



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

FIRST-LEVEL UNIVERSITY ONLINE MASTER PROGRAM in “Electoral Policy and Administration”

THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023

**in partnership with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and
cooperation with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International
IDEA)**

Art. 1 – Start up

The VII edition of the first-level University Master Program in “Electoral Policy and Administration” (MEPA), is hereby activated pursuant to art. 3 of the Statute of the Sant’Anna School of Advanced Studies.

The Master Program will be held online, with an optional residential phase in Pisa of up to 3 weeks (usually during the months of May and November), provided that there is a minimum of 10 students attending the residential phase, which will be delivered in English.

The Master program is available in English, French, Portuguese, and Arabic.

Instead of enrolling in the Master Program, it is also possible to enrol only in a limited number of individual modules. All the Modules are available in English, French, Portuguese, and Arabic.

Art. 2 – Academic Credits (ECTS)

A maximum of 67 academic credits calculated according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS credits) will be awarded upon successful completion of the Master Program, subordinate to the evaluation of results and fulfilment and compliance of the Rules and Regulations of the Master in Electoral Policy and Administration.). More specifically:

- 47 ECTS credits will be awarded upon successful completion of the online compulsory and optional modules (article 12) and fulfilment and compliance with the Master Program Procedural Guidelines for Students;
- 15 ECTS credits will be awarded upon positive evaluation and public defence of the Master Thesis (min 15.000 max 20.000 words). Candidates who choose to undertake an internship and successfully complete it will present a shorter Master Thesis (min 7.000 max 10.000 words);
- 5 extra ECTS credits may be obtained by attending the optional residential phase or by successfully completing additional optional modules.

A minimum of 62 ECTS credits is necessary to earn the First Level Master’s Diploma.

The MEPA syllabus comprises 12 compulsory modules and 12 optional modules. 2 to 4 ECTS credits will be awarded for each module upon completion of the said module (depending on the complexity of the module). MEPA participants should complete all the assigned compulsory modules and choose a series of optional courses based on their preferences. The credits corresponding to all the selected optional modules should reach a maximum of 12 ECTS credits. ECTS credits are issued upon completing an individual module after a positive evaluation of the intermediate and final learning assessment tests and upon compliance with the obligations underlined in the Master Program Procedural Guidelines for Students.



Art. 3 – MEPA objectives

The Master in Electoral Policy and Administration is designed to provide comprehensive, advanced education on electoral processes to current or prospective election professionals through an exhaustive overview of all the phases. It also aims to offer the knowledge and skills necessary to serve as election administrators, members of Election Management Bodies, or electoral observers.

The Master Program

- 1) responds to the global, structural demand for qualified electoral administrators.
- 2) contributes to reducing the gender gap in electoral administration by strengthening women's role in this sector, especially in senior positions.

Art. 4 - Teaching and internal structure

The lectures of the Master Program adopt an intercultural perspective and a cross-disciplinary approach. Teaching methodologies rely on analysing real situations and concrete examples and include several drills, simulations and role-plays.

The educational syllabus for the Master Program includes:

1. An online component – 9 months for a total of 470 hours (excluding individual study hours)
2. An optional internship – min. 300 hours
3. The drafting and public defence of the thesis – 3 months
4. An optional residential component – max. 2 weeks to be held in autumn or spring at the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies' premises. The residential component is only organised if a minimum of 10 participants will attend it. It will be delivered in English.

Art. 5 – Places Available and Admission requirements

There is no limit to the number of students that can enrol in the Master Program or the individual modules.

An application for admission may be submitted by candidates that:

- a) have obtained at least a three-year degree (Bachelor's Degree), a Masters' Degree (per the Ministerial Decree (D.M.) No. 270/2004), a Masters' Degree of 4 years (per the Ministerial Decree No. 509/1999), a 5-years Degree, based on the old university system, or an equivalent academic qualification, obtained by the expiry date of this call for applications, at an Italian or foreign University.
- b) have gained some working/volunteering/educational experience in electoral policy and administration or related areas.

Those attending the English version of the Master must have a good knowledge of English (at least a B2 level based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

For more details on the latter, kindly use the following link:

<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168045bb52>).

Those that selected other linguistic versions must similarly have a good knowledge of the said language (at least a B2).

An application for admission may also be submitted by undergraduate students who have concluded all the progress examinations before the start of the Master Program and expect to obtain the academic qualification during the academic year that precedes the onset of the said program. The Sant'Anna School may decide, at any time, to exclude a candidate with a motivated decision if the prescribed requirements have not been met.



Art. 6 – Entry ECTS

Upon specific request from interested candidates, the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies can recognise up to a maximum of 12 university ECTS credits on the basis of the comparability and adequacy of the activities already undertaken in respect to the knowledge, skills, and competencies offered by the MEPA Program. The recognition of ECTS may be asked only by providing the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies with a Diploma Supplement (no other certificates or course information will be taken into account).

Art. 7 - Application procedures Application procedure for the entire Master Program

Candidates interested in being admitted to the Full Master Program, should:

1. Go to the website www.mastermepa.santannapisa.it;
2. Download the file called "MEPA Master Application" and fill it electronically;
3. Follow the instructions based on the provided tutorial video (link available on the website) and register online;
4. Upload the Master application form during the online application procedure;
5. Under penalty of exclusion, candidates must include in the application all the requested information and upload the following mandatory documents:
 - a copy of their passport or identification card;
 - a copy of ALL the degrees mentioned in their application (e.g. BA, MA, PhD etc.);
 - official transcripts of the bachelor's degree (it must be an official document from the university that specifies the grades of all the exams and the final grade obtained. Screenshots of webpages will not be accepted)
 - a copy of the last payslip (if the candidate applying for a scholarship is working).

Incomplete applications will not be taken into consideration.

Application procedure for the Individual modules

Candidates interested in attending individual modules should:

1. Go to the website www.mastermepa.santannapisa.it;
2. Download the file called "Individual Modules Application" and fill it out electronically;
3. Send the file to mepa@santannapisa.it

Incomplete applications will not be taken into consideration.

Falsification of documents and fraudulent statements are punished according to the Italian Criminal Code and the special applicable laws (Art. 75 and Art. 76 of Presidential Decree (D.P.R. No. 445/2000)). The Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies may monitor the truthfulness of the statements provided and the documents submitted, at any time, during the procedure, even after the program has already started, and may request that original documents be submitted. In the case of false statements, the Institution may decide, at any time, to exclude candidates from the selection procedure or the Master Program, based on a motivated decision issued by the Rector, without prejudice to the resulting criminal liability.



Art. 8 - Application deadline

The application procedure for the Master program is always open. However, the program has two intakes per year: one in October (on the 11th of October 2022) and one in April (on the 12th of April 2023). To be considered for the Autumn intake, candidates must apply before the 21st of September 2022. Whereas for the Spring intake, candidates must apply no later than the 22nd of March 2023. Late applications will be considered for the next round. The admitted candidates will be contacted shortly after the expiration of the relevant deadline.

The application procedure for individual modules is always open. Students can apply anytime and will be able to start attending the modules soon after the payment of the tuition fees.

Art. 9 - Selection of candidates Selection procedure for the Master

The selection of candidates for the entire Master Program is made by a special committee appointed by the Rector of the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies. The committee attributes each candidate a score based on the assessment of their educational qualifications and, only if deemed relevant by the Committee, based on a telephone/Skype interview.

The Committee will select the admitted applicants by awarding each candidate a score of up to 100 points upon the evaluation of their qualifications based on the following criteria:

- Academic curriculum (average of grades received in exams, marks of the graduation exam if applicable, consistency of the curriculum and coherence of the final thesis with the contents of the Master Program) - up to 24 points;
- Motivational letter - up to 35 points;
- Relevant training in the sector - up to 16 points;
- Relevant professional experience/voluntary activities in related fields - up to 16 points;
- Language skills (except English for those attending the English version; Arabic for those attending the Arabic version; Portuguese for those attending the Portuguese version, and French for those attending the French version) - up to 7 points;
- Relevant publications - up to 2 points.

The selection committee reserves the right to request additional documents/information.

Candidates who obtained an overall assessment equal to or greater than 60 points out of 100 will be admitted to the Master Program. Due to the high number of applications, only admitted candidates will be notified via email.

The undergraduates referred to in art. 4, who are considered suitable, are admitted "subject to reserve requirements" until the degree has been obtained, within the periods indicated in the following article.

Selection procedure for the Individual modules.

There is no selection procedure for applicants interested in attending individual modules.



Art. 10 - Tuition fee and Scholarship

Tuition fees and scholarships for the entire Master

The tuition fees for the entire Program are 10.000,00 euros: payable in three instalments of, respectively: 3.500,00 euros, 3.500,00 euros and 3.000,00 euros. The first instalment shall be paid at the enrolment. The tuition fees cover the following components: academic and tutorial costs, didactic materials, access to university services such as the e-library, and administrative expenses. The program does not cover travel expenses, visas, and accommodation in Pisa for the optional residential phase and any other related costs.

If the attendance of the Master Program is interrupted, successful candidates have an obligation to pay the enrolment fee up to the date when the attendance of the Master Program is interrupted.

To foster diversity within the program, the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies and its partners may award partial fee reductions to talented students in need of financial aid based on merit, distinctive competencies, and academic excellence. Every selection round, the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies and its partners may offer up to three fee reductions of 30% to Master candidates coming from Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Admitted candidates can email the program director if they deem that they are in serious need of a financial reduction within one week of receiving the acceptance email. Fee reductions are subjected to the availability of funds. Female candidates will have precedence in the case of *ex aequo*.

The Fischer Family Scholarship is also an annual scholarship award granted to one student each intake. The latter is an award of \$5,000 granted to one student that has been admitted in the selection procedure corresponding to the Master in Electoral Policy and Administration (MEPA) program at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna. This scholarship covers part of the tuition costs of the Master program. The candidate should be professionally engaged / or intends to be engaged in some aspect of electoral conflict prevention and electoral security. These candidates could thus be staff working in electoral security departments at Electoral Management Bodies, individuals working for organisations or consultants with a conflict prevention and mediation focus. In applying for the scholarship, the student will be asked to provide a cover letter addressed to Jeff Fischer (In English). In the latter, they should explain how they are engaged in electoral security and where they see their career path taking them in this field. The scholarship applications will be reviewed and awarded by Jeff Fischer. The award will be made based on the applicant's background and professional intentions concerning electoral security combined with their future professional plans. The successful awardee will be the one who presents the most compelling professional case.

Tuition fees and reductions for individual modules

The fee for each MEPA module is based on the corresponding credits assigned to said module (depending on the complexity of the module). 700,00 euros for 2 credits modules, 850,00 euros for 3 credits modules and 950,00 euros for 4 credits modules. Upon enrolling in multiple modules, a 10% discount is offered on the fees of the second and third modules, and a 15% discount is applied on the fees of the fourth, fifth and sixth modules. The order of the modules whilst calculating the reduction will consider the least expensive modules first and the most expensive modules last to benefit the student. Special fee reductions are considered if an institute or organisation enrolls a certain number of employees/participants simultaneously in the Master Program or in the individual modules.

Pursuant to art. 9, paragraph 2 of Legislative Decree No. 68/2012 the Institution grants total exemption regarding payment of the enrolment fee in the case of students with disabilities, acknowledged to be equal to or greater than sixty-six percent, in accordance with art. 3, paragraph 1 of Law No. 104/1992, and applies a 1.5% reduction for every percentage point of disability in the case of students who have been acknowledged a disability of less than sixty-six percent. A student who asks for said exemption or reduction must attach an appropriate certificate to the online application.



Art. 11 - Acceptance procedure and method of payment

Applicants admitted to the Master Program shall confirm their acceptance by replying, within one year, to the communication of admission they received. To start the master program, they shall also send:

- A copy of the payment of the first instalment of the tuition fee (3.500,00 Euro).

If the attendance to the Master Program is waived before the start of the Program, then successful candidates forfeit the right to be refunded the amount paid as the 1st instalment or as a deposit. Students admitted to attending one or more individual modules must pay the fee for each module no later than one year after receiving the notification of Admission and at least 15 days before starting the respective modules.

The payment can be performed by bank transfer to Banca Intesa San Paolo, branch of Pisa, Corso Italia 2 - 56125 Pisa- IBAN IT88S0306914010100000046021, BIC/SWIFT BCITITMM, BENEFICIARY Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna ", description of payment: "No. of instalment (e.g.: 1st instalment), MEPA 2022/2023, student's full name".

Art.12 - Didactic Phase

The didactic phase will consist of twenty-four modules, including twelve compulsory modules and twelve optional modules, as listed below:

- 1 – Elections and Voting as Instruments of Governance (2 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 2 – Electoral Legal and Regulatory Frameworks (3 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 3 – Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) (3 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 4 – Electoral Systems and Managing Representation (3 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 5 – Understanding and Managing Boundary Delimitation (3 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 6 – Political Parties, Campaigns, and Political Finance (3 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 7 – Electoral Planning and Budgeting (3 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 8 – Electoral Logistics (4 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 9 – Voter Registration and Identification Systems (3 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 10 – Electoral Operations (3 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 11 – Gender and Elections (2 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 12 – Marginalized Electorates and Special Voting Programs (2 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 13 – Managing Elections in Public Emergency Situations (3 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 14 – Election Integrity in the Digital Age (3 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 15 – Civic and Voter Education (2 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 16 – Media and Elections (2 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 17 – Electoral Integrity and Malpractice (4 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 18 – Managing Electoral Security, Electoral Violence, and Preventing Election-related conflicts (2 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 19 – Elections in Fragile / Post Conflict contexts (3 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 20 – Electoral Justice Systems (3 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 21 – Electoral Observation, Evaluation, and Validation (3 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 22 – Policy Advice and Electoral Reform (3 ECTS credits) – Compulsory Module
- 23 – Direct Democracy (2 ECTS credits) – Optional Module
- 24 – Leadership in Electoral Administration (2 ECTS credits) – Optional Module

Art. 13 – Rights and obligations

The rights and obligations of the students and the interactions between the said students, the staff and the school's facilities are regulated by the Master Program Procedural Guidelines for Students, the Ethical Code and by the general rules established by the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies. Failure to respect the regulations might entail a disciplinary sanction according to the gravity of the violation.



Art. 14 – Final thesis and timing for the conclusion of the MEPA

After having successfully acquired 47 ECTS credits through the assigned compulsory modules and the selected optional modules, participants have an obligation to submit a Master thesis targeting one of the topics covered during the Master Program. The thesis will be discussed publicly and assessed by a committee appointed by the Rector of the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies.

Students who attend the Master in Arabic have to submit a copy of their thesis in English, and they are warmly invited to discuss the thesis in English if their language skills allow it. Students who attend the Master in French can submit a copy of their thesis in French and discuss it in French (unless they prefer to discuss it in English). Students who attend the Master in Portuguese have to submit a copy of their thesis in English, and they are warmly invited to discuss the thesis in English if their language skills allow it. The thesis may be discussed in person during the optional residential phase or via online programs, such as Skype, WebEx or Zoom. The thesis is to be registered in digital format, in the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies' online theses archive, in compliance with the timing indicated in the Master Program Procedural Guidelines for Students.

Art. 15 - Prohibition of plagiarism

All works submitted as part of the requirements for any examination of the Master program must be expressed in the students' own words and incorporate their ideas and judgements. Plagiarism, which is the presentation of another person's thoughts or words as a student's own, must be avoided and will be duly punished. Particular care should be taken in coursework, essays, and thesis. The Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies reserves the right to use plagiarism detection software. If caught with an act of plagiarism, students can be expelled from the program.

Art. 16 - Educational Qualification issued

Educational qualifications issued for the completion of the Master

At the end of the Master Program, the Institution issues a first-level University Master's Diploma pursuant to art. 3 of Ministerial Decree No. 270/2004, as subsequently amended, to students who: attended the entire training syllabus regularly; passed the final exams for all the compulsory and selected optional modules, in accordance with the requirements envisaged in the Disciplinary Regulations; successfully discussed the Master thesis; and are up to date with the payment of the enrolment fees.

Educational qualifications issued for the attendance of individual modules

Students admitted to individual modules, who have regularly settled the tuition costs and have passed all the required examinations, will receive a Certificate of Completion and the respective ECTS credits.

Art. 17 Technical Requirements (Hardware and Software)

The Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies and its partners recommend the following as a minimum in hardware and software to be able to access the "desktop/laptop" version of the MEPA e-learning platform:

- Platform: Windows 95, 98, 2000, NT, ME, XP or superior; MacOS 9 or MacOS X; Linux
- Hardware: 64 MB of RAM, 1 GB of free disk space
- Software:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader
 - Adobe Flash Player
 - Microsoft Office (Windows or Apple version) or Open Office
- Browser:
 - Google Chrome 30.0
 - Safari 6



- Internet Explorer 9 (IE 10 required for drag and drop of files from outside the browser into Moodle)
- It works better with Firefox 25.0
- Note that JavaScript, Cookies and Popups must be enabled
- Modem: 56 K

For the mobile version, students are requested to install the Moodle Mobile app and the platform can be accessed both with Android and iOS.

For technical problems related to the MEPA platform, students can contact UNITAR's technical helpdesk at mepa@unitar.org. Also, a virtual office is available once a week for any other issues and requests for clarifications.

In case of participation in the virtual office and other synchronous activities, or in case the student decides to discuss his/her final thesis via online programs, a webcam and a microphone are required. The student will also be asked to download video conferencing software such as "Skype", WebEx or Zoom.

Art. 18 – Responsible person for the competitive entrance examination procedure, personal data processing and prevention of corruption measures

The Responsible of the U.O. Alta Formazione of the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies - Via Maffi, No. 27, 56127 Pisa - tel. 050/882645 - fax 050/882633 - e-mail: altaformazione@santannapisa.it, is the person responsible for the competitive entrance examination procedure referred to in this call for applications pursuant to the provisions of art. 5 of Law No. 241/90.

The Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies complies with the laws and regulations relating to the prevention of corruption (Law No. 190/2012) by applying the measures identified in the "Three-year prevention of corruption plan" published in the "Transparent Administration" section of the institutional website at the following address: www.santannapisa.it.

Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies (hereinafter the "School"), represented by the Rector, as Data Controller, under the article 13 of the EU General Data Protection Regulation n. 679/2016 and under the Italian Legislative Decree 30 June 2003 ("Privacy Code regarding the protection of personal data") with regard to the processing of personal data, and on his behalf, Giovanna Bottai, giovanna.bottai@santannapisa.it. Please read the privacy statement available at the following address: <https://www.santannapisa.it/it/alta-formazione-info>.