Master of Science in Facility Management

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### Objective
The Master of Science in Facility Management focuses on strategic management decision-making, supported by research-based knowledge. It combines professional specialisation and scientific expertise with a practical orientation. The study programme has an international focus and prepares students for middle and upper management positions in this rapidly-growing branch of the economy.

### Specialisation
Having the choice of different Electives and Research Labs, as well as choosing the topic of the Master’s Thesis, offers students the opportunity to specialise and develop their own personal profile.

### Title
Master of Science (MSc) ZFH in Facility Management. The programme is accredited by the Swiss Government and, on an international level, by the IFMA Foundation.

### Scope and structure
3 semesters full-time or 5 semesters part-time, 90 ECTS

### Language
All lectures are held in English. Students can choose individually whether to write their Master’s Thesis in German or English.

### Place of study
Campus Reidbach, RA, Seestrasse 55, 8820 Waedenswil

### Fees
The tuition fee is CHF 720 per semester. An additional semester fee of CHF 500 is payable by students legally domiciled outside Switzerland. For more information please visit: [www.lsfm.zhaw.ch/master](http://www.lsfm.zhaw.ch/master).

### Admission requirements
Graduates with a degree in Facility Management at Bachelor’s level or FM-related studies, for example in the fields of business administration, hospitality management, civil engineering, building services engineering, architecture.

### Participants
Participants in the programme include students based in Switzerland, as well as many international students.

### Application and start of the programme
Registration deadline is April 30; the programme begins in September each year.

### Master’s Thesis
The Master’s Thesis is an individual scientific work in which the skills and knowledge acquired during the study programme are applied to specific research questions.

### Career prospects
Nationally and internationally oriented organisations increasingly expect a Master’s degree as an entrance qualification for leadership positions. [More on page 13](#)

### Further information
Registration office: +41 58 934 54 39, general enquiries: mscfm.lsfm@zhaw.ch, web: [www.zhaw.ch/ifm/master/en](http://www.zhaw.ch/ifm/master/en)
The Master of Science (MSc) in Facility Management deals with methodological, technological and managerial issues in FM. It enables students to deepen their scientific understanding and provides a practical awareness of this interdisciplinary management field.

Study programme

The internationally oriented consecutive Master of Science in Facility Management addresses current issues and dynamic challenges in Facility Management from a scientific perspective. The study programme is based on the holistic FM model described in the European standards. It teaches students to carry out applied research and to adapt the FM model to individual business situations.

The first semester of the Master’s programme focuses on a company’s support processes from the viewpoint of FM and identifies optimisation potential. In the second semester, students learn about companies’ core processes. The central question addressed at this stage is how FM can support these core processes effectively and efficiently. In the third semester, programme contents of the first and second semester are incorporated into the preparation of the Master’s Thesis and are complemented by the industriespecific issues and particular aspects of the international FM market that students choose to focus on. In all three semesters, scientific knowledge and methods are taught with the aim of promoting action-oriented problem-solving skills. This training promotes interdisciplinary and holistic thinking in FM. The Master’s Thesis enables graduates to address practical or theoretical issues in a scientifically sound way.

Excellence for strategic management

In every organization, the provision of facilities and support services can be effectively coordinated. The manager responsible for such a Facility Management department needs to work at a strategic level. This position calls for advanced management skills, leadership and the ability to solve problems. With these responsibilities in mind, the MSc in FM focuses on strategic management decision-making, supported by research-based knowledge.

To ensure that the most up-to-date, practically relevant projects and research are included in the programme, MSc Students work with the results of national and international research and have an opportunity to get involved in projects conducted at the Institute of Facility Management. An understanding of scientific methods and principles, in both quantitative and qualitative research, is imperative to ensure sound theory for application in everyday Facility Management. Students will acquire the competences to systematically solve problems and to create new solutions and knowledge in the field of FM. Research to support strategic management provides a strong evidence base for decision-making and for developing economically, environmentally and socially sustainable FM models and strategies, as well as the corresponding processes. The findings from this research, representing state-of-the-art knowledge, are integrated into every aspect of the technical and management processes.

Educational concept

The Master’s degree programme combines independent learning (supervised or individual) with contact lessons (lectures, seminars). Participants work individually and in online networks. The dual teaching approach takes account of both the dynamic educational requirements of the FM profession and the individual preferences of the students. «Exploratory learning» enables students to independently generate new knowledge during their work on the Master’s Thesis.

Scope, structure and qualification

The study programme carries 90 ECTS points. It is divided into the following module blocks: Managerial Skills, Strategic Management, Strategic Planning of Facilities and Services, FM Integrated, Applied Research Projects and Research Skills. 18 ECTS points are awarded for the Master’s Thesis.

The duration of the full-time study programme is three semesters; a part-time option is available, generally lasting five semesters.

The Master’s programme at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences and Arts ZFH concludes with the internationally recognised title «Master of Science ZFH in Facility Management». The Master’s programme is accredited by the Swiss government as well as by the IFMA.
Module Overview

The detailed course descriptions are available at www.zhaw.ch/ifm/master/en

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<tr>
<th>Module Block</th>
<th>1st semester ECTS*</th>
<th>2nd semester ECTS*</th>
<th>3rd semester ECTS*</th>
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<td>Managerial Finance and Accounting</td>
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<td>Change Leadership</td>
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<td>Systems Engineering and Project Manage</td>
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<td><strong>Strategic Management</strong></td>
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<td>Business Environment</td>
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<td>FM Environment</td>
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<td>Business Processes and Value Management</td>
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<td><strong>FM Integrated</strong></td>
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<td>Case Study I</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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*Note: For the module block Applied Research Project, 12 ECTS must be obtained. There is a choice of Elective, Research Lab or Conference. To begin with, both a Research Lab 1 as well as Elective 1, must be selected. Everything else can be chosen freely; the module distribution given here is only a suggestion.

Managerial Skills

Facility Managers of tomorrow will contribute at a strategic level by helping corporate goals to be met. In addition to managing FM staff, Facility Managers will be able to make and contribute to key business decisions. In the Managerial Skills module block, students develop extensive conceptual, analytical and people skills. They learn how to generate and understand many relevant business indicators, as well as how to formulate and represent them to the corporation in order to influence decision-making. They develop a sound problem-solving competence and are well-informed about new models and processes.

**FM Integrated**

The Integrated FM module block is trans-disciplinary in terms of the procedures and theories introduced. In Advanced FM the focus is on general, strategic aspects of Facility Management and sustainability, as well as on trends and perspectives in the fields relevant to FM. Students learn about recent and potential challenges in the future as well as changes for FM. In the case studies, students apply their FM knowledge, integrate different expertise, theories and ideas and interact with partners from real-life situations. The aim is to develop an integrated understanding of FM to learn to deal with complexities within projects holistically and to develop academic skills.

**Research Skills**

The Research Skills module block focuses on research strategies (quantitative and qualitative) and selected methods, their application and logic. Reflecting on real-life problems where FM is the focus is essential. This directly links with the module block Applied Research Project and the module Master’s Thesis Research Plan which empowers students to carry out a research project. They are trained to take a scientifically sound approach, which involves a reasoned, critical and problem-solving orientation, and to do this on their own. They will be able to analyse, interpret and synthesise data and information.

**Master’s Thesis**

The Master’s Thesis is an individual scientific work. Students prove their academic, research and analytical skills. A Master’s Thesis usually mirrors one of the research strategies of the Institute of Facility Management and / or is written in cooperation with an external partner. Therefore students focus on relevant, up-to-date problems and issues from within Facility Management in real-life situations. The findings are of practical relevance and value to different stakeholders.

**Strategic Management**

In the Strategic Management module block, Facility Management is focused on the business environment and its dimensions, as well as on FM and its potential to strategically contribute to a company’s decision-making. As an important management partner, a Facility Manager needs to understand business dimensions from an internal and an external perspective so they can contribute to policy development and add value. Students become familiar with different models and concepts and learn about best practices in Switzerland and other countries. They develop an broad understanding of factors that influence business so they are able to advise organisations at tactical and strategic levels.

**Strategic Planning of Facilities and Services**

The focus of the FM Processes module block is based on an organisation’s support processes and the optimization potentials. Students are introduced to different FM realities where optimization is a continuous key issue and a responsibility of Facility Managers. The focus is on property and facilities as resources (asset and portfolio management), service design and strategic services marketing and relationship management challenges in a B2B2C field, and workspace design with its impact on productivity and wellbeing.

The Master’s Thesis is an individual scientific work. Students prove their academic, research and analytical skills. A Master’s Thesis usually mirrors one of the research strategies of the Institute of Facility Management and / or is written in cooperation with an external partner. Therefore students focus on relevant, up-to-date problems and issues from within Facility Management in real-life situations. The findings are of practical relevance and value to different stakeholders.
Research Labs and Electives

Having the choice of different Research Labs and Electives offers students the opportunity to specialise and develop their own personal profile.

Research Labs

Research Labs are integrated into ongoing research projects and are derived from the main focal points of the Institute of Facility Management (IFM). There are the following research areas:

- Corporate and Public Real Estate Operations
- Workplace Management
- Facility Management in Health Care
- Consumer Science/Consumer FM and Ambient Assisted Living
- Knowledge and Behaviour
- Strategy, Models, Concepts

Research Labs are offered each fall and spring semester. The course descriptions for the Research Labs are published and presented to the students at the beginning of each semester. Students learn about the ongoing projects in a workshop. The number of participants per Research Lab is limited.

Examples of Research Labs offered in the past:

- Service Ecosystems and the use of ICT Technologies
- Hospital Planning 4.0
- Benchmarking Technical FM in Health Care
- National BMI Library for Switzerland
- Corporate & Public Real Estate Management (CREM/PREM)

At the new location, the students, researchers and faculty staff of Facility Management work together in attractive, modern surroundings.

Electives

Building Information Modelling (BIM)

Students will be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of Building Information Modelling (BIM) as a process. The course will clarify what BIM is, and what it is not, as well as explore the implications and importance of Facility Management for the BIM process. Students will gain knowledge about the history of BIM research and get an overview of how BIM standards and associated working documents and tools are being developed as BIM becomes accepted as a mainstream digital planning process.

Ambient Assisted Living

Students will develop an understanding of the complex and changing working environments in nursing and senior caring facilities. They will learn about different aging concepts and life styles which influence people’s behaviour and expectations with respect to where, how and with whom they want to live. Furthermore, students will get to know the most recent ICT-developments relevant to Facility Management, the European Union funded and supported Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) initiative for a better living environment in old age, and the different aging facility environments and their distinct characteristics.

Corporate & Public Real Estate Management (CREM/PREM)

The course gives students an understanding of Corporate & Public Real Estate (CREM/PREM) and its staff. This is important in terms of the ability to perform, staff welfare and ultimately, profitability.

FM in Healthcare

According to the OECD, the Swiss healthcare system is high-performing and well-developed, albeit costly. Commentators are of the opinion that the large number of hospitals is one reason for the high health expenditures; other reasons given are advanced technology, patients’ consumerism and the lack of efficiency. Such accounts do not consider that one third of hospital costs are unrelated to health or patient care, but are related to FM.

In this course the opportunities, risks and challenges to FM and its leaders (internal and external to the organisation) will be discussed. The course encourages students to critically assess theories and concepts and to transfer them into the FM context or vice versa.

Workplace Management Elective

Workplace Management contributes to organisational goals and business objectives by planning, providing, managing, and optimising workplaces with the aim of optimally supporting the main activities of an organisation. In this elective course, the role of workplace management is promoting the end-user’s health and well-being. It will also be examined how work performance can be supported.

Service Value Management Elective

The Service Value Management framework considers the delivery mode and client/customer, as well as end-user perceptions of value. The proposed approach is consistent with the thinking that underpins the European standards in FM (EN 15221) and provides a conceptual foundation for considering a demand-driven, service-oriented and user-focused approach to FM. In this course the opportunities and challenges encountered by the key FM stakeholders will be discussed. Moreover, students are encouraged to critically assess theories and concepts.
Good to know

Participants
The Master’s programme is intended primarily for graduates with a professional degree in Facility Management at Bachelor’s level. Students with a different qualification may be admitted if they have acquired the necessary competencies. For details, please see «Admission requirements».

Lecturers
To ensure that a scientific approach and practical orientation are thoroughly integrated in the Master’s degree programme, lectures and seminars are held by a team of lecturers who have both a sound scientific background and up-to-date practical experience. This interdisciplinary team is composed of the Faculty of the Institute of Facility Management, as well as other nationally and internationally recognised experts from academia and the corporate world.

Language
All lectures are held in English. All written materials are in English. Knowledge of English (level C1 according to the Common European Framework of Languages proficiency scales) therefore essential for successful study. Students can choose whether to write the Master’s Thesis in German or English.

Admission requirements
Building on the Bachelor’s degree in Facility Management, the Master’s degree offers students the opportunity to deepen their knowledge. Holders of a diploma or a Bachelor’s degree from the fields of business administration, hospitality management, civil engineering, building services engineering, architecture or other FM-related studies who can provide proof of the required entry competences will be admitted to the Master’s degree programme.

Prospective students should enclose with their application for the Facility Management study programme written evidence of English skills as well as a written statement demonstrating their personal aptitude for this study programme. If all the criteria are met, applicants will be invited to attend an interview to assess their suitability for the study programme and for a career in Facility Management.

Dates
The consecutive Master’s degree programme in Facility Management begins in September. The registration deadline is April 30 each year.

This internationally oriented programme prepares you for demanding management positions in this rapidly growing industry.
Prospects

Career prospects

A Master of Science ZFH in Facility Management provides students with a nationally and internationally recognised degree. They develop the ability to cope with complexity and build their scientific skills. Internationally oriented organisations increasingly expect a Master’s degree as an entrance qualification for leadership positions.

Growing cost pressures and the need to increase productivity mean that expert Facility Managers are in demand, not only in the private sector, but also in public institutions. Master’s graduates thus have a variety of professional and managerial opportunities available to them, e.g. working for large corporations such as FM/total service providers, financial services, construction companies and real estate management. Other professional and management positions are found in health care, public services, industry, teaching, research and development at institutes of higher education, independent development of new business areas (consulting, development, services), as well as in specialised functions such as portfolio management and consultancy.

Competences

Building upon the sound methodological training provided in the Bachelor’s degree programme, the consecutive Master’s degree programme enables students to deepen their scientific knowledge of Facility Management. In addition to the refinement of applied methodology and development of specific subject knowledge, expertise in independent research work and social, personal and leadership skills are also cultivated.

Master’s students become experts at bridging the gap between theory and practice through dealing with scientific issues and becoming familiar with the latest international research literature. They are thus optimally prepared for the challenges of their future leadership roles.
Innovative learning and creative research await you in beautiful surroundings overlooking the Lake of Zurich.

About us

The ZHAW

The ZHAW (Zurich University of Applied Sciences) is one of the leading universities of applied sciences in Switzerland. Teaching, research, continuing education, consulting and other services are scientifically-based and practice-oriented. The ZHAW comprises eight schools at three locations (Wädenswil, Winterthur, Zurich). Currently, over 12,000 students are enrolled at the ZHAW.

The School

The School of Life Sciences and Facility Management (LSFM) is located in Wädenswil on the left shore of the Lake of Zurich. Teaching and research are carried out in the fields of environment, nutrition/food, health and society. The degree and continuing education programmes include five Bachelor’s degree programmes, three Master’s degree programmes, and a wide range of continuing education courses. Around 1,500 students are currently enrolled at the LSFM in Wädenswil.

The Institute

The Institute of Facility Management (IFM) is a leader in the field of Facility Management. The IFM is the only academic institute in Switzerland to offer comprehensive education and services in Facility Management: Bachelor’s and Master’s level programmes, continuing education (MAS), research and development, as well as consulting. The Institute works closely with business and public organisations, developing new solutions and supporting the optimisation of Facility Management processes through applied research and development, as well as consulting. The Institute provides advice on strategic decisions and supports change processes. It works on a scientific and application-oriented basis in the research and development of new business areas, strategies, processes and applications. Through its research activities, the Institute contributes to development and innovation in processes, organisation, methods, and products related to Facility Management. At the same time, it promotes a theoretical and methodological understanding of the aspects, topics, and activities being studied.

Specific research fields are selected that address the needs of the market or society and relate to the expertise within the IFM. The methodological and technical skills of various FM sub-disciplines are systematically applied. The Institute’s innovative strength in applied research and development is based on interdisciplinary cooperation among its over 50 members.
The ZHAW is one of the leading Swiss universities of applied sciences. The School of Life Sciences and Facility Management currently has around 1500 students and over 600 employees. Its study and continuing education options include five Bachelor’s and three Master’s degree programmes as well as a broad selection of continuing education courses.

Our expertise in life sciences and facility management in the areas of the environment, food and health enables us to make a vital contribution to solving social challenges and improving quality of life. Our success is based on five dynamic institutes with extensive competence in research, development and services in the disciplines of chemistry and biotechnology, food and beverage innovation, natural resource sciences, applied simulation, and facility management.