



Universität für Bodenkultur Wien
BOKU University, Vienna

Curriculum

for the Master Programme in

Agricultural and Food Economy

Programme classification no. 066 457

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For legal purposes, only the version of the curriculum that has been published in the official journal (Mitteilungsblatt) is binding and valid - this English translation is for information purposes only.

CONTENTS

§1	QUALIFICATION PROFILE.....	3
§2	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	4
§3	PROGRAMME STRUCTURE.....	4
§4	COMPULSORY COURSES	6
§5	ELECTIVE COURSES.....	6
§6	FREE ELECTIVES.....	9
§7	MASTER’S THESIS.....	9
§8	COMPLETION OF THE MASTER PROGRAMME.....	9
§9	ACADEMIC DEGREE.....	10
§10	EXAMINATION REGULATIONS	10
§11	TRANSITIONAL REGULATIONS	11
§12	EFFECTIVE DATE.....	11

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<p style="text-align: center;">Curriculum of the Master Degree Programme “Agricultural and Food Economy” At the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna</p>

As at October 1st, 2025

§1 QUALIFICATION PROFILE

The Master programme in Agricultural and Food Economy is a degree programme which serves to deepen and extend students' pre-vocational academic education, building on the basis provided by a Bachelor degree programme (§ 51 [2] item 5 of the Universities Act UG 2002, Federal Law Gazette BGBl I no. 81/2009). The programme fulfils the requirements of Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, article 11, letter e.

1a) Knowledge and Personal and Professional Skills

Students of the Master degree programme in Agricultural and Food Economy acquire a sound knowledge in the field of national and international Agricultural and Food Economy which opens up a broad operational area for graduates.

Graduates are able to analyse business-related and social problems in the field of agricultural and food economics with scientific methods and to develop interdisciplinary solutions. They are able to think analytically, critically and systematically. They are equipped with the following key qualifications:

- Professional competences such as the understanding of markets, operational and social processes as well as regional, sectoral and international interdependencies;
- Methodical competences in the application of economic and social-scientific methods for the analysis of operational, regional and global processes and problems;
- Social competences such as team work, communication strategies, leader competences and a sense of responsibility.

Graduates of the Master degree programme Agricultural and Food Economy qualify in two of the four specialisations offered:

- **Business Management**
- **Marketing**
- **Agricultural and Food Policy**
- **Regional Development and Rural Sociology**

1b) Professional Qualifications

Graduates are active in the following occupational fields:

- Management of businesses in the agriculture and food economy (agrarian production, processing and food trade, industrial raw materials and carriers of bio energy as well as services);
- Regional management and rural development;

- Public administration, public and private representation of interests, research and development centres as well as educational and counselling institutions;
- National and international organisations as well as non-governmental organisations.

§2 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Graduates of the following Bachelor programmes in offered by BOKU University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, are eligible for admission with no further requirements:

033 255	Agricultural Sciences
033 227	Environment and Bio-Resources Management
033 298	Viticulture, Enology and Wine Economics
033 602	Equine Sciences

For graduates of thematically related Bachelor programmes completed at other universities in Austria or abroad, mastery of the following learning outcomes is required for admission:

- Basic knowledge in the economic and social sciences
- Basic knowledge in agricultural production

The basic knowledge required in the economic and social sciences includes economics, agricultural and food policy, basics of law and legislation, farm business management, agricultural markets and marketing, accounting, regional planning and rural sociology.

The basic knowledge required in agricultural production includes crop production, animal husbandry and agricultural engineering.

Furthermore, competences in English at a level of B2 (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages by the Council of Europe) are a precondition.

§3 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

3a) Duration, total ECTS Credits, and Structure

(1) The programme consists of courses and other requirements worth a total of 120 ECTS credits. This is equivalent to a duration of four semesters (a total of 3,000 60-minute credit hours). The programme is divided into

Compulsory courses:	27 ECTS credits
Elective courses:	51 ECTS credits
Master's Thesis:	30 ECTS credits
Free electives:	12 ECTS credits
Foreign language-taught courses*):	9 ECTS credits

(2) In the course of the Master programme in Agricultural and Food Economy, two specialisations have to be completed. From each of the chosen specialisations 18 ECTS credit points have to be completed successfully from the field of compulsory courses. From the two chosen specialisations elective courses to an extent of 15 ECTS have to be completed successfully.

(3) Students are required to complete courses, which are related to the field of study, worth a total of 9 ECTS credits taught in a foreign language. These courses can be compulsory courses, elective courses, internships or free electives. Courses taken at international universities abroad are to be credited. General language courses (with the exception of specialised language courses) will not be considered. (General foreign language courses may be credited in the framework of free elective courses.)

(4) Programme Structure

Compulsory courses (27 ECTS credits)			
Elective courses (18 ECTS credits from 2 specialisations, in total 36 ECTS credits and 15 further ECTS credits from the two selected specialisations)			
Business management	Marketing	Agricultural and Food Policy	Regional development and rural sociology
Free elective courses (12 ECTS credits)			
From all courses offered at recognised universities in Austria and abroad			
Master thesis (30 ECTS credits)			

(5) Limited number of participants in courses

For courses with a limited number of participants the head of a Master course of the type UE, SE and PJ belonging to this curriculum (UH 066 457) is authorised to first admit students enrolled in the Master programme; i.e. students enrolled in a Bachelor study programme can only be admitted to the courses if further spaces are left on the course.

The admission of students enrolled in the Master study programme is conducted according to the following order of required courses by the students: compulsory course, elective course, free elective course.

3b) Three-Pillar Principle

The three-pillar principle is one of the central identifying characteristics of both the Bachelor and Master programmes offered at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna. In the Master programmes, the sum of the compulsory and elective courses must be made up of at least

15% technology and engineering

15% natural sciences

15% economic and social sciences, law.

Excluded from the three-pillar principle are the Master's Thesis and the free elective courses.

§4 COMPULSORY COURSES

Used Abbreviations:

ECTS = European Credit Transfer System points

WS = Winter Semester

SS = Summer Semester

Notes:

- 1) In English
- 2) In English and German
- 3) Courses not offered in the academic year 2024/25
- 4) Courses only offered in uneven years (e.g. 2023/24)
- 5) Courses only offered in even years (e.g. 2024/25)

The following compulsory courses worth a total of 27 ECTS credits are required to complete the Master programme in Agricultural and Food Economy:

Compulsory courses	Course type	ECTS credits
Course title		
Field trip agricultural and food economy	EX	1
Master's thesis seminar	SE	2
Farm business management I	VO	3
Farm business management II	VU	3
Agricultural marketing I	VO	3
Agricultural marketing II	VO	3
Reforms and decision making process of common agricultural policy*)	VU	3
Principles of commodity markets and trade policy ¹	VO	3
Rural sociology	VO	3
Agro-Food studies	VO	3

§5 ELECTIVE COURSES

In the course of the Master study programme Agricultural and Food Economy elective courses to an extent of 51 ECTS credit points have to be completed successfully, whereby students have to choose courses marked with *) from two specialisations and successfully complete 18 ECTS credits in each of those (which adds to a total of 36 ECTS credit points). In addition, elective courses to an extent of 15 ECTS from one or both of the chosen specialisations have to be completed successfully. The completed specialisations are stated in the diploma.

5a) Specialisation Business Management

Business Management	Course type	ECTS credits
Course title		
Farm business management - application exercises*)	UE	3
Seminar farm business management*)	SE	3
Business management project*)	PJ	3
Environmental economics at company level*)	VO	3
Valuation and agriculture*)	VO	3
Tax law*)	VU	3
Special methods in farm business management*)	VU	3
Farming resilience and social sustainability*) ¹	PJ	3
Environmental management and environmental information systems for businesses	VO	3
Fiscal science with special consideration of agriculture ⁵	VO	3
Banking and credit systems	VO	3
Business planning	VO	3
Organisational behaviour and gender issues ¹	VU	3
The world food economy	VO	3
Controlling	VO	3

5b) Specialisation Marketing

Marketing	Course type	ECTS credits
Course title		
Food supply chain management*)	VO	3
Total quality management in dietetics*)	VS	3
Agricultural marketing - practical*)	UE	3
Communication and mediaplanning*)	SE	3
Seminar agricultural marketing*)	SE	3
Marketing project - case studies*) ¹	PJ	3
Multi-variant methods in marketing*)	VS	3
Market research in the agricultural and food industry*)	SE	3
Market-oriented innovation processes	VU	3
Global agricultural markets	VO	3
Internationalization strategies	SE	3
Export marketing ³	SE	3
Strategic and systems oriented management	VS	3
Direct marketing	SE	3
Developing and implementing ³	SE	3
E-Business in the agriculture and food value chain ¹	SE	3
Decision support systems ¹	SE	3
Co-operatives ³	SE	3
Global networking ¹	SE	6
Retail marketing	VS	3

5c) Specialisation Agricultural and Food Policy

***) When choosing the specialisation Agricultural and Food Policy, the core seminar must be completed positively.

Agricultural and Food Policy	Course type	ECTS credits
Course title		
Econometrics*)	VO	3
Econometrics - seminar*)	SE	3
Food and agricultural policies in new institutional economics ¹	VO	3
Seminar in agricultural and food policy*)**)	SE	3
Managerial economics*) ¹	VU	3
Agricultural production and policy impact modelling*) ¹	VS	3
Growth, development, trade and environment*) ¹	VO	3
Economic of sustainable land use under global change*)	VO	3
Advanced natural resource economics	VO	3
Valuation methods for natural resources ¹	VO	3
Game theory in environmental and natural resource management ¹	VO	3
Computer simulation in energy and resource economics ¹	VS	3
Mathematical modelling in life sciences	VU	3
Principles of commodity futures markets	VS	3
Markets, prices and industrial organization ^{1,3}	VS	3
Energy economics and policy	VS	3
Psychology of nutrition	VO	2

5d) Specialisation Regional Development and Rural Sociology

Regional Development and Rural Sociology	Course type	ECTS credits
Course title		
Rural development *) ¹	VO	3
Methods and tools of rural development*)	VO	3
Core seminar rural development*)	SE	3
Rural sociology - seminar*)	SE	3
Survey research in the social sciences*)	SE	3
Principles of qualitative approaches in the social sciences*)	VS	3
Globalisation and rural development*) ¹	VO	3
Rural gender studies*)	SE	3
Management of rural development - seminar	SE	3
Nature and landscape conservation economics	VO	3
Introduction to development cooperation ¹	VU	3
Coaching of project managers	SE	3
Agricultural journalism	VS	3
Agricultural law	VO	3

§6 FREE ELECTIVES

Free electives worth a total of 12 ECTS credits are required to complete the Master programme in Agricultural and Food Economics. Free electives may be selected from all courses offered by all recognized universities in Austria and abroad. Free electives are intended to impart knowledge and skills in the student's own academic subject as well as in fields of general interest.

§7 MASTER'S THESIS

A Master's Thesis is a paper on a scientific topic, to be written as part of a Master's degree programme (*For exceptions please see the By Laws of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, part III- Teaching, § 30[9]*). The thesis is worth a total of 30 ECTS credits. With their Master's Thesis, students demonstrate their ability to independently address a scientific topic, both thematically and methodologically (§ 51 [8] UG 2002 BGBl. I no. 81/2009).

The topic of the Master's thesis shall be taken from a subject of the study programme. The Master's thesis is supervised by a person with full teaching authorisation (*venia docendi*) in this subject (exception: § 86 para. 7 of the Constitution of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna). Joint supervision by two persons with full teaching authorisation (*venia docendi*) is permissible if at least one of these two persons represents a subject of the study programme.

The topic of a Master's Thesis shall be chosen in such a way that it is reasonable to expect a student to be able to complete it within six months. Multiple students may jointly address a topic, provided that the performance of individual students can be assessed (§ 81 [2] UG 2002 BGBl. I no. 81/2009).

The Master's Thesis shall be written in German or English. Languages other than German or English are permissible only if approved and confirmed by the thesis supervisor. The thesis defence must be held in German or English regardless of the language of the thesis.

§8 COMPLETION OF THE MASTER PROGRAMME

The Master Programme in Agricultural and Food Economy has been completed when the student has passed all required courses and received a positive grade on the Master's Thesis and defence examination.

§9 ACADEMIC DEGREE

Graduates of the Master Programme in Agricultural and Food Economy are awarded the academic title “Diplom-Ingenieur” (m) or “Diplom-Ingenieurin” (f), abbreviated as “Dipl.-Ing./Dipl.Ing.ⁱⁿ” or “DI/DIⁱⁿ”. The academic title “Dipl.-Ing./Dipl.Ing.ⁱⁿ” or “DI/DIⁱⁿ”, if used, shall precede the bearer’s name (§ 88 [2] UG 2002 BGBl. I no. 81/2009).

§10 EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

(1) The Master Programme in Agricultural and Food Economy has been completed successfully when the following requirements have been met:

- positive completion of compulsory courses worth a total of 27 ECTS credits (§ 4)
- positive completion of elective courses from two specialisations to an extent of 51 ECTS credits in total (18 ECTS credits each from the courses marked with *) and 15 ECTS credits from the two chosen specialisations)
- positive completion of free electives worth a total of 12 ECTS credits (§ 6)
- a positive grade on the Master’s Thesis and the defence examination.

(2) Student evaluation takes the form of course examinations. Course examinations can be either written or oral, as determined by the course instructor, taking the ECTS credit value of the course into account. Any prerequisites for admission to examinations shall be listed in § 4 under the respective course/module.

(3) The choice of examination method shall be based on the type of course: Lectures shall conclude with a written and/or oral examination, if continuous assessment of student performance is not applied. Seminars and project-based courses can be evaluated based on independently written papers, length and contents of which are determined by the course instructor. For all other course types, the examination type is at the instructor’s discretion.

(4) The topic of the Master’s Thesis shall be selected from one of the subjects of the Master programme. The student must inform the dean in writing prior to the commencement of the work on the Master’s Thesis. Thereby, the student has to state the Master’s Thesis topic as well as the name of the supervisor of the Master’s Thesis.

(5) The completed Master’s Thesis which has been assessed positively by the supervisor shall be publicly presented by the student and defended in the form of an academic discussion (defence examination) after successful completion of all courses. The committee shall consist of a committee chair and two additional university lecturers with a *venia docendi* or equivalent qualification. The student’s total performance (Thesis and defence examination) will be assigned a comprehensive grade. Both thesis and defence examination must receive a passing grade for the student to complete the programme. The written evaluations stating the grounds for the thesis grade and the defence examination grade are included in calculating the comprehensive grade and are documented separately.

The comprehensive grade is calculated as follows:

- Master’s Thesis: 70%
- Defence examination (incl. presentation): 30%

(6) A comprehensive evaluation of the student’s performance on the entire programme shall be assigned. A comprehensive evaluation of “passed” means that each individual component of the programme was completed successfully. If individual components of the programme have not been successfully completed, the comprehensive evaluation is “failed”. A comprehensive evaluation of “passed with honours” is granted if the student has received no grade worse than a 2 (good) on all individual components, and if at least 50% of the individual components were graded with 1 (excellent).

§11 TRANSITIONAL REGULATIONS

Students who have not completed the formerly effective Master’s curriculum in Agricultural and Food Economy (UH 066 457) when this new Master’s curriculum comes into force are transferred to the currently valid one.

For students in the new Master’s curriculum already positively completed exams on courses from the old Master’s curriculum are acknowledged based on the equivalence list for the respective study programme.

§12 EFFECTIVE DATE

This curriculum shall take effect on October 1st, 2025.

ANNEX TYPES OF COURSES

The following types of courses are available:

Lecture (VO)

Lectures are courses in which certain areas of a subject and the methods used in this area are imparted through didactic presentation.

Lab Course (UE)

Lab courses are courses in which students are instructed in specific practical skills, based on theoretical knowledge.

Practical Course (PR)

Practical courses are classes in which students deal with specific topics independently, based on previously acquired theoretical and practical knowledge.

Compulsory Internship Seminar (PP)

The compulsory internship seminar is a class in which students deal independently with topics related to their internship placements, based on previously acquired theoretical and practical knowledge.

Seminar (SE)

Seminars are courses in which students are required to work independently on the respective subject, deepen their knowledge of the topic and discuss relevant issues.

Field Trips (EX)

Field trips are courses in which students have the opportunity to experience relevant fields of study in real-life practical application, to deepen their knowledge of the respective subject. Field trips can be taken to destinations both in Austria and abroad.

Master's Thesis Seminar (MA)

Master's Thesis seminars are seminars intended to provide students with academic support during the thesis writing process.

Mixed-Type Courses

Mixed-type courses combine the characteristics of the courses named above (with the exception of project-type courses). Integration of different course-type elements improved the didactic value of these courses.

Project Course (PJ)

Project courses are characterized by problem-based learning. Under instruction, students work (preferably in small groups) on case studies, applying appropriate scientific methods.

Lecture /Seminar (VS)

Lecture/Lab (VU)

Lecture/Field Trip (VX)

Seminar/Field Trip (SX)

Lab/Seminar (US)

Lab/Field Trip (UX)