

Information for MSE students at the ZHAW

1. Regulations

- The ZHAW academic regulations for the Master of Science degree programme in Engineering including the annex and the ZHAW general academic regulations apply.
- The above-mentioned documents are legally binding even if a contradictory statement is contained in this information. This information aims to be as simple, clear and concise as possible, and does not claim to be complete or correctly formulated in a legal sense.

2. Conditions for admission

- Graduates from a technical university may be admitted to the MSE degree programme provided they are among the top 35% of their year group (ECTS grade A or B). If no grades can be demonstrated, the director of studies may accept the applicant on the basis of their diplomas and proven experience. (A very good degree - equivalent to grade A or B in Switzerland - is required.)
- Graduates who meet the admission requirements will be invited to an interview at the Master Research Unit (MRU) to which they apply. The purpose of this interview is to assess the applicant's academic aptitude and personal suitability for the activities at the MRU.
- All MSE students are assigned to one MRU for the duration of the degree programme; it is only possible to change MRUs during the programme in exceptional cases.
- Applications may be rejected on the grounds of a lack of workplaces. (Applicants have no claim to a workplace at a particular institute.)

3. Degree programme

- 90 ECTS credits are required to complete the Master's in Engineering. The course is divided into three parts:
 - a) 33 credits obtained in 11 theory modules of 3 credits each. These can be obtained in the following combinations:
 - at least 2 modules (6 credits) from a specialisation (TSM module)
 - at least 3 modules (9 credits) from the basic modules (FTP module)
 - 3 further modules selected from the TSM and FTP modules (9 credits)
 - 3 context modules (CM modules, 9 credits)
 - b) 24 credits must be obtained in practical R&D work conducted at the MRU. Usually 12 credits each are obtained in two specialisation projects. Other combinations are possible, depending on the project situation. However, at least 6 credits must be obtained from any project. Students may do more than two specialisation projects only in exceptional circumstances. An additional 6 credits must be obtained in "supplementary courses". These courses are designed to deepen theoretical understanding in the selected field.
 - c) The compulsory Master's thesis is worth 27 credits. Students must complete the specialisation and basic modules before beginning work on their Master's thesis. If students are required to repeat modules, they may only repeat one theory module at the same time as working on their Master's thesis.

4. Administration

- Students are assigned a study advisor at the beginning of their degree course. The advisor is responsible for advising the student on academic and administrative matters at the MRU.
- The MRU may require students to take certain theory modules from the main programme. Students must then pass these compulsory modules in order to remain at the MRU.
- The advisor discusses the study objectives for the coming semester with the student. The results of this discussion are recorded in an individual student agreement.
- This agreement sets out:
 - a) the programme of modules to be taken by the student. In general students have a free choice of modules, although they must take the compulsory modules.
 - b) the scope, objectives and assessment criteria for the specialisation project and Master's thesis.
 - c) additional courses to be attended
 - d) special aspects of the degree programme (e.g. previously obtained qualifications and experience, degree funding etc.). All special arrangements must be submitted to the programme director for approval!
- The individual student agreement, in particular the choice of theory modules, must be entered by the advisor in the MSE tool and approved.

- If reasonable grounds are provided (lack of knowledge in the topic area, module does not take place, etc.), students may withdraw from or change their selected modules **only during the periods communicated by the Student's office** (whereby changing modules should be an exception!).
- Once a module has been selected and the selection deadline has passed, students **must** subsequently complete the module including examination. If the student fails to turn up to the exam without a valid excuse, they fail the module and **receive the mark 1**.
- A failed module may be repeated **once**. A resit examination is held for students who previously took and failed the end-of-semester examination and for those who were excused from taking this exam. Students who fail to appear to the end-of-semester examination without giving prior reason may not sit the resit examination.
- There is no guarantee that students can repeat a module, as modules are only run if there are sufficient student numbers. An alternative module may be taken with the agreement of the advisor and the programme director.
- A failed module is automatically classed as a "surplus module". Students may take a maximum of three surplus modules.

5. Workload

- One ECTS credit represents about 30 hours of work. A module worth three credits therefore represents about 90 hours of work.
- The same workload is expected for the specialisation projects. In other words, a course worth 12 credits involving two working days a week and a course worth 18 credits involving 3 working days a week amounts to around **20 weeks of study**. The specialisations usually take longer than one semester! This calculation also applies to the Master's thesis, i.e. working five days a week for 27 credits it will also take **20 weeks**. Time during which no teaching takes place should not be considered as free time!
- The main modules comprise 14 weeks of teaching plus exam preparation time and the exam period. In order for a minimum amount of teaching time to be lost, the MSE programme only recognises the official Swiss public holidays. **Time off is not given** on cantonal or local public holidays (Sechsilüüte, 1. Mai, etc.)! The Friday after Ascension Day is also a working day.
- In the spring semester, one week of holiday is given which includes Good Friday and Easter Monday. This week begins on the Thursday before Easter and lasts until the Wednesday after Easter.
- Students are advised **not** to take extra modules "in reserve", as with each module taken the workload increases correspondingly. The quality of students' project work should not suffer because they take too many modules. Advisors are encouraged to ensure that the MSE students have a reasonable overall workload.

6. Informationen, persons and addresses

- MSE website Switzerland: www.msengineering.ch. Here you will find descriptions of the key theory modules.
- MSE website Switzerland: www.zhaw.ch/engineering/mse.
- ZHAW intranet: <https://intra.zhaw.ch/departemente/school-of-engineering/masterstudium/>
- ZFH programme director: Dr Reto Knaack / knaa@zhaw.ch
- Academic Director, ZHAW School of Engineering: Prof. Thomas Järmann / jart@zhaw.ch
- Department administrative office: Lagerstrasse 41, 8004 Zurich, Büro ZL E0.2
Ms Judith Eidenbenz, mse.engineering@zhaw.ch
- Questions and problems:
 - Please discuss any questions and problems you may have with your advisor.
 - If he or she cannot help you or if you are unable to come to an agreement, please contact the programme director.
 - If you are unable to come to a satisfactory agreement with the programme director, an appeal can be made in accordance with the general academic regulations (RPO).
 - Please contact the academic office for any questions regarding registration, deregistration, deadlines and the course programme.