



LUDWIG-
MAXIMILIANS-
UNIVERSITÄT
MÜNCHEN

MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN
EVOLUTION, ECOLOGY AND SYSTEMATICS



EES Master's Thesis Guidelines

Master's thesis project (26 ECTS credits)

Students carry out an independent research project. The topic of the project should be in the field of Evolution, Ecology or Systematics. In most cases, the research project will follow the plan developed during the IRT3 module ("Grant Proposal Writing"). Students read the relevant literature and become experts in the methods necessary to complete their research projects. Students will conduct statistical analyses of the data they have collected and will write a report (Master's thesis) in the format of an academic journal article (Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Literature Cited).

The total length should be 60,000 – 100,000 characters (40 – 60 pages including figures, tables, references, etc.).

The thesis project may be carried out under the supervision of any professor or group leader within the LMU Faculty of Biology (see the list of internal supervisors in the "downloads" section of the EES website). Group leaders who are not on this list may co-supervise projects, but only together with a faculty member on the list who will act as the official supervisor.

It is possible to carry out an **external project** at another LMU faculty, university, or research institution. In this case **the student is responsible for finding an appropriate member of the faculty (internal supervisor)** to co-sign for the project, ensuring that its content and execution meet the faculty standards. For this, student and external supervisor should provide a short outline of the goals of the master's thesis project for the internal supervisor.

External projects must be applied for at least 3 weeks prior to starting the thesis project through the Examination Office ("Prüfungsamt").

- The application for an external master's thesis project must include: a formless application, stating the reasons why the student would like to do the thesis externally, a brief project description (1 – 2 pages),
- a timeline indicating when the project will be carried out, the contact information (including the postal address) of the external supervisor, and
- a written confirmation both of the internal and external supervisor.

The external thesis must be approved by the Examination Committee **before** it is started.

Master's thesis defense (1 ECTS credit)

As part of their thesis work, the students present their research to their supervisor(s), co-workers, and fellow students. It begins with a presentation of the thesis (around 20 minutes) and is followed by questions and discussion. The graded defense should be done within the group where the research was carried out. In total, the defense should not exceed 45 minutes. The internal supervisor must attend the defense, even in case of an external master's thesis project. Attendance may be by video-conferencing. The defense should take place within 2 weeks after submitting the thesis, it can occur before thesis submission. Students are expected to give a short presentation of their research at the annual EES conference, which is not graded.

Registering and submitting the thesis

The official starting date of the thesis project must be registered with the Examination Office ("Prüfungsamt"; room B 00.056 - please pay attention to the opening hours) Please note that the **starting date** of the thesis (not the registration date) has to be on a **Monday!**

The registration form can be submitted anytime during the opening hours of the Examination Office, but by the Monday on which the master's thesis project starts at the latest.

The [registration form](#) can be downloaded from the EES website. It must be signed both by the student and the (internal) supervisor.

Once registered, the thesis **must be completed within 24 weeks**. The exact due date will be provided by the Examination Office at the time of registration.

Please note that **late submissions are not accepted**. If the thesis is not submitted on time, the thesis will be marked "insufficient" and ECTS credits cannot be awarded.

Extensions of the deadline are not granted in order to do more experiments or analyses, or to repeat failed experiments. An "interruption" of the thesis is only allowed in cases where the student is physically unable to work on the project. In such cases, the student must apply to the Examination Office and provide medical documentation of the exact dates that she / he was unable to work. The deadline can only be extended for this period of time.

Two hard copies of the master's thesis with **fixed, non-spiral binding** must be **submitted by the individual submission deadline** that the student received upon project registration.

The **first hard copy** of the master's thesis must be **submitted to the Examination Office**. It is recommended to do this in person, so that it is confirmed that the thesis was submitted in time and arrived properly. However, if you do not manage to submit it during the office hours of the Examination Office, you can put the hard copy of the master's thesis in the mailbox of the Examination Office next to the porter in hall B of the Biocenter. In that case, you should request the porter to add a date stamp to the master's thesis of the day on which you hand in the thesis. For this hard copy of the master's thesis the **last page of the master's thesis (including statement of originality) is to be included** as last page. This can be downloaded from the EES website. It must be filled out and signed by the student.

The **second hard copy** of the master's thesis should be provided by the student **to the (internal) supervisor** by the individual submission deadline.

Grading of the thesis

After the thesis is submitted, the (internal) supervisor will be contacted by the Examination Office and asked to provide:

- a signed hard copy of the thesis evaluation with the grade,
- the date and grade of the thesis defense,
- a confirmation of successful participation in the group seminar.

For external thesis projects the external supervisor must send an evaluation of the student's work to the internal supervisor within two weeks after the submission deadline. Supervisors should contact their students directly to inform them of their grades and provide feedback. The Examination Office does not inform students of their grades, nor provide them the evaluations.