1. Content and purpose
A master’s thesis consists of a written part followed by an oral examination. The written part of the master’s thesis can have two different formats:

1) It can consist of a coherent text.
2) It can consist of a general introduction into the theme and the methodology of the topic of the thesis and a manuscript for a scientific article. The article manuscript must be made preparation for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. The main supervisor of the thesis cannot be co-author of the article. The student must be the first author of the manuscript and the role of the co-authors needs to be declared.

Within the framework of the Master’s thesis, the student must demonstrate the ability to constructively, critically, and independently formulate, discuss and communicate issues at stake, taking into account that the latter demands the integration of empirical data, theory, and methods of public health science.
2. Requirements and recommendations
A minimum requirement for registration is that the student, or students, has, or have, compiled at least 60 ECTS-points on the master level. The Master’s thesis must be completed during the final year of the programme.

3. Regulations concerning groups
The Master’s thesis may be composed individually or by two students together.

A master thesis written by two students is evaluated on the basis of the contribution of each individual student. In order to identify the individual contribution, a page specifying which part of the master thesis the student is responsible for, must be included in the paper directly after the front page. This shall secure that the evaluation is done individually.

However, the introduction, discussion and conclusion may be written jointly.

4. Choice of subject
The subject of the project must be connected with one or several of the modules that comprise the Master of Science in Public Health programme at the University of Southern Denmark and must be founded in the main specialisation selected by the student.

Students are advised to start defining a topic for their master’s thesis and getting in contact with a potential supervisor in the beginning of their 3rd semester.

5. Supervision
Main supervisors must be employed at the University of Southern Denmark.

Main supervisors must have a Ph.D. or documented research experience of at least 4 years. Students may also be supervised by co-supervisors either from SDU or externally. However, cosupervisors’ supervision is done on a voluntary basis.

Students are allocated 10 hours of supervision by the main supervisor in connection with individual theses. However, in connection with group theses, the collective number of supervision hours is 15. This is inclusive of preparation of the supervisor, but exclusive of evaluation and examination. As a principal rule, supervision can only be commenced during the third semester of the Master’s programme at the earliest. Supervision provided before registration of the thesis is part of the 10 (or 15 in case of a group thesis) hours of supervision provided.

6. Master’s thesis seminar
In addition to the individual supervision, students are expected to participate in the Master’s thesis seminar that is conducted as a series of lectures (with the possibility of online participation) during the 3rd semester and mainly in the period from November to January. The main purpose of the Master’s thesis seminar is to support students in developing a problem formulation for their thesis and to decide on an appropriate methodological approach for answering it.

7. Master’s thesis contract, supplementary form and synopsis
Please note that the dates mentioned apply to students who write their thesis in the Spring semester.
The Master’s thesis contract must be approved by the supervisor and the head of studies before the end of the 3rd semester of the Master programme, which would be January 31st and before students start writing their master theses. This date is mandatory irrespective any pending examinations.

The student’s master thesis contract must be completed by filling in an electronic contract. In addition, a supplementary form indicating the master thesis method and a supervision schedule must be attached to the electronic contract together with the synopsis as one PDF-document. The link to the electronic contract and the supplementary form can be found on the website: (https://mitsdu.dk/en/mit_studie/kandidat/folkesundhedsvidenskab_kandidat/undervisning_og_ekskerenspeciale)

A synopsis concerning the issue at stake must be elaborated. This synopsis must be approved by the main supervisor and must – in general terms – discuss the field of focus, purpose and potential hypotheses of the projected thesis. Moreover, the scientific relevance to public health of the thesis must be described. A brief, substantiated presentation of applicable materials, methods, and theoretical approaches must be presented. The synopsis should have a maximum length of five (5) standard pages.

8. Registration for Master’s thesis
The student must also register for the Master’s thesis through Student Self Service Registration takes place in November and will be announced via e-mail by the office of Registration and Legality.

9. Submission of the Master's thesis
The latest date for submission of the master’s thesis is May 31st, that means four months after registration of the thesis.

The student(s) must upload their thesis in pdf-format on Blackboard. In addition, the student must fill in an electronic library form on the following link: https://blanket.sdu.dk/form/556/submit. The electronic library form ensures that the library has the possibility to lend out your master thesis, if you give it permission to do so.

The oral defence will take place between June 1st and 30th. Time and place for the defence will be announced on blackboard.

10. Re-examination
Theses that are submitted after the deadline will be regarded as absent and the student will have used an examination attempt.

The student must re-write the synopsis and the title must be changed (can be similar to the original title). According to the ministry’s definition the modified synopsis must correspond to a further three months’ work load. The modified synopsis and contract must be submitted no later than 2 weeks after the original deadline and a new three months’ deadline for submission will be fixed.

The new deadline is automatically fixed to three months after the original deadline.
If the Master’s thesis is not submitted within the new deadline, the student will be granted a third attempt according to the same rules that apply to the second attempt.

If the Master’s thesis is not passed (grade ‘00’ or ‘-3), a modified synopsis must be submitted within two weeks after the publication of the assessment. A new deadline for submitting the thesis will be fixed to three months after the publication of the assessment.

11. Important dates and timeframe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month/date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td><strong>Information meeting:</strong> Structure of the thesis, formalities and the writing process, choice of subjects and supervisor (possibility to participate on-line) <strong>Supervisor:</strong> students are recommended to start looking for a supervisor in the beginning of the semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Registration via Student Self Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November-January</td>
<td>Master’s thesis seminar (possibility to attend on-line)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15th</td>
<td>Deadline for completion of electronic contract including synopsis and supplementary form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31st</td>
<td>Deadline for approval of contract, synopsis and supplementary form by the supervisor and head of studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1st-May 31st</td>
<td>Official thesis period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 31st latest by 12:00 noon</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting the thesis via blackboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1st-30th</td>
<td>Oral defense. The thesis must be evaluated before the end of June</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Students who do NOT write their thesis in the Spring semester
The deadlines for students who write their thesis in the Autumn semester are shown below.

Important: there are no information meeting and Master’s Thesis seminar in connection with the Autumn semester. It is the student’s own responsibility to make sure to attend the seminar before the thesis period.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month/date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Registration via Student Self Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 15th</td>
<td>Deadline for completion of electronic contract including synopsis and supplementary form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 31st</td>
<td>Deadline for approval of contract, synopsis and supplementary form by the supervisor and head of studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1st-December 31st</td>
<td>Official thesis period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2nd latest by 12:00 noon</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting the thesis via blackboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 3rd-31st</td>
<td>Oral defense. The thesis must evaluated before the end of January</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. **Form of examination**
The Master’s thesis will be evaluated in a combined examination. The examination comprises the written thesis work together with an oral defence. The oral defence is an individual examination. The student is expected to initially present central issues at stake, together with conclusions (duration approx. 5-10 minutes). After this the student will be examined. The examination is carried out primarily by the main supervisor together with the external examiner. 30 minutes is allocated inclusive of oral presentation and grading for the individual oral defence.

14. **External examiner**
The thesis will be evaluated by an external examiner who will also be present at the oral defence, after which grading will take place in co-operation with the examiner.

15. **Length of thesis**
A Master’s thesis must have a minimum of 40 standard pages and must not exceed 90 standard pages. This number is exclusive of enclosures, the number of which should be limited wherever possible. As for group theses, the minimum number of standard pages must be 60 and the maximum number of standard pages will be extended to 120. If students hand in their thesis jointly, each student must specify clearly who is responsible for each section. However, introduction, discussion and conclusion may be written jointly.

Background material such as databases, interview recordings etc., must be made available if required by the examiner or external censor.
If the master’s thesis is written in Danish, it must be provided with a title and summary in English and if the master’s thesis is written in English, a title and summary in Danish must be provided. The front page of the master thesis must include a Danish as well as an English title. However, for international students the title and summary must be written in English only.

16. Oral defence of the master thesis
As a general rule, all master students must defend their master theses in person at the University of Southern Denmark at the Campus Esbjerg facilities. Exemptions to the rule may apply if there are special circumstances. However, this must be approved by the Academic Study Board of Public Health.

Applications for an exemption must be submitted to the Study Board before the beginning of the thesis period.

17. Assessment
Assessment of the Master’s thesis will be effected by an external examiner, and grading will take place according to the Danish 7-point grading scale (http://fivu.dk/en/education-andinstitutions/thedanish-education-system/grading-system?searchterm=grading%20scale). Grading is based on an overall assessment of the written work and an evaluation of the student’s performance in the oral defence. Individual grades are given. Different grades may thus be given to various group members in connection with group theses and oral defences of these.

In connection with grading, importance is attached to whether the student is able to demonstrate, in writing and orally, independent academic competence and shows intimate knowledge of the theories and methods of analysis that are involved in the elaboration of the field of study.

Furthermore, assessment is made as to whether the student has fulfilled the competency objectives described in the course description for the master’s thesis. The final grading is, first and foremost, based on professional criteria, but the student’s abilities as to written and oral presentation are also assessed.

18. Language
The Master’s thesis and the oral defence of the same may be carried out in English, Danish, Swedish or Norwegian.

19. Exemption
A substantiated application for exemption from the above-mentioned regulations must be submitted to the Public Health Study Board. https://mitsdu.dk/en/mit_studie/kandidat/folkesundhedsvidenskab_kandidat/studienaevn/ansoegnin_gsskemaer

20. Complaints
Complaints must be submitted to the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences. The complaint must be in writing and must be substantiated. The complaint must be submitted not later than two weeks after the announcement of the assessment. https://mitsdu.dk/en/mit_studie/kandidat/folkesundhedsvidenskab_kandidat/undervisning_og_eksmen/eksamensklager