

DH Master Thesis Project

Instructions for students, EPFL professors and companies/universities that support students during their Digital Humanities master project.

1. Goal of the master project

The master project is a personal student project which requires analytical, conceptual and implementation work. Through their work during their project students will prove their acquired engineering skills.

The master project can be conducted at an EPFL laboratory, within another university or within an external institution.

2. Project choice

The topic of the master project can be proposed by:

- a lab from the EPFL Digital Humanities Institute (DHI) or from another EPFL faculty
- the student
- an external institution
- another university

3. Supervision

The master project **must** be supervised by an **academic representative**¹, who is either a professor or MER of the DH section. The supervisor is responsible for following-up with the project and for evaluating it. Should the supervisor be outside of the DH section or a scientific collaborator, prior approval of the DH Section director will be necessary.

Should the project be carried out in an external institution (other university or company), the **external representative** supervises the student and is designated as the primary contact person for the **academic representative**.

In the case where a student proposes a project, the student is responsible for finding a DH supervisor (**academic representative**) who accepts to supervise the master thesis.

In the case where the master project is done outside EPFL (in an external institution or another university), the student is responsible for finding a DH supervisor (**academic representative**) who accepts to supervise the master thesis.

Once the topic has been defined, and a DH supervisor has accepted to supervise the project, in agreement with the host institution and the **external representative** when applicable, the student must clarify the dates and conditions of the Master thesis project.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The student

- Must find a DH supervisor (**academic representative**) who accepts to supervise the master thesis
- Is free to choose the academic representative with whom they wish to carry out their master project, provided the academic representative agrees.
- The project supervisor (academic representative) can be:
 - o A Professor/MER within the DH section
 - o A Professor/MER outside the DH section or a scientific collaborator based on prior approval of the DH section director
- Must register on IS-Academia.

The academic representative

- Proposes topics in their research field on their lab website.
- Officially supervises the project, regularly follows-up with the work progress and presides over the evaluation jury.
- Organises the defense of the thesis with an external expert.
- For external master thesis projects:
 - o The academic representative examines proposed external master thesis projects, verifies the quality of the projects proposed by the external partner and validates the topics they wish to be responsible for.
 - o Intervenes with the external representative should any problems arise.

External project representative

If the master thesis project is carried out externally, the **external representative** must ensure that the student can conduct sufficient analytical and conceptual work for the **academic representative** to evaluate the student's engineering capacities.

5. Duration

The DH master thesis project duration is:

- 18 weeks if it is conducted at EPFL (including one week of vacation)
- 26 weeks if it is conducted outside EPFL (including one week of vacation)

6. Agreement for projects in institutions/companies

An EPFL agreement template exists for all Master thesis projects carried out in outside institutions or companies. If applicable, the DH Section will provide this agreement to all parties in due time.

7. Project development

Student

For the entire duration of the master project, the student remains registered as an EPFL student and is subject to the laboratory and/or host enterprise rules: schedule, leave of absence, confidentiality, seminars etc.

Academic representative

- Asks the student for an intermediate work report/display in order to evaluate the student's capacities and the progress of the project.
- Reserves the right to redirect the work, in agreement with the external representative (if applicable), in order for the master project work to demonstrate the student's engineering abilities
- Chooses an external expert to evaluate the master project
- Plans and organizes the oral defense of the master project

External representative (for Master thesis outside of EPFL)

- Welcomes the student on the first day of the project and gives the student project directions
- Mentors the student and regularly follows up with the work progress.

8. Writing of the report

The student must prepare a report that contains amongst others:

- The title
- The name of the student
- The name of EPFL and its logo
- The name of the host laboratory
- The name of the academic representative
- The name of the external representative at the host institution (if applicable)
- The work results with a summary
- 5 to 8 key words that characterize the project
- This report shall be representative of the work conducted and shall be used to evaluate the student's engineering capacities.
- The project is the student's property but there is the possibility, with the student's approval, to make it available on the DH webpage.

Copyright rules

It is very common to reuse published (or unpublished) content in a thesis (e.g. in the case of the theses made of a compilation of published articles). It is therefore important to ensure that the use (or reuse) is possible and to ask for authorizations from the rights holders when necessary. [This EPFL guide](#) provides information on how to reuse other content while respecting the rules of copyright.

Bibliographic references

Download [a short PDF guide](#) to bibliographic references writing.

9. Conclusion of the master thesis project

Mandatory

The Master Thesis report must be up-loaded on IS-Academia by the deadline that has been given to the student (12h00 local time of the Project). The report will be ran through an anti-plagiarism system.

For confidential reports, please contact the section for instructions.

An electronic version in .pdf format must be e-mailed to kathleen.collins@epfl.ch and to master-dh@epfl.ch as well as to the academic representative and to the expert by the deadline that has been given to the student (12h00 local time of the Project). Should the project be handed-in later than 12h00, it will not be accepted and be noted NA ("non-acquis") = fail.

Only if required by the academic representative or the expert

A paper version must be handed to these two people (no paper version is necessary for the Section).

Oral defense

The student prepares an **oral master project defense**. The duration of the defense is one hour: presentation (20-30 minutes maximum), questions (25 minutes) and final conclusion (5 minutes).

The academic representative

- Evaluates the work together with the external expert with regards to:
 1. work quality
 2. report quality
 3. quality of the oral presentation.
- Directly communicates the grade to SAC, after the oral defense
- Completes the Master Thesis Assessment form provided by the DH Section and hands-in it to the section when signed by the academic representative and the external expert
- If the project work is judged to be insufficient, the academic representative can ask the student to submit an improved version within two weeks, starting from the date of the oral presentation.
- In the case of failure, a new master project must be presented the following semester.

Confidentiality

During the master project, certain data may be confidential. Should this be the case, the host institution **must make a written request to the DH section** for a confidentiality contract between the different parties. In this case, the master project report may be classified as "confidential" and returned to the institution after the evaluation of the project.

10. Publication of master thesis project on Infoscience

Infoscience is the institutional repository of the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL). Authors affiliated with EPFL may deposit and disseminate their academic publications, either Open Access or with a restricted access. As part of the EPFL Open Science strategy, Infoscience is freely accessible to every interested reader and allows viewing and downloading the fulltext resources of all Open Access publications stored in the database.

The DH Section encourages its students to publish their Master thesis project report on Infoscience. Before publishing it, students are required to complete the [DH Publication authorization form](#) and hand-it in to the DH section.

Important EPFL links to help with the publishing of the report

[Infoscience](#)

[Publish your thesis while respecting copyright rules](#)

[Guides and recommended tools and tutorials](#)

[EPFL Library Publishing Support Fastguides](#)

[Recording of a coffee lecture given on Creative Commons Licences \(YouTube\)](#)

Please feel free to contact the [EPFL library team](#) with any questions you may have regarding publishing.

11. EPFL Rules and procedures regarding the Master's projects

<https://www.epfl.ch/education/studies/en/rules-and-procedures/pdm-english/>

¹ The academic representative corresponds to the Responsible Person / Instructor on ISA: Master Project Registration