

Your Master's project (PDM) at SCGC**The basics**

- You are allowed to start your PDM with up to 8 missing credits, which will have to be caught up during your PDM. Arrangements are to be discussed with your ISIC supervisor and then communicated to the Section.
- You have two semesters to successfully complete your Master's project and it can start as soon as your grades for MA3 have been validated.
- An Autumn PDM can start as soon as the results of the exam sessions are out (end of July) – 31st December.
A Spring PDM can start as soon as the internship is validated (max 2 weeks after its end) / project II has obtained a "pass" / minor is succeeded
- A PDM must always start on a Monday and be submitted on a Friday at noon.
- If you plan on doing your PDM outside of EPFL (company or other university) or in another section of EPFL, you will need to find an ISIC supervisor (a professor / MER accredited with the chemistry and chemical engineering section). The ISIC supervisor's role is to validate the subject of the Master's project, ensure its smooth progression, evaluate its report (thesis) and finally organise the oral defense of the project by inviting an expert as well as give and communicate the Master's project's grade.
- Chemistry students
Project II in a company → PDM in academia
Project II in academia → PDM either in industry or in academia

Chemical engineering students
Minor → PDM in industry
Internship → PDM in academia

PDM at EPFL

Duration: 18 weeks (including 1 week holiday)

Registration

1. Once your chosen subject has been approved by your ISIC supervisor, you will be requested to fill-in the internal registration form: <https://forms.gle/aJ9xeP6Vtb8tLy6w6>.
2. The Master's project must be registered on IS-Academia between the opening of the academic registration form (FRAC) and the Friday of the second week of the semester. A late registration fee of CHF 50 is due for a registration after this deadline.

Report**Language**

The report can be written both in French or in English.

Presentation of the report

A written report must be submitted. The format and content of the report have to be discussed together with the EPFL supervisor and the local supervisor, when relevant. The number of pages is not defined.

The report should include the following sections:

1. Abstract
2. Introduction
3. Description of the experiments
4. Results' discussion
5. Conclusion
6. Bibliography
7. Experimental results in appendix, if relevant

Final changes

Any changes to the title of your PDM (the title is mentioned on the student's Diploma Supplement) must be submitted to the section on the day of the oral examination at the latest. Once uploaded on IS-Academia, it will be impossible to further modify the report.

Delivery**Non-confidential**

Your PDM will have to be uploaded on IS-Academia. This is intended for anti-plagiarism verification only. There is absolutely no publication or availability of projects, either within EPFL or externally. Please check with your supervisors how they wish you to deliver your report to them.

Confidential

The report has to be sent by email or delivered in person on a USB stick at the section (BCH 3312) by 12:00. No posters are required for confidential projects. Please be aware that confidential projects do not take part in prizes.

Oral defense

The ISIC supervisor and the student set the date for the oral exam and the ISIC supervisor selects the expert (internal or external). The oral exam takes place within a maximum of four weeks after the date of submission of the report. This information must then be communicated to SAC via IS-Academia by the ISIC supervisor at least one month before the oral exam.

If you intend to graduate with all your peers, the grade of your final exam will have to be entered in IS-Academia by your ISIC supervisor by the end of September. However, please note that only PDMs validated by mid-September will be considered for the awards distributed at the Magistrale. As for the prize for best PDM, internal to our section, only PDM completed and graded by the 31st August that year will be considered.

Posters

Presenting your PDM as a poster is mandatory. However, it is not part of the final grade and will not have to be presented during the oral exam. It has to be brought to the Section's office 4 weeks latest after the report submission deadline, but in any case by the end of the 3rd week in September. It will be printed by the EPFL repro center and paid for by the section (inform you are a SCGC student and give your name / only 1 printing per person, format A0, portrait, in standard version). No need to fill-in the repro order form. Please count approx. 2 weeks for the printing.

Basic rule: make sure to indicate the name of your supervisors (EPFL and local if any) as well as the name of your host lab / company on the poster. If needed, [this](#) poster template can be used.

Posters exhibition

The poster exhibition takes place over 10 days in the run-up to the Magistrale. The three best posters are rewarded during the Magistrale.

After successful completion

Prizes

Prix DSM-Firmenich: internal to SCGC

This prize rewards the best PDM in chemistry and the best PDM in chemical engineering. Only PDMs with a grade of 6 will be considered. The selection will then be made by a jury of Prof. / MER affiliated to SCGC. No registration from students. Only PDM validated by the 31st August will be considered.

There are other prizes rewarded by EPFL or companies. Full list available [here](#). You can register to up to 3 prizes (Prix Firmenich does not count). Please take note that confidential PDM will not be eligible for prizes.

Mention of your PDM on your diploma

The name of your PDM, as well as the place where you have conducted it will appear on your diploma supplement.

Magistrale

The Magistrale is organised by EPFL central services. Info will be sent to you in the course of late August – September. You will receive your invitations (you + 2 guests) as soon as the successful completion of your PDM will have been validated. The registration process to the event is dealt solely by the EPFL Events team.

PDM outside of EPFL

Duration: 26 weeks (including 1 week holiday)

Registration

1. Once your chosen subject has been approved by your ISIC supervisor, you will be requested to fill-in the internal registration form: <https://forms.gle/aJ9xeP6Vtb8tLy6w6>.
2. The Master's project must be registered on IS-Academia between the opening of the academic registration form (FRAC) and the Friday of the second week of the semester. A late registration fee of CHF 50 is due for a registration after this deadline.

Registration in a host university

Usually, students who undertake a project are registered as visiting or host students. The procedure is specific to each university. It is therefore advised to inquire with the host university if any tuition fees or taxes have to be paid. Some universities may ask you to pay semester fees, which are at our own costs.

Paperwork and organizational guidance

If you intend to conduct your PDM abroad, please note that EPFL does not offer support in organising or coordinating your semester abroad. All arrangements will have to be made by you. Make sure to have your own insurances covered. If you intend on going to a country requesting a VISA, do make sure to start the procedures to obtain one asap.

Universities

Please note that even when undertaking a master thesis in another university, you will remain registered at EPFL and be expected to pay EPFL's tuition fees even if the host university charges tuition fees or taxes locally as well. When applying for a research position, you will usually be required to provide the following documents: a signed visiting student agreement, a letter from the section's administration confirming that you are a registered student and that your visit is approved, your transcripts.

If your host university is one of EPFL's partner universities and that it asks you to be nominated by EPFL (this is sometimes required by host universities in Japan), please contact the student services desk.

Agreement

There are no formal agreements to sign regarding PDMs. Should your host institution ask for one, please refer to your ISIC supervisor.

Confidentiality

NDA are forbidden in the frame of master projects (which, as academic assignments, should not generate results classified as confidential). Therefore, we encourage you to be extra cautious with some companies, which do demand for NDAs to be signed off. Do not make any formal commitment to the company before having found a professor willing to supervise your master project in industry! PDMs at those companies are consequently impossible to confirm. In case of doubts, please contact the Section.

Whatever the conditions, the thesis report should not contain any confidential information and should be downloadable in IS-Academia as is. Confidential parts can be removed before uploading the project in IS-Academia.

PDM will never be published without your consent and are not in open-source once downloaded in IS-Academia.

Remuneration

Master projects are considered as academic tasks overseen by a professor or a Senior Scientist at the School. The student can therefore work in the company without signing a contract and there is therefore no remuneration obligation.

Scholarships

EPFL does not offer scholarships for PDM outside of Europe and a financial support is granted only for PDMs conducted in partner universities (including ETHZ). Please visit the [Mobility Office website](#) for more information.

ETHZ / 4 research Institutes of the ETH Board (EAWAG, EMPA, PSI, WSL)

PDM in one of these institutions are supported with an allowance of CHF 500 for the whole project.

Partner university in Europe

Exchange through an agreement with one of EPFL's [partner universities in Europe](#) are entitled to the scholarship from the Swiss-European Mobility Programme (SEMP). The total amount equates to CHF 1900 for the whole project (4 or 6 months).

An exchange form must be downloaded from your IS-Academia portal ("exchange application" tab) and signed by your ISIC supervisor, by the Deputy Director of our section and by yourself. Once the form is signed by the 3 parties, please upload it IS-Academia and validate the application form.

Student status at EPFL

Even though they remain enrolled as EPFL students, when students carry out their Master's project in a company or another university, they are subject to the rules of the host institution or company regarding working hours, holidays, confidentiality, salary, etc.

Working authorization

Master projects are considered as academic tasks overseen by a professor or a Senior Scientist at the School. The student can therefore work in the company without signing a contract and without the employer having to request work authorization, regardless of the nationality of the student.

Report

Language

The report can be written both in French or in English.

Presentation of the report

A written report must be submitted. The format and content of the report have to be discussed together with the EPFL supervisor and the local supervisor, when relevant. The number of pages is not defined.

The report should include the following sections:

1. Resume
2. Introduction
3. Description of the experiments
4. Results' discussion
5. Conclusion
6. Bibliography
7. Experimental results in appendix, if relevant

Final changes

Any changes to the title of your PDM (the title is mentioned on the student's Diploma Supplement) must be submitted to the section on the day of the oral examination at the latest. Once uploaded on IS-Academia, it will be impossible to further modify the report.

Delivery

Non-confidential

Your PDM will have to be uploaded on IS-Academia. This is intended for anti-plagiarism verification only. There is absolutely no publication or availability of projects, either within EPFL or externally. Please check with your supervisors how they wish you to deliver your report to them.

Confidential

The report has to be sent by email or delivered in person on a USB stick at the section (BCH 3312) by 12:00. No posters are required for confidential projects. Please be aware that confidential projects do not take part in prizes.

Oral defense

The ISIC supervisor, together with the student, sets the date for the oral exam and selects the expert (internal or external). The oral exam takes place within a maximum of four weeks after the date of submission of the report. This information must then be communicated to SAC via IS-Academia by the ISIC supervisor at least one month before the oral exam.

If you intend to graduate with all your peers, the grade of your final exam will have to be entered in IS-Academia by your ISIC supervisor by the end of September of that same year. However, please note that only PDMs validated by mid-September will be considered for the awards distributed at the Magistrale. As for the prize for best PDM, internal to our section, only PDM completed and graded by the 31st August that year will be considered.

Posters

Presenting your PDM as a poster is mandatory. However, it is not part of the final grade and will not have to be presented during the oral exam. It has to be brought to the Section's office* 4 weeks latest after the report submission deadline, but in any case by the end of the 3rd week in September. It will be printed by the EPFL repro center and paid for by the section (inform you are a SCGC student and give your name / only 1 printing per person, format A0, in standard version). No need to fill-in the repro order form. Please count approx. 2 weeks for the printing.

Basic rule: make sure to indicate the name of your supervisors (EPFL and local if any) as well as the name of your host lab / company on the poster. If needed, [this](#) poster template can be used. There are no other rules edited from the Section to follow regarding the presentation of your poster. This has to be discussed within your host group / company.

Posters exhibition

The poster exhibition takes place over 10 days in the run-up to the Magistrale. The three best posters are rewarded during the Magistrale.

After successful completion**Prizes**

Prix DSM-Firmenich: internal to SCGC.

This prize rewards the best PDM in chemistry and the best PDM in chemical engineering. Only PDMs with a grade of 6 will be considered. The selection will then be made by a jury of Prof. / MER affiliated to SCGC. No registration from students. Only PDM validated by the 31st August will be considered.

There are other prizes rewarded by EPFL or companies. Full list available [here](#). You can register to up to 3 prizes (Prix Firmenich does not count). Please take note that confidential PDM will not be eligible for prizes.

Mention of your PDM on your diploma

The name of your PDM, as well as the place where you have conducted it will appear on your diploma supplement.

Magistrale

The Magistrale is organised by EPFL central services. Info will be sent to you in the course of late August – September. You will receive your invitations (you + 2 guests) as soon as the successful completion of your PDM will have been validated. The registration process to the event is dealt solely by the EPFL Events team.