



LUND UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Science

Department of Biology

Information to Supervisors of Master's Thesis Projects in Molecular Biology

The Master's thesis project is one of the most important and valuable courses that our students take during their education. Therefore, we very much appreciate the support and mentorship that you, any co-supervisors, and other members of your research team will provide throughout the different stages of the project. As the main supervisor you must hold a permanent position (employment) at Lund University, while the co-supervisor must not, e.g. postdocs etc. We hope that our students will be invited to group meetings, journal clubs, seminars, or other relevant activities at their workplaces. This is important for their education, even if it is not always directly relevant for their specific projects.

The students get specific instructions about the rules and routines for the project. Here we highlight some points that are particularly relevant for you as supervisor.

Project plan and registration

- The project plan is written before the project starts (specific instructions to the students are found at a [Canvas page](#)). At this early stage, it is natural that the student needs substantial input from you and that you together write a meaningful plan. The project plan, including a time plan, provides an important framework for the student throughout the project. It also helps us to get a clear view of content and scope of the planned work.
- The coordinator (see list below) has to approve the project plan and sign the registration form before the project is allowed to start.

During the project

- The students are instructed to carefully document their work in a lab notebook (or in an electronic lab journal, if appropriate). Please, oversee that this is done in a proper way and provide instructions if necessary. The lab notebook should be accessible and may be evaluated as part of the examination. After the examination, we expect that you as supervisor may want to keep the lab notebook as documentation of the work.
- When half the project time has passed, the student shall perform a half-time evaluation together with the supervisor. To facilitate and document the evaluation, a simple [form](#) should be filled in, signed by both the student and the supervisor and sent to the coordinator.

Master's thesis

- The Master's thesis shall be written as a scientific report in the style of a manuscript for a scientific journal. [There are specific instructions for the students on writing of the Master thesis](#). Although we want the students to write in a stringent scientific style, they are expected to be slightly more explicit with background, explanations, etc, than what one would be in a published paper, and they are allowed to include preliminary or incomplete results. We also want them to introduce and show that they understand the chosen methods and strategies by explaining them and providing necessary details. The report is the most important basis for the examination and should be written independently by the student, but it is also a significant part of their training. Therefore, we expect that you (and/or co-supervisors) provide support and advice during the writing process and give constructive feedback before the final version is submitted to us.
- The student is also required to write a popular summary of the project, and we would like you to give feedback on that text.

Examination

- The student shall give a seminar to present his/her work, and he/she will then be questioned by an examination committee consisting of (i) the examiner and (ii) an external reviewer or opponent. The examiner is the coordinator of the specialisation, or another senior teacher at the Department of Biology who is appointed as examiner by the coordinator. The opponent should be an expert on the topic of the project and is a person at postdoc level or more senior. We will often ask the supervisor for suggestions of appropriate opponents.
- A date for the examination (and seminar) is decided by the examiner. The student shall submit the Master's thesis via [OUR ORIGINAL](#) at least one week before this date.
- As a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic, Master theses' examinations may be done remotely via Zoom. The coordinator will organize the examination and inform about the procedure.
- At the examination, we will ask you for your evaluation of the student's performance during the project. Guidelines for the evaluation are found [here](#). Find the template for the evaluation of the degree project [here](#).
- It is possible to publish the report in a database called Lund University Publications (LUP), under [Student theses](#). However, you as supervisor need to approve such publication. Note that this would make the thesis publicly available through the internet, and it may also compromise future publication of the results in a scientific journal. You will be asked at the examination whether you approve publication of the full report, only the Abstract plus Popularized summary, or just the Popularized summary.

If you have any questions or concerns at any stage of the project, please get in touch with the coordinator or with our study advisor (addresses below).

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USEFUL LINKS

- [Instructions for conducting a Master's degree project in Molecular Biology](#)
- [Template for Presentation of Degree Project \(ppt; 105 kB\)](#)
- [Application to course "Work with laboratory animals"](#)
- [Half-time examination form \(pdf, 60 kB\)](#)
- [How to write a scientific report in Molecular biology](#)
- [Guidelines and template for popular summary \(doc; 34 kB\)](#)
- [Template for Evaluation of Degree Project \(pdf; 528 kB\)](#)
- [Guidelines for Evaluation of Degree Project \(pdf; 133 kB\)](#)
- [Lund University Master's thesis database \(LUP\)](#)