

# Procedure for the Semester and Master's Thesis

In the module Project Work and Practical Skills the students need to acquire at least 12 credit points. These credit points can be gained either through a semester thesis or through specially designated practical courses, or through a combination of both. The semester thesis must take place under the supervision of one of the two institutions, the University of Basel or the University of Applied Sciences FHNW.

In the last semester, for all full-time student in the 4<sup>th</sup> semester, the master program culminates in a master's thesis with 25 credit points, accompanied by a master's examination with 5 credit points. The master's thesis must take place again under supervision of one of the 2 organizing institutions, the University of Basel or the University of Applied Sciences FHNW.

It is possible to carry out the semester or master's thesis at an external institution or in industry. The administrative efforts will be increased as more details need to be clarified and regulated before. In any case, external projects always need the support of a lecturer of the Master Program to ensure that the quality standards of the Master Program and the formal conditions are met.

Please see below the individual steps for a successful semester or master's thesis:

## How do I find a master- or semester thesis project?

The students can select a project offered in one of the databases of the institutions:

- [Link Projects University of Basel](#)
- [Link Projects FHNW](#) (VPN needed)

Alternatively, students may also proactively contact a potential semester /master thesis supervisor of interest directly.

## How long is a semester thesis and when do I start it?

The semester thesis starts upon agreement, usually in the third semester (1<sup>st</sup> of August until 31<sup>st</sup> of January); it can be carried out in part-time in parallel to semester courses (week 38 until week 51) or in approx. 8-9 weeks in full-time before or after the course period. A semester thesis accounts for 6, 9, or 12 credit points, depending on the expected workload. This is specified for each thesis separately in the thesis proposal/learning contract in advance. If you prefer a different workload for a particular semester thesis project, do not hesitate and discuss options with the supervisor.

A semester thesis can lead to a subsequent master's thesis.

## How long is a master's thesis and when do I start it?

The master's thesis usually starts in the 4<sup>th</sup> semester (1<sup>st</sup> of February) and lasts for 6 months (until 31<sup>st</sup> of July). The timing is not fixed and can be adapted to the progress of the student or the availability of the master's thesis project.

## How do I set up the master's / semester thesis project

Before the start of each semester thesis/master's thesis, an agreement must be set up between the student and the supervisor. This agreement contains relevant details such as thesis start and end

date, thesis content, goals and deliverables. Each agreement needs to be approved by a co-head of the teaching commission before the start of the project.

At the **University of Basel** for a semester thesis a learning contract must be prepared with the supervisor in the [services](#) account of the student. For a master's thesis each student fills in this [contract](#) together with the supervisor.

At the **FHNW** for semester thesis and master's thesis a contract needs to be set up between the student and supervisor. A up to date transcript of records proving the achieved credit points has to be submitted together with the agreement to the co-head of the teaching commission for approval.

#### **IMPORTANT:**

Students can only start the semester thesis when 48 credit points are achieved. (**§ 9.**)

Students can only start the master's thesis when all basic courses are completed, and 78 credit points are achieved. (**§ 21.**).

## **How do I submit my semester / master's thesis?**

At the end of the defined semester/master's thesis project the student submits an electronic copy of the semester/master thesis to the supervisor.

The submission process is depends on the institution of the supervisor:

At the **University Basel**, the semester's thesis is submitted to the supervisor only. The format of the report is aligned with the supervisor.

For the master's thesis the first page needs to include all the elements as show in the [title page file](#). Within the beginning of your master's thesis report a signed statement on your [scientific integrity](#) needs to be included. An electronic copy of the master's thesis (MA) as a pdf file shall be sent to all relevant persons (i.e. supervisor(s), collaborators) including the DBE student administration [master-dbe@unibas.ch](mailto:master-dbe@unibas.ch).

The master's thesis **file name** needs to include your name and the year of submission i.e. *your email name without the @stud.unibas.ch\_2024\_MA.pdf* for example: pia.peters\_2024\_MA (email: pia.peters@stud.unibas.ch).

At the **FHNW** for submission of your master thesis you will be guided through an [electronic submission process](#). Your Master's thesis must be submitted electronically. For a valid submission of the final thesis together with the poster (in pdf and pptx format, respectively) must be submitted with the file name and to the location indicated in the process before the deadline.

The **file name** at FHNW follows this convention: *MSBE\_surname\_first name\_Thesis.pdf* for the Master's thesis, *MSBE\_surname\_first name\_Poster.pdf/pptx* for the poster in pdf and pptx format, and *MSBE\_surname\_first name\_Supplementary.zip* for optional supplements.

For submission of the semester thesis, you have to submit an electronic copy of the thesis and supplementary documents to your supervisor and (if applicable) to the external/additional partner.

A confirmation of receipt will be sent within a few days from the responsible institution.

## **How do I organize my master examination?**

The details of the master examination can be found in [the study regulation](#) and in the study guides ([FHNW](#) and [Unibas](#)).

The master examination usually takes 45-minute and includes a 20-minute presentation on the master's thesis projects followed by a discussion (25 min) and is usually open to the public. Upon request to the Teaching Committee, the public may be excluded.

At the **University of Basel** each student organizes his/her master examination him/herself:

The master examination takes place a few days/weeks (max. 6 weeks) after the submission of the thesis. The student finds a date suitable for all examiners, invites the examiners and organizes a room. Additionally, the Master student informs the student administration ([master-dbe@unibas.ch](mailto:master-dbe@unibas.ch)) about the details (Date, Time, Location, Title and Name of Examiners).

At the **FHNW** the master examination is organized jointly with the supervisor.

The master examination takes place a few days/weeks (max. 6 weeks) after the submission of the thesis. The student finds a date suitable for all examiners, invites the examiners and organizes a room.

## **How do I receive the performance review of my semester/master's thesis?**

The semester thesis will be evaluated by the supervisor, the master's thesis and master examination will be evaluated additionally by an independent external expert using the [master's thesis evaluation form](#). The evaluation and the grade of the thesis will be disclosed to the student by one of the supervisors.

The supervisor is responsible for nominating an independent examiner, who must be an expert in the relevant field and affiliated with a different academic group or an external institution. One of the examiners must be a lecturer in the program.