for endnotes and Bibliography. More information available at: <[https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)>.

### **Bibliography**

It is recommended that you use the original language first edition of the volumes included in the Bibliography. Only include the edition number if the volume included is not the first edition. If the volume has been translated, please use the name of the translator and the translated title as in the following guidelines.

### **Volume**

#### **One author**

Doniger, Wendy. *Splitting the Difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

#### **Two authors**

Cowlshaw, Guy and Dunbar, Robin. *Primate Conservation Biology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

#### **Three or more authors**

Pearce, Susan et al. *Charles Robert Cockerell in the Mediterranean. Letters and Travels, 1810-1817*. Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2017.

#### **Editor, translator, or compiler instead of author**

Lattimore, Richmond (ed.). *The Iliad of Homer*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951.

#### **Chapter or other part of a volume**

Wiese, Andrew. “The House I Live In’: Race, Class, and African American Suburban Dreams in the Postwar United States.” In Kruse, Kevin M. and Sgrue, Thomas J. (eds.). *The New Suburban History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006, 101–2.

#### **Translated volume**

Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Translated by James Strachey. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976.

### **Journal article**

#### **Article in a print journal**

Smith, John Maynard. “The Origin of Altruism.” In *Nature* 393 (1998), 639.

#### **Article in an online journal**

Irace, Fulvio. “Fascism in Ruins.” In *Domus* 659, no. 3 (1985). Accessed November 14, 2019. <<https://www.domusweb.it/en/architecture/2010/04/29/fascism-in-ruins.html>>.

### **Other sources**

#### **Thesis or dissertation**

Steiner, Hadas A. “Bathrooms, Bubbles and Systems: Archigram and the Landscapes of Transience.” PhD dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1993.

#### **Sitography**

If the website does not list a date of publication of online content, please include the date on which you have accessed the content.

#### **Website content**

Atlas of Places. “Atelier Peter Zumthor & Partner AG. Neues Atelier 2011-2016.” Accessed November 1, 2019. <<https://www.atlasofplaces.com/architecture/neues-atelier>>.

Schuler, Timothy A. “The Middle of Everywhere.” In *Places Journal*, November 2019. <<https://doi.org/10.22269/191112>>.

#### **Image sources**

Include a caption for each image you cite and insert it below or alongside the image. Number the images you have used and include a List of Figures at the end of your Bibliography as a separate section, including the following: image number; caption; image source. Please use the same referencing style as in the Bibliography when citing your image sources.

## **ANNEX 2    FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Question 01 | The thematic portfolio - is it essential to follow the instructions given in the regulations in full?**

Respecting these rules is fundamental and indispensable for admission to the graduation exam. The portfolio will be formally checked by the **Verification Board** to guarantee the presence of all the parts required, their completeness and consistency with the regulatory requirements (organisation, structure, features and length of the parts).

### **Question 02 | The thematic portfolio - what is meant by an in-depth study of an architectural theme?**

Preparing the portfolio is when a student independently reviews their study plan, measuring the critical capacity developed and the skills acquired. The architectural theme chosen as the portfolio subject will consist of reviewing specific experiences covering one or more fundamental issues during studies. These are a relevant focus on the disciplinary complexity around architecture or significant topical matters. The portfolio should reflect how the student wishes to describe the issue around which to spend their profile as a young graduate.

### **Question 03 | The thematic portfolio - how is it possible to authentically re-present the projects developed during the three years?**

The projects and experiences selected should be presented, even partially and critically, to support an original analysis, building a link between experiments, subjects and disciplinary aspects involved. This choice is linked to a review and summarising process involved in closing an experience and shows the level of maturity and critical capacity achieved. However, the case studies should not be discussed in the same way and for the themes addressed in the curricular course in which they were previously developed and assessed.

### **Question 04 | The thematic portfolio - what aspects will the Degree Examination Board consider when formulating an assessment of the chosen architectural theme?**

The Board will evaluate the portfolio contents and the oral presentation. It will focus on the coherence of the arguments, language abilities, ability to make appropriate connections between the disciplines, thematic relevance of the design case studies, critical framework and the solidity and mastery of the Bibliography. The specific contents and the quality or critical issues of the laboratory projects or results of the other experiences will not be considered under assessment, as they have been assessed within each curricular course.

### **Question 05 | The thematic portfolio - do style and graphic care have any weight in the assessment?**

Le Corbusier described architecture as the typographic art of newspapers, magazines and books and spent considerable energy on the design and graphic care of his publications. This fact reiterates the importance of graphic design and complete care in one's work which helps to underline, in a precise and coherent manner, the maturity achieved at the end of three years. The Board will take these aspects into account, linking them to the depth of reflection and the level of critical capacity achieved.

### **Question 06 | The thematic portfolio - is it correct to provide a detailed explanation of the theme, the objectives and the results achieved regarding each experience selected from among the course and laboratory production?**

A detailed explanation of the projects presented in the portfolio is not required. It is not helpful unless it is formulated in close relation to the architectural theme taken as the central point of the portfolio argumentation. It is unnecessary to recount what has been done, and how and its results. Instead, it is essential to systematise themes, individual objectives and results, or review and criticise one's own work against the portfolio central theme.

### **Question 07 | The thematic portfolio - is it possible to include additional graphic material to what was developed in the courses and laboratories?**

The inclusion of original material in the thematic portfolio is one of the objectives set out in the regulations and is a practice to be encouraged if these works enrich the critical discourse addressed and make the adopted interpretative methods, thematic connections and their relationship with the project clearer. In preparing the portfolio, it could be helpful to reconsider works that have been part of the project not strictly linked to the official course deliverables.

**Question 08 | The thematic portfolio - what does it mean to structure the table of contents as a summary?**

By asking for the table of contents to be structured as a summary, it is intended that the section title, which comprises the thematic portfolio, is followed by a brief illustration of the general topic contents.

Ex:

Chap. 04 - Table of contents

The chapter deals with constructing the table of contents as a summary within the detailed explanation of the rules for preparing the thematic portfolio for the L in architectural design

**Question 09 | The thematic portfolio - is it necessary to list the course title, the professors' name and the working group composition for each experience presented?**

This is mandatory, like the other regulatory requirements. This information is essential to guide the Board work. Mentioning the working group is essential as a matter of fairness and responsibility towards colleagues who are the project co-authors.

**Question 10 | What is meant by “state of the art” in the chosen thematic field?**

This means the need to make a concise summary of what has been formulated for the chosen topic. Such a summary is normally drawn up in close connection with a bibliography, which should be cited, according to the style provided, to support one's arguments. A good reconstruction of state of the art makes it possible to demonstrate awareness of the subject and adequate mastery of the basic bibliography.