

From project description to thesis submission

[and more about structuring your thesis work]

Master's week 2 - Research, methods and writing the thesis

Joshi, Marianne, Anne Lene, Vegard etc.

IFI, 11. January 2024

Early-morning warm-up clichés quotes

"Research is what I'm doing when I don't know what I'm doing."

[Wernher von Braun]

"Research is seeing what everybody else has seen and thinking what nobody else has thought."

[Albert Szent-Györgyi]

"Research means that you don't know, but are willing to find out."

[Charles F. Kettering]

"Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose."

[Zora Neale Hurston]

Annual Calendar

1st semester

August: First master's week - with academic and social program

September-October: Presentations of available master's thesis topics

November: Information meetings about the study plan and Research day for Master's students

December 1st: Deadline for submission of the study plan

2nd semester

January: Second master's week - Research, methodology, and thesis writing

June 1st: Deadline for essay submission

3rd and 4th semester

Thesis writing: Read more about the master's thesis and supervision

May-June: Finishing your master's studies with submission and presentation

Need to postpone submission? How to apply for an extension

- Read less

Structure: courses and thesis work

4th semester <i>(V2025)</i>	Master thesis		
3rd semester <i>(H2024)</i>	Course	Master thesis	
2nd semester <i>(V2024)</i>	Course	Course	Master thesis
1st semester <i>(H2023)</i>	Course	Course	Course
	10 ECTS	10 ECTS	10 ECTS

4th semester <i>(V2025)</i>	Master thesis		
3rd semester <i>(H2024)</i>	Master thesis		
2nd semester <i>(V2024)</i>	Course	Course	Course
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Current status

At this point, you should have a study plan:

- Supervisor(s)
- Thesis topic
- Project description
- List of courses



In 490 days:

- 15. May 2025: Thesis submission

Start of studies

First semester

The master's thesis

Finishing the
programme

Study plan agreement for master students at IFI

The study plan is a master's agreement between the student, supervisor and the department. It is due December 1st in your first semester of the master's program. The study plan must be approved by the department before it is valid.

Here is the [web form for study plan agreement](#).

Checklist for study plan agreement +

Additional applications +

After you submit your application +

Changing your study plan agreement –

You might need to change the [theoretical curriculum \(courses\)](#), the [progress plan](#) during your studies or [submission date](#). These changes need to be approved by the department. You are responsible for [applying for the changes](#). Keep in mind that [your supervisor has to approve the application](#).

Please use the following [web form for applying for changes in your study plan agreement](#).

Be advised that you need to apply for changes to your study plan 3 months before your thesis submission deadline.

If you need to postpone your submission date, you must apply for this. Please see our webpage about [finishing the programme](#) for more information.

Deadline day is today

- Even if you have a course in your approved study plan, you still need to register for the course in StudentWeb.
- **Remember to sign up for courses in StudentWeb before midnight.**
- You will receive your admission by Sunday.
- Remember to pay the semester fee before 1. February 2024.

The essay

Your supervisor will assist you in finding a topic for the essay.

You may hand in a draft/first version, and get feedback for correction.

The essay should be at least 10 pages, maximum 15 pages.

June 1st: Deadline for handing in your essay

The essay is assessed by your supervisor with the grade scale pass/fail.

Second semester

In January, before the regular lectures starts, there will be another introductory week of mandatory classes. This week the main focus will be on how to write a thesis, and there will be lectures ranging from writing technique to formatting large documents.

During your second semester, all master's students who are writing a long thesis (60 ECTs) must to write an essay.

June 1st: Deadline for handing in your essay

The essay is intended to support and prepare you to start writing your master's thesis. The essay is assessed by your supervisor with the grade scale pass/fail.

Your supervisor will assist you in finding a topic for the essay. It could be related to your master's thesis and is usually a discussion of the topics from at least two different scientific articles or books, and a personal assessment. The essay should be at least 10 pages, maximum 15 pages.

You may hand in a draft/first version, and get feedback for correction. The deadline for submitting the final version of the essay is by the end of the semester after you were admitted to the master's programme. The administration needs feedback from your supervisor in regards to pass/fail of the essay. You need to get a pass on the essay by at the latest at the start of your second semester of writing the thesis.

250 hours

4th semester <i>(V2025)</i>	Master thesis		
3rd semester <i>(H2024)</i>	Course	Master thesis	
2nd semester <i>(V2024)</i>	Course	Course	Master thesis
1st semester <i>(H2023)</i>	Course	Course	Course
	10 ECTS	10 ECTS	10 ECTS

- Working on your thesis is different from taking courses because there are no predefined curriculum, weekly lectures, group teaching, mandatory activities or assignments, nor any exams
 - You are in charge: how much and how often will you work on your thesis (next to courses)?
- A 60 ECTS master thesis should reflect one full person-year of work upon submission.
- Strictly counting, 10 ECTS equals 250+ hours of work over one semester.
- **Working on your thesis equal to 10 ECTS requires more of you than just submitting an essay.**
- Make sure you set up a plan for the semester with your supervisor on what you will do – of which some time will be spent on writing the essay, but not all.

Avoid procrastination

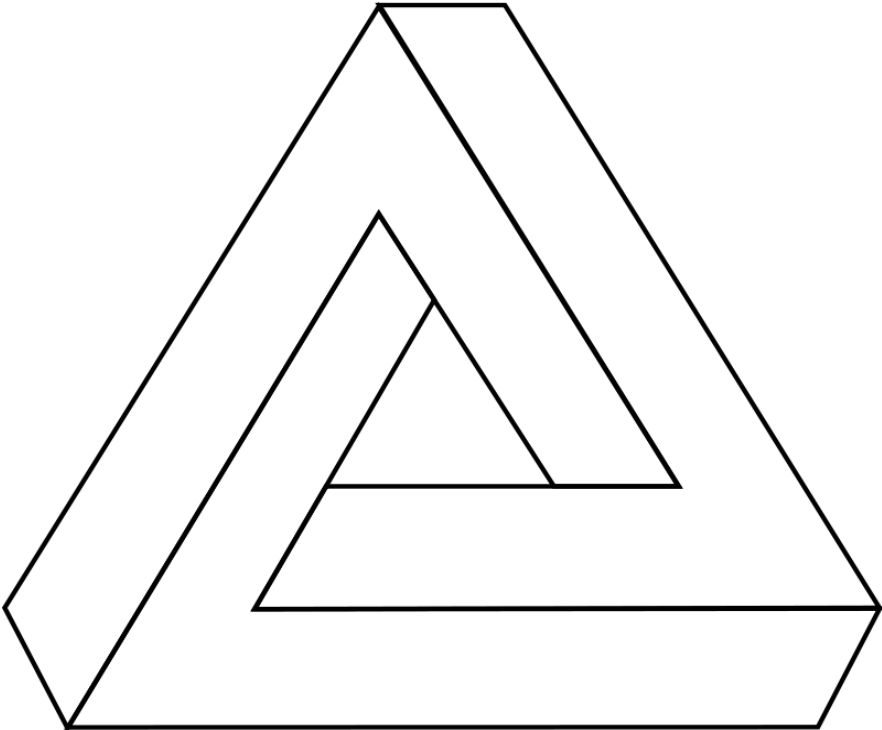
4th semester <i>(V2025)</i>	Master thesis		
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- Working with research and thesis writing takes time and is hard to rush.
- A big part of your journey is the maturation process that comes with academic reading, thinking, problematizing etc.
- Certain parts of your thesis work like experiments, fieldwork, simulations, development, prototyping etc. might require planning ahead of time:
 - Organizing the circumstances for conducting experiments, simulations, benchmarks etc.
 - Sorting out people, processes etc.
 - Getting technical permits, legal consent, physical access etc.

Taking responsibility

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3rd semester <i>(H2024)</i>	Course	Master thesis	
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	10 ECTS	10 ECTS	10 ECTS

DEADLINE
SUBMITTING ON TIME



BALANCE COMMITMENTS
WORK, FAMILY, HOBBIES ETC.

RESULT
GETTING A GOOD GRADE

Thesis submission deadline

- The final (and strict) deadline to submit your thesis is **15. May 2025**.
- The next submission possibility is 15. November 2025 with defense and graduation in December 2025 or January 2026 (for short thesis).
- It is recommended to plan to finish 1. May 2025 to give yourself some time in the end to finalize and polish your thesis before submission.

Generic grade descriptions given to the assessors

A

EXCELLENT

Outstanding work which demonstrates a clear talent for research and/or originality, seen in a national perspective.

B

VERY GOOD

Very good work that clearly stands out.

C

GOOD

Good work.

D

MODERATELY GOOD

Clearly acceptable work.

E

ADEQUATE

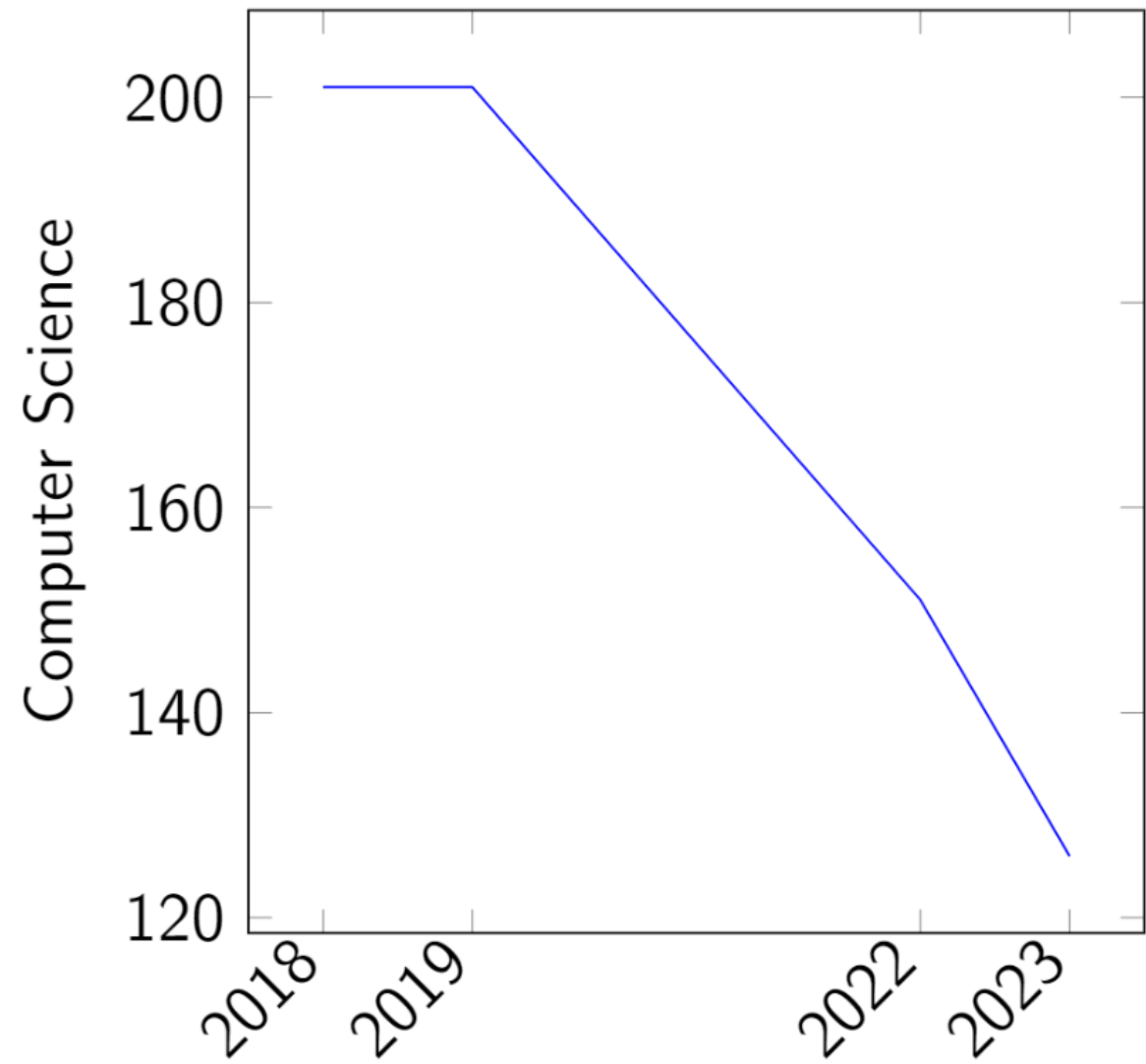
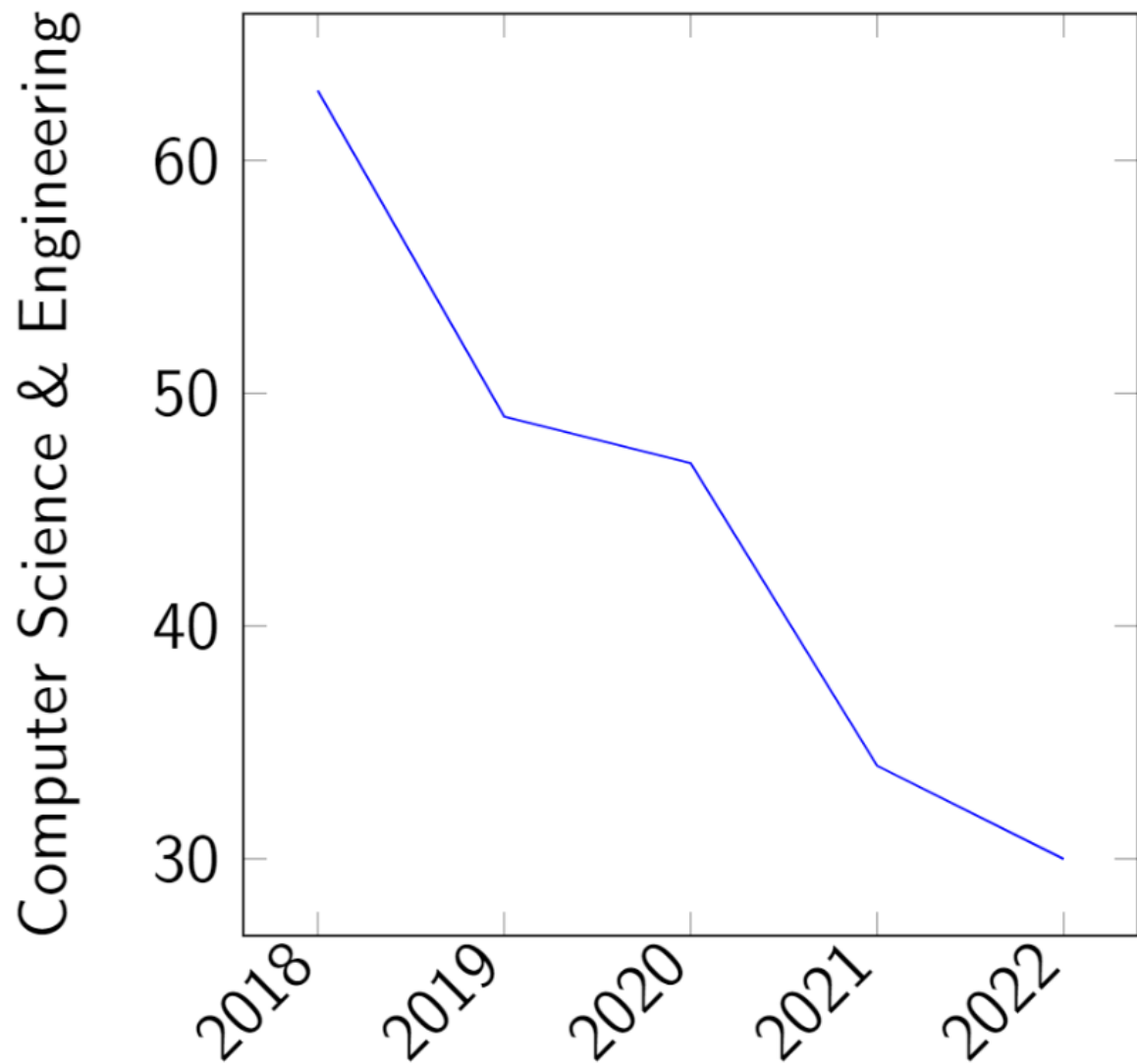
Acceptable work that satisfies the minimum criteria.

F

FAIL

Work that fails to meet the minimum requirements.

With a Bucket of Salt: Shanghai & THE by Subjects



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Talk to a last-year master student

- What has unexpectedly taken up a lot of time now as you are approaching the end?
- What have you needed the most help with from your supervisor so far?
- What has taken more time than expected?
- How hectic do you envision the final push to be? And what could have been done differently so far?
- How important has it been to choose topics that are thematically/academically fitting for the assignment?
- How has the writing process gone so far?
- What would you say is the most important to prioritize in the second semester?

Moving forward

- **Get started** → Navigating literature, choosing research method, and starting up with thesis writing.
- **Put in the hours** → Prioritizing being a student, avoid procrastination, take responsibility, and plan ahead.
- **Use your supervisor and peers** → Talk to your supervisor regularly, use fellow students, use online resources etc.
- Make it into something you enjoy!

The program for Thursday and Friday

Thursday 11 January

09:00 - 09:15 – Welcome! Grab a coffee and find a seat.

09:15 - 10:00 – From project description to thesis submission

And more about structuring your thesis work.

10:15 - 11:00 – Introduction to thesis writing: Requirements and expectations

With senior lecturer [Leif Harald Karlsen](#).

11:15 - 12:00 – How to choose research methods for your project

With professor [Kyrre Glette](#).

12:00 - 13:00 – *Lunch break*

Servings of fochachette (a form of focaccia).

13:00 - 13:15 – Information: Available resources for master students

With [Academic Writing Centre](#) and Senior Academic Librarian [Anna Kathinka Dalland Evans](#).

13:15 - 14:00 – Experiences from being a master student at IFI

With Tine Nørregaard.

14:15 - 15:00 – Q&A with the student administration

Friday 12 January

09:00 - 09:15 – Welcome! Grab a coffee and find a seat.

09:15 - 09:30 – Introduction to methods

09:30 - 11:30 – Parallel sessions, choose between:

1) Quantitative empirical methods

- Controlled experiments: sampling, generalization, validity, AB-experiments
- Surveys: sampling, generalization, validity

With professor [Dag Sjøberg](#) og Associate Professor [Gunnar Rye Bergersen](#)

2) Qualitative empirical methods

- Qualitative data collection methods (e.g. observational studies)
- Qualitative data analysis methods (e.g. thematic analysis)

With Associate Professor [Jasmin Niess](#) and Doctoral Research Fellow [Tora Jarsve](#).

11:30 - 12:30 – *Lunch break*

Servings of wraps.

12:30 - 13:15 – Navigating literature

With Doctoral Research Fellow [Barbro Renland Haugjord](#).

13:30 - 15:00 – Ethics @ informatics

With Associate Professor [Henrik Skaug Sætra](#).