

Wageningen University & Research MSc Thesis Learning Agreement

This Wageningen University & Research (WUR) master thesis learning agreement sets out the agreements between a **master's student** and a **chair group**. The agreement registers the rights and duties of both parties and is a further supplement and elaboration of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), Education and Examining Regulations and the Student Charter.

The form has to be completed for each master's thesis by the student and a representative of the chair group before starting work on the thesis.

The student and supervisor sign the form and the supervisor takes care of archiving the learning agreement (ultimately this will be done in OSIRIS; until that is possible the chair group secretary archives the document).

For additional information and clarification of each of the questions see the appendix.

For complaints regarding supervision or assessment, the student can appeal to:

- The study advisor for advice and support
- The Examining Board for advice on procedures or an official complaint
- The Examination Appeals Board
- A Dean or a Confidential student advisor

1. Information on student and chair group

Student name: _____
Student registration number: _____
Study programme: _____
Specialisation: _____
Study advisor: _____
Chair group: _____
Supervisor: _____
2nd Supervisor: _____
Examiner: _____
Course code: _____
Course size (EC): _____

→ The student has been informed about the (written) guidelines and rules of the chair group for thesis students.

In case the data collection takes place abroad:

→ Risk assessment needed?
→ The student has been informed about the covid-19 measures applicable in the country in question and taken by the contact organisation.
→ The student and supervisor(s) came to an alternative how the data collection will be done if the student is unable to complete the work on location.

2. Information on the local contact organisation in case the data collection takes place abroad:

Name organisation: _____
 Name contact person: _____
 Phone number: _____
 Email address: _____
 Country: _____

3. Admission to the thesis

The student declares that study progress, the topic and the selection of the chair group has been discussed with the study advisor before the start date of the thesis.

The student fulfils the requirements regarding prerequisite knowledge for the start of the thesis.

Course code: _____ Passed:

yes/no

 Course code: _____ Passed:

yes/no

4. Title and description of the project

<p>Title:</p> <p>Description:</p>

5. Planning

Start date: _____
 Progress evaluation date: _____
 Completion date: _____
 Special planning arrangements: _____

A MSc thesis of 36 credits will include in total 24 weeks of 42 h/w or 25 weeks of 40 h/w, not including holidays or regular days off. 28 h of work is 1 credit.

Nature of the activities	Planned		Credits
	Weeks 40h	Weeks 42h	
Thesis-ring			1.5
Writing report & Colloquium			
TOTAL			

6. Arrangements regarding supervision

(Arrangements regarding the type and frequency of meetings between student and supervisor. If multiple supervisors or multiple chair groups are involved: roles and responsibilities of the different supervisors):

Students will be able to contact their daily supervisor (PhD student/postdoc) every day, if needed. Once every ~ 3 weeks (more often if necessary), the results will be discussed with the professor/teacher.

The student will take part in a safety lecture at the start of the thesis, and in regular thesis ring meetings. Moreover, the student will attend Monday Morning Presentations and colloquia from other students.

7. Arrangements regarding facilities

(Work place (office/lab), access to buildings and locations. Availability and use of equipment, materials and facilities):

- Office hours: Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 18:00. Working outside office hours is undesirable and only allowed when it is really necessary and has been discussed with supervisor(s). See below
- Never work alone in the lab.
- Equipment should be reserved in advance (never more than 2 weeks ahead).
- The student participates in the lab duties (filling stock, dishes, etc.)
- Shared PC, print facilities and shared lab table.
- During covid19 times, you comply with the FCH's and the university's corona mitigation guidelines (see PDFs sent by email), the most important ones of which are (i) Work from home as much as possible; (ii) Comply with the 1.5 meter distance rule; (iii) Respect the maximum corona capacity for laboratories and offices.
- If you cannot complete your MSc thesis in time due to (covid19-related) illness, your contract will be automatically extended with the time lost.
- During covid-19 times, (some of) the points above might be overruled by updates on corona guidelines. Please continue to familiarize yourself with these.
- Students should read the Introduction to FCH Laboratory available on Brightspace.

8. Arrangements regarding progress evaluation

(What will be evaluated, what are the criteria for evaluation, who is involved?)

About 6 to 8 weeks after the student started, there will be a mid-term evaluation with the student, the daily supervisor and the professor/teacher. During this conversation, the student will get a warning if the expected grade on his current work will be less than a 7. This gives the student the opportunity to improve. Nevertheless, if you did not receive this warning, this does not automatically mean that your grade will be a 7 or higher.

The progress evaluation will mainly focus on the performance of the student (i.e. independence/initiative/creativity, commitment/perseverance/adaptability, receiving and providing feedback, development of knowledge and skills, time management, performance on research, execution of research), but also entails the critical reflection, level of English and presentation skills.

Information about the rubric and grading sheet used for the final evaluation can be found on Brightspace. With respect to the report evaluation, this will be mainly based on the draft report.

9. Arrangements regarding the report

(Language and lay out of the report, time and format of transfer of results and data (data

management plan), agreements on secrecy of results, and publication of the thesis report):

- Lab journal and report will be written in English; presentations will be given in English.
- Report will contain an introduction, materials and methods, results and discussion and a conclusion, and should not exceed 60 pages, including references, but excluding appendices.
- The draft report will be handed in printed on request of the supervisor and also electronically in order to facilitate a plagiarism scan.
- The final report needs to be handed in before the final presentation.
- Data obtained from this research is property of the Laboratory of Food Chemistry and it is not allowed to share them with others.
- To store (raw) data, it is obliged to use the E-lab journal following the Data Management Plan.

10. Arrangements for individual situations.

(Special/unforeseen circumstances, disability, absence for special reasons)

11. Signature

The student agrees to report any relevant changes in circumstances which may affect the thesis project to the supervisor.

The student declares to be familiar with rules and regulations specific to the chair group and with rules and procedures related to assessment, as well as with the up-to-date COVID19-related guidelines at FCH and WUR. The chair group declares that they have provided the student with all the relevant information (including rules, regulations, and information on safety issues).

Wageningen,

	Name	Date	Signature
Student:
Supervisor:
2 nd Supervisor

Appendix: Explanation

1. Information for student and chair group

The examiner will be the chair holder or another staff member appointed by the examining board. The supervisor is responsible for daily supervision. Supervisors from an external organisation cannot have a formal role and cannot be involved in the grading. If multiple supervisors and/or chair groups are involved, each role should be explained under item 6.

2. Information on the local contact organisation in case the data collection takes place abroad

In case of emergency the supervisor has to be able to reach the local contact organisation abroad.

3. Admission to the thesis

The student is required to discuss the possibility to start a thesis (in terms of study progress and selection of chair group) with the study advisor in advance. Chairs may determine a maximum of two prerequisite courses (in total 12 credits) for starting a thesis. These prerequisites have to be published in the study handbook. The student has to pass the exam(s) before being granted access to the thesis.

4. Description

The description includes the subject of the project and activities. If relevant, reference can be made to an existing chair group project proposal. An important aspect is that the student has to be aware of all the consequences with respect to type of activities, intensity and planning of work.

5. Planning

It is required make agreement on dates for progress evaluation and completion of the project, with regard to regulations for delay. If the student intends to combine the project for one or more periods with course work, to interrupt the project for exams or a period of leave/absence, this has to be agreed with the supervisor in advance.

6. Arrangements regarding supervision

Making these arrangements explicit is important to manage expectations for both parties. Supervisors have their own guidelines for planning meetings with students and for involving co-workers. In particular in cases where multiple supervisors and chair groups are involved, the student should not be confronted with conflicting rules and opinions: one supervisor should be the focal point for the student.

7. Arrangements regarding facilities

The chair group arranges the facilities required for the student. In general, it should be assumed that the student is unfamiliar with the policy concerning priorities for use of equipment and facilities, and is not aware who is in charge of them. The student needs to be informed that arrangements made are never a guarantee for availability, and that due to unpredictable circumstances, the thesis project may have to be adapted with respect to time planning and/or content. The chair group and the student then have to agree solutions together.

8. Arrangements regarding progress evaluation

The progress evaluation is a meeting between student and supervisor that takes place before the student is halfway through the project. It is up to the chair group if this meeting is scheduled right after the completion of the research proposal or later on, but should be agreed upon with the student in the learning agreement. In this meeting, all aspects of the thesis project at that point (i.e. research proposal, supervision, performance) are discussed. The principle of two-way feedback applies to the progress evaluation.

In case of severe problems regarding the dedication, skills, knowledge or communication, only the examiner may decide to terminate the thesis project after consultation of the supervisor and student. In order to prevent this, it is essential to make expectations regarding the progress evaluation explicit in the learning agreement. In case the thesis is terminated, this decision should be thoroughly substantiated and archived by the chair group.

9. Arrangements regarding report

Specific rules on the form and lay-out of a report (report, paper or otherwise), the transfer of data sets and processed results (data management) have to be agreed.

The thesis project may be part of a larger project in which external partners are involved, or in which results may be generated that require confidentiality. The university has guidelines regarding protection and embargo of scientific results. Thesis reports can be registered with a restriction on disclosure of contents. The examiners and supervisor(s), however, always need a full copy to be able to assess the student.

All MSc thesis reports should be archived. It is up to the chair group and student to decide whether the report will be made public or not in the Digital Library.

10. Arrangement for individual situations

Students can ask for specific facilities for example in the case of disabilities. The student and chair group can ask the study advisor or Dean for students for advice. Additional arrangements for Double Degree students can be included here if needed.