

Fact sheet for external research internship supervisors

(UM FPN master tracks)

Students of the one-year master programmes of the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience, Maastricht University, are required to do a research internship that involves planning, conducting and analysing the results of the student's own research project, resulting in an individually written Master's thesis.

- Period: between January and July (approximately 28 weeks).
- Work load: 5 ECTS for the research proposal (140 hours), 25 ECTS for the internship (700 hours), and 10 ECTS (280 hours) for the thesis.
- Supervision: Students will have two supervisors: the external internship supervisor and a second UM faculty supervisor.

Responsibilities of the external supervisor (first assessor):

- Familiarizes student with the host organization;
- Provides advice and help;
- Ensures that ethical approval** for the study is requested and/or obtained
If the external supervisor holds a PhD has a track record showing experience in conducting research and writing scientific papers, assessment of:
 - o the research proposal (sufficient/insufficient)
 - o the practical execution of the internship (graded on a 10-point scale with half - point increments).
 - o the Master's thesis (graded on a 10-point scale with half-point increments)
- If the external supervisor does not hold a PhD or track record showing experience in conducting research and writing scientific papers[†], assessment of:
 - o the practical execution of the internship (graded on a 10-point scale with half-point increments).
- Assessment forms must be completed via the DorsWebApp within 15 working days after the student has handed in the final version.

Responsibilities of the UM faculty supervisor (second assessor):

- Maintains contact with the student while (s)he is at the external institution.
- Communicates with the external supervisor on a regular basis to ensure that the external internship runs smoothly and to ensure that ethical approval** for the study is requested and/ or obtained.
- Assessment of:
 - o the research proposal (sufficient/insufficient)
 - o the Master's thesis (graded on a 10-point scale with half-point increments)
- Assessment forms must be completed via the DorsWebApp within 15 working days after the student has handed in the final version.

* European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. One academic year corresponds to 60 ECTS credits. One credit is equivalent to 28 hours of study.

** A standard clause will be added to the internship contracts, stating that the scientific research as part of the internship is carried out according to the applicable ethical standards. Students shall include in their Research Proposal how ethical approval is or will be obtained by the person with the primary responsibility for the design and procedure.

[†] In that case, the UM faculty supervisor will act as the first assessor, and the student will need to find an additional second assessor (both assessor should have a PhD degree; there is an exception for PhD-students and for UM lecturers without a PhD. When they completed the UTQ workshop 'assessment', they can be second supervisor. When in addition, the PhD student or the UM lecturer without PhD already supervised two research internships as a second supervisor, they can also act as first supervisor.

Responsibilities of the student

- Ensures that the information about assessment is sent to the supervisors by the FPN Education office;
- Complies with the guidelines described in the Handbook Writing Skills;
- Keeps track of and communicates the time lines for assessment of the proposal, ethical approval** for the research, practical work and Master's thesis.

Requirements for the research proposal:

- Between 1600 and 2800 words;
- Including:
 - a brief theoretical background of the research
 - the question(s) addressed by the research
 - a description of the research plan
 - a description of the research methods
 - a description of the data processing and analysis techniques
 - a reference list
 - a timetable
- Submitted within 6 weeks of commencing the internship;
- Evaluated and formally approved by both the first and the second assessor *before* the actual research (i.e., participant recruitment and/or data collection) can be started.

Requirements for the Master's thesis

Formal guidelines:

- For students who only do a research internship (no clinical internship), the minimum length of the thesis should lie between 5000 and 7000 words. For students in the clinical variant (who do both a research internship and a clinical internship), the minimum length is between 3000 and 6000 words (always in agreement with the supervisors). There is no official maximum word limit. 1.5 line spacing, font size 12 [Times New Roman; 11 pts for ARIAL], margins of about 2.5 cm all round), excluding title page, references, tables, figures and appendices.
- The thesis must be written in English (either British English or American English, but not a mixture).
- The thesis must be written individually.
- Use APA guidelines for referencing. No other referencing guidelines are allowed

Content guidelines

1. Title page: title, student name, ID number, mastertrack, date, location of internship, the name and affiliation of each supervisor/assessor and a total word count (excluding title page, table of contents, reference list, notes and appendices).
2. Table of contents
3. Summary/Abstract
4. Introduction
5. Methods
6. Results
7. Discussion and/or Conclusions
8. References
9. Notes (if any) and/or appendices (if any)

Assessment of the Master's thesis

Both first and second supervisor assess the Master's thesis. The Master's thesis will be assessed on aspects of content as well as format and must comply fully with the norms set for content, structure, form (layout) and language usage, as described in the Handbook of writing skills. Criteria related to content (formulation of the research question(s) and hypotheses, scientific content/specialized aspects, argumentation/line of reasoning/motivation) and format will be assessed separately and contribute to the final mark for the thesis.

The Master's thesis is assessed on the following four aspects:

- The research question(s) and hypotheses
- Scientific content/ specialized aspects
- Argumentation/ line of reasoning/motivation
- Format

The final grade for the thesis, based on the abovementioned four aspects, needs to be at least 6.0 for the student to pass.

The Master's thesis is graded by averaging the scores given by the first and the second assessor. Both grades must be at least 6.0 and the difference between the grades may not be more than 2 points.

Assessment of the practical execution of the internship

To make a clear distinction between the practical part of the internship and the master thesis, the practical part (Dutch: uitvoering) of the research internship will be graded as well. This aspect will be graded on a 10-point scale.

This grade will not be included in the overall GPA (grade point average). This is done to avoid that this part will largely influence the GPA, because of the large number of credits awarded to the practical part (25 in the master).

As for criteria regarding the grading of the practical part, the following aspects can be taken into account:

Practical skills

- .. Accuracy/precision
- .. Planning (realisation time schedule)
- .. Organisational skills
- .. Data collection / analysis
- .. Independence
- .. Taking initiative
- .. Communication

Attitude

- .. Commitment
- .. Dedication
- .. Collaboration
- .. Collegiality

Insurance:

If the research does not fall under the responsibility of the UM, the host institution where the research is conducted is responsible for concluding a liability insurance for the student.

