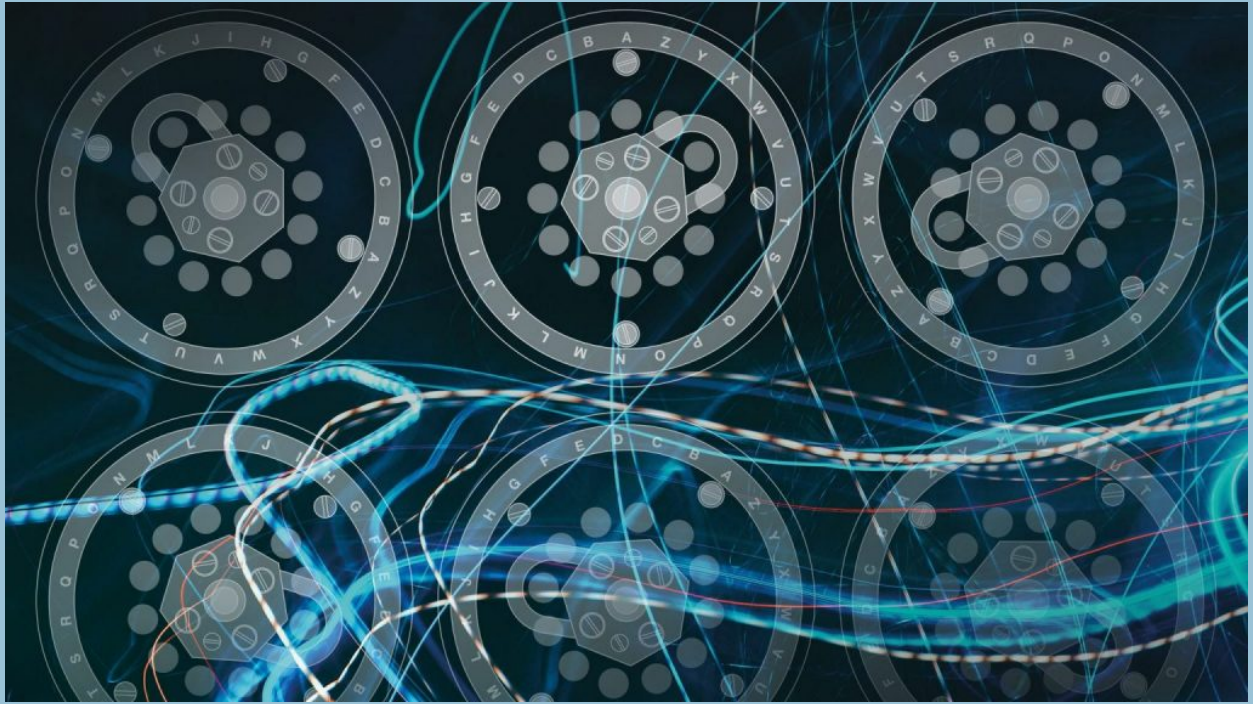




WELCOME

Key Points for your
Master's Studies
Cyber Security

Contents

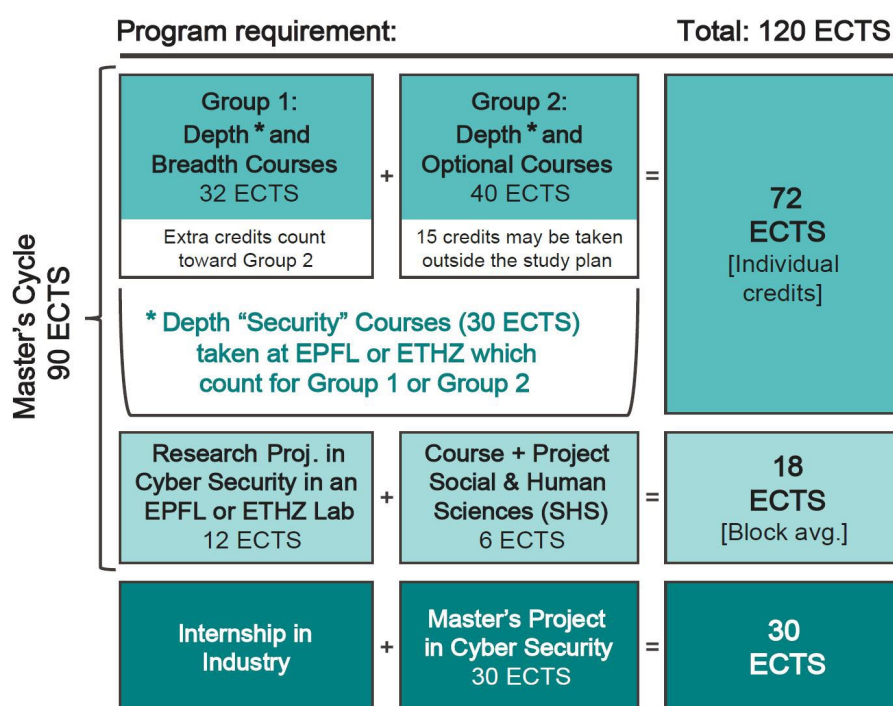
Introduction	2
1. Master's program structure	2
1.1 Duration.....	3
1.2 Master's cycle (90 ECTS).....	3
1.2.1 Depth requirement	3
1.2.2 SHS Course + Project	4
1.2.3 Courses outside the study plan	4
1.2.4 Research project	4
1.3 Internship / Master's project (PDM)	5
1.4 Course book and personal study plan	6
2. Completing ETH Zürich credits.....	6
2.1 Which option applies?	6
2.2 Options at a glance	7
3. About Master's studies	7
3.1 Conditional admission to the Master's program	7
3.2 Course types, registration and assessment rules at EPFL	8
3.4 Exam sessions, academic calendar, special arrangements.....	9
3.5 Conditional admission to the Master's project	10
3.6 Leave of absence after the Master's cycle and before the Master's project.....	10
3.7 Master's degree and graduation	10
3.8 Other useful links	10
4. Contacts	11

Introduction

This quick guide contains information to help students successfully complete the EPFL–ETH Zürich joint Master's program in Computer Science – Cyber Security. Students are advised to review this document and refer to it throughout their studies to ensure they meet program requirements. For any questions, please contact the relevant administrative contacts listed at the end of this document.

1. Master's program structure

The Master's program in Computer Science – Cyber Security consists of two main components: the Master's cycle (90 ECTS), followed by a one-semester Master's project (30 ECTS), for a total of 120 ECTS.



Important

- After their first semester at EPFL, **students must complete between 20 and 35 ECTS at ETH Zürich** in depth, breadth, or optional courses to fulfil Group 1 and Group 2 requirements.
- Internship requirement:** A mandatory industry internship must be completed, either as an 8-week summer internship or as a 6-month internship during a full semester. The internship may also be combined with the Master's project at the end of the Master's cycle.
- A Master's project (30 ECTS):** Focused on cyber security, the Master's project lasts 18 weeks (including one week of vacation) when completed at EPFL, or 26 weeks (including one week of vacation) when carried out in industry or at another university, including ETH Zürich. If the project is carried out at EPFL, ETH Zürich or another university, students must have completed and validated either an 8-week or 6-month internship in industry beforehand.
- The program specializes in cyber security, **with NO minors or specializations** offered.

1.1 Duration

The maximum duration of the Master's cycle is six semesters, comprising 90 ECTS of courses and project work. However, students are encouraged to take an average of 30 ECTS per semester to complete the Master's cycle in three semesters, prior to beginning their Master's project.

Students must begin their Master's program in Lausanne. After their first semester at EPFL, they must complete between 20 and 35 ECTS at ETH Zürich. How and when these credits are completed depends on when the student started the Master's program at EPFL (see Section 2 for full details).

If students wish to take a break for a semester for personal reasons during the Master's cycle, they can request to be placed "on leave". However, the six-semester limit for the Master's cycle will not be extended. For more information: go.epfl.ch/interruption-studies-master

1.2 Master's cycle (90 ECTS)

The 90 ECTS of courses and project work in the Master's cycle build foundational knowledge ("breadth"), develops specialized expertise in core security principles ("depth"), and offer flexibility through elective options. The coursework is organized into three categories: (i) depth and breadth courses, (ii) depth and optional courses, and (iii) a block consisting of a research project carried out in an EPFL lab (or at ETH Zürich) and a course + project in the social and human sciences (SHS).

- **32 ECTS** must be chosen from **specialized security courses ("depth")** and related **areas of computer science ("breadth")** – Group 1.
- **40 ECTS** must be selected from a broad set of **specialized ("depth")** and **optional courses** – Group 2. Any additional credits earned in Group 1 count toward Group 2.
- **12 ECTS** must be completed through a mandatory **research project** in an EPFL or ETH Zürich lab. An optional second research project may be undertaken in an EPFL lab for an additional 8 ECTS, which will count toward the 40 ECTS in Group 2.
- **6 ECTS** must be earned through a course focusing on transversal competencies in the **social and human sciences**, including a project component.

1.2.1 Depth requirement

A key requirement of the program is the completion of 30 ECTS in "depth" security courses, which must be taken at either EPFL or ETH Zürich. This requirement underscores the program's focus on core cyber security principles and ensures that students benefit from the combined expertise of both institutions.

Depth courses may count towards either Group 1 or Group 2 and are selected from those tagged "depth" in the EPFL cyber security study plan or the ETH Zürich course list.

Only one seminar and one lab may be counted toward the "depth" requirement across all EPFL and ETH Zürich courses.

1.2.2 SHS Course + Project

Students must earn 6 ECTS in transversal competencies in the social and human sciences (SHS). The SHS course is offered only in the Autumn semester and is followed by a related project in the subsequent Spring semester. The Autumn semester includes a 3 ECTS course introducing the selected topic, while in the Spring, students complete a project, individually or in groups, based on the course themes. This is not specific to the School of Computer and Communication Sciences (IC); it is a general requirement of the SHS program applicable to all EPFL Master's students.

If students have difficulty finding an SHS course + project, particularly in English, they can contact the SHS administrative team: scienceshumaines@epfl.ch, for assistance.

Depending on their plans, students may complete 3 or 6 ECTS of social and human sciences courses at ETH Zürich. Equivalent courses can be found in the ETH Zürich study catalog under the Science in Perspective (GESS) program: www.vvz.ethz.ch

1.2.3 Courses outside the study plan

Students may earn a maximum of 15 ECTS from unlisted courses, that is, courses not included in the EPFL or ETH Zürich study plans, excluding Bachelor-level courses (with a few exceptions). These courses must either be included on the list of pre-approved courses or be approved on a case-by-case basis.

For courses not on the pre-approved list, students must request approval by submitting a form available on this [page](#) at the start of the semester.

Please note that for EPFL courses with a maximum capacity, students who do not have these courses in their study plan are not authorized to register for them.

For more information: go.epfl.ch/IC-courses-outside-study-plan

1.2.4 Research project

New master's students, especially international students, are encouraged to wait until after their first semester to start the 12-ECTS mandatory research project, giving them time to become familiar with EPFL's research groups and faculty. Otherwise, the project can be carried out in any Autumn or Spring semester of the Master's cycle, provided it is completed before the Master's project begins.

Students are encouraged to begin searching for a project at the end of the preceding semester. Project listings on lab websites may not be exhaustive, and additional opportunities may be found by contacting labs of interest directly. Students are advised to meet with the supervising professor or assistant to clearly define the project objectives and expected deliverables before enrolling in a research project.

The topic of the mandatory research project must be in the field of cyber security.

The research project must be carried out at EPFL or at ETH Zürich. If the project is conducted at EPFL, it must be supervised by an EPFL cyber security authorized professor; if conducted at ETH Zürich, it must be supervised by an ETH Zürich cyber security authorized professor.

The duration of the research project is 14 weeks. Students carrying out the project at ETH Zürich must agree on this duration with their ETH Zürich supervisor at the beginning of the semester.

Students may also undertake an optional 8-ECTS research project at EPFL, in collaboration with an IC-authorized lab. These credits count toward Group 2 – options. Unlike the mandatory project, the optional research project is not limited to the field of cyber security. Please note that the optional research project is not available at ETH Zürich.

Students may not carry out a 12-ECTS mandatory research project and the 8-ECTS optional research project in the same semester.

Full details about registration, authorized labs, and additional information can be found at: go.epfl.ch/IC-master-semester-projects

1.3 Internship / Master's project (PDM)

An internship in industry is mandatory and must be approved in advance by the Section. There are three possible types of internships:

- **Short internship in industry (8 weeks)**
Takes place during the summer and only after the student has completed the exam session. The student must be back on campus in time to begin the Spring semester. For students taking courses at ETH Zürich during the Spring semester, the internship must take place between the end of the semester and before the August exam session.
- **Long internship in industry (6 months)**
Carried out during a semester in which the academic clock for the Master's cycle is suspended. No courses may be taken in parallel.
- **Integrated internship with a Master's project in industry (6 months / 26 weeks)**
A long internship that also fulfils the Master's project requirement, carried out in an industrial setting.

The Master's project (worth 30 ECTS), which may also be integrated with the internship in industry, is always carried out at the end of the Master's cycle. It must be in the field of cyber security and supervised by an EPFL cyber security authorized professor: go.epfl.ch/IC-projects-labs-Cyber

The Master's project can also be carried out in an EPFL lab (18 weeks) or at another university, including ETH Zürich (26 weeks). In these cases, students must have completed and validated either a short or long validated internship in industry beforehand.

Students intending to pursue a PhD at EPFL or another institution are advised to carry out their Master's project ideally in lab at EPFL (18 weeks) or at another university (26 weeks), ideally in the field they wish to orient their doctoral studies. A short or long internship in industry must have been completed and validated beforehand.

Students should begin the internship search process 4-5 months in advance. An information session is held at the start of each semester, giving students time to prepare and plan accordingly.

International master's students must complete one full year before being able to undertake an internship. Earliest possible start date: **summer/autumn 2027**.

For more information:

- go.epfl.ch/IC-internships
- go.epfl.ch/IC-master-thesis

1.4 Course book and personal study plan

The EPFL study plan for the current academic year is available here:

go.epfl.ch/MS-cybersecurity-courselist

Courses at ETH Zürich can be selected from this list: go.epfl.ch/cyber-ethz-study-plan. For full course details, the ETH Zürich course catalog is published here: www.vvz.ethz.ch.

Students are encouraged to establish their personal study plan at the beginning of the Master's program to help structure their studies and ensure that all program requirements are met.

2. Completing ETH Zürich credits

EPFL students must begin their Master's program in Lausanne. After their first semester at EPFL, they are required to **complete between 20 and 35 ECTS at ETH Zürich**. How and when this is done depends on when the student started the Master's program.

2.1 Which option applies?

- **Started before Autumn 2026:** the student follows the **Mandatory semester** pathway — one full semester at ETH Zürich, as before.
- **Starting Autumn 2026 or later:** during their first semester at EPFL, students must choose one of two options:
 - **Residential semester:** relocate to Zürich for one semester after the first semester at EPFL and register for at least 20 (up to 35) ECTS there. May include a mobility stipend and, for the Spring semester, access to pre-booked accommodation.
 - **Flexible option:** spread the 20-35 ETH Zürich ECTS over more than one semester after the first semester at EPFL, taking courses at both institutions concurrently, without relocating. No mobility stipend and no pre-booked accommodation.

The IC Section will send students a form **midway through their first semester at EPFL** so they can confirm their choice. If a student's plans change afterward, they must contact the IC Section **before** making any changes to their study arrangements. The switch is not automatic.

Students who started before Autumn 2026 remain on the Mandatory semester pathway; the Residential semester and Flexible option are not available to them.

2.2 Options at a glance

	Mandatory semester	Residential semester	Flexible option
Who is it for?	Students who started before Autumn 2026	Students starting in Autumn 2026 or later	Students starting in Autumn 2026 or later
ETH Zürich credits	At least 20 ECTS during one semester; up to 35 ECTS	At least 20 ECTS during the residential semester; up to 35 ECTS	At least 20 ECTS; up to 35 ECTS distributed across multiple semesters
Relocation to Zürich	Required	Required	Not required
Mobility stipend	Available, subject to applicable conditions	Available, subject to applicable conditions	Does not apply
Pre-booked accommodation (Spring)	Limited places available	Limited places available	Does not apply
Pre-booked accommodation (Autumn)	Not available	Not available	Does not apply
EPFL courses in parallel	Not permitted. Semester fully dedicated to Zürich credits	Permitted, alongside the 20-ECTS minimum in Zürich	Permitted
Required form	Cyber Security Learning Agreement	ETH Zürich study plan form	ETH Zürich study plan form

For more information: go.epfl.ch/ETHZ-Credits-Study-Options

3. About Master's studies

3.1 Conditional admission to the Master's program

In their admission letter, students may have been assigned a number of additional credits that must be acquired during the first year of the Master's program. These credits must be prioritized, as admission to the Master's program is conditional upon acquisition of these credits. These credits do not count towards the Master's degree.

The final list of required courses will be determined upon receipt of the student's official Bachelor's transcripts, which must be submitted directly to the Office of the Registrar according to the instructions outlined in the admission letter.

Once the documents are reviewed, the Registrar will send the student the official decision titled *"Supplement to the decision regarding admission to the Master's program"*, along with all relevant details. The procedure for registering for these courses will be communicated by the Registrar's Office once the student receives the official form.

3.2 Course types, registration and assessment rules at EPFL

EPFL courses fall into two main categories:

- **Courses examined during the semester**

The final grade is based on continuous assessments such as quizzes, labs, projects, reports, presentations, posters, etc., conducted throughout the semester.

- **Courses examined in the exam session (Winter or Summer)**

The final grade is based, at least in part, on a written or oral exam that takes place during the official exam session. For these courses, it is imperative to be present at EPFL during the exam session.

- **Course registration periods**

- **Autumn semester:** From August until Friday of the second week of the semester
- **Spring semester:** From January until Friday of the second week of the semester

- **Exam registration**

At EPFL, exam registration is automatic, based on your course registration—regardless of whether the course is assessed during the semester or in the exam session. Important: If a student forgets to withdraw and has submitted any coursework or assessments—whether during the semester or the exam session—they will receive a grade, which will appear on their transcript.

- **Course and exam withdrawal deadlines**

Withdrawals must be made through your secure access to IS-Academia.

- **Autumn semester:** From October until Friday of the 10th week of the semester
- **Spring semester:** From March until Friday of the 10th week of the semester

After these deadlines, withdrawal is no longer possible.

Note: Some courses cannot be dropped after the registration deadline. These are marked “*sans retrait*” in the study plans and flagged with an alert in the registration tab in IS-Academia. Students registering for such courses are expected to fully commit to completing them.

- **Missed assessments – Justification required**

Absences from any assessment, whether during the semester or during the exam session, must be justified with official documentation (e.g., medical certificate covering the missed date, birth or death certificate, or a training certificate for elite athletes).

- **For continuous assessments during the semester (e.g., midterms, quizzes, homework, etc):**

Students must notify the teacher before the assessment and submit the required justification within three days. At the teacher's discretion, a substitute assessment may be offered during the same semester, but this is not guaranteed. If no substitute assessment is offered, the student receives a grade of "M" (missed) for that assessment and may retake the course the following academic year to complete the missed assessment.

- **For exams during the official exam session:** students must inform the teacher immediately and submit justification to [Student Services](#) within three days of the exam date, copying the teacher. Deferred exams are not available, even for justified absences. Students receive a grade of "M" (missed) for the exam and may re-register for the course and retake the exam the following academic year. The grading scheme cannot be modified, and the missed assessment cannot be excluded from the final grade.

Note: In both cases, if the course evaluation method changes, the student must complete all assessments, not just the one originally missed.

- **Grading**

The final grade for a course reflects the performance across all assessments (e.g., graded homework, exercises, quizzes, midterm exam, final exam, etc.). If a student completes only part of the assessments without providing an official justification (such as a medical certificate), they will receive a score of "0" for each missed component. The final grade will be calculated as the weighted average of all assessments.

- If the final grade is below 1.00, the student receives an "NA" (Not Acquired).
- A grade of NA does not count toward the GPA.

- **Course retake**

- Students who fail a course (grade below 4.0) may retake the same course the following year.
- The grade for the second attempt replaces the grade from the first attempt. If the course is not retaken, the failing grade remains on the transcript.
- Once a student has taken an exam or submitted an assessment, they cannot retroactively cancel the result by submitting a medical certificate or any other documentation. If unsure about their ability to complete an assessment—whether during the semester or during the exam session—students should consult a doctor in advance.

For more information:

- go.epfl.ch/registering-courses-exams
- go.epfl.ch/withdrawing_subjects_tests
- go.epfl.ch/master-pass-conditions

3.4 Exam sessions, academic calendar, special arrangements

- **Exam sessions**

- January/February
- June/July

- Academic calendar and important deadlines: go.epfl.ch/academic-calendar

- Special arrangements for students with disabilities (courses and/or exams): go.epfl.ch/arrangements-courses-exams

- Medical certificates: go.epfl.ch/medical_certificate

3.5 Conditional admission to the Master's project

Students may be conditionally admitted to the Master's project if they are missing no more than 8 ECTS from their Master's cycle, provided the following conditions are met:

- The student is not at the end of the maximum duration of the Master's cycle (i.e., 6 semesters).
- The mandatory 12-ECTS research project must be completed and validated before the Master's project begins.
- If the Master's project is not carried out at EPFL or near Lausanne, the possibility of taking a course remotely in parallel must be discussed with the section beforehand.

3.6 Leave of absence after the Master's cycle and before the Master's project

Students may request a one-semester leave of absence, which may be extended by an additional semester, after completing the Master's cycle, provided they have not exceeded the maximum duration of six semesters for the Master's cycle. The deadline for the Master's project will be adjusted accordingly. However, leave is not permitted during the Master's project or between project attempts.

3.7 Master's degree and graduation

Upon completion of the Master's program in Cyber Security at EPFL, graduates are awarded a *Master of Science (MSc) in Computer Science – Cyber Security*, from EPFL and ETH Zürich.

The final official transcript confirms completion of the program and serves as a provisional diploma until the official diploma is awarded at the graduation ceremony, which, starting in 2027, will be held on the last Saturday of September.

The GPA is calculated as the weighted average of all subjects for which a grade between 1 and 6 has been attributed.

Graduates also receive a Diploma Supplement, which outlines the courses completed and the skills acquired throughout the program.

3.8 Other useful links

- go.epfl.ch/IC-FAQ-Cyber
- go.epfl.ch/SAC-rules-and-procedures

IC Student Association - CLIC

Don't hesitate to join the **Telegram channel for IC students**, run by our student association **CLIC** to meet other IC students and exchange about courses, life on campus, or any other topics.

<https://go.epfl.ch/ic-ma>

4. Contacts

The Administrative Specialist of your Master's program is [your first point of contact for all queries about your study plan, courses and program rules](#).

Jasmine Locatelli

jasmine.locatelli@epfl.ch

Office hours – INN 112

Morning: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 10:00 > 12:00

Afternoon: Monday, Thursday: 14:00 > 16:00

- **Program Director**
Prof. Wenzel Jakob
- **Section Deputy**
Eileen Hazboun
- **Internships and Master's Project Coordinator**
Patricia Genet

EPFL Student Services

The Student Services desk is the contact point for [general queries about matriculation, campus services, official documents, special arrangements and social consultation](#).

From Monday to Friday

- **In-person**
09:00 > 17:00
Building BP 1229
- **Phone**
Morning: 09:00 > 12:00
Afternoon: 13:30 > 17:00
+41 (0)21 693 43 45

student.services@epfl.ch