

# Handbook for new MSLS students

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This handbook gives new students the necessary overview:

- ❖ Which insurances should students check before starting their studies at the ZHAW to avoid unpleasant surprises?
- ❖ What is the function of the ZHAW account and why is it important to check it regularly?
- ❖ How are the modules in the Master's Life Sciences study programme structured and what important administrative deadlines do I need to be aware of?
- ❖ Take care of your health: use the university's counselling and health services.
- ❖ Use social media: network with fellow students and professors!
- ❖ Find out who are your contact persons and much more!



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## Introduction

Congratulations for choosing the Master's programme at the ZHAW! Thank you for the trust you have placed in our university of Applied Sciences. In this handbook you will find important information about the Master's programme, which will enable you to have a smooth start.

You are currently at an important point in your life where you lay the tracks for your career. During the programme you will face many challenges, and we would like to accompany you and do our best to support you with our services.

## Important information before your studies

### Insurance

Check your insurance policy before you start your degree programme at the ZHAW to avoid any unpleasant surprises (further information can be found on our [homepage](#)):

- ❖ Accident insurance
- ❖ Health insurance
- ❖ AHV (old age and survivors' insurance)
- ❖ Pension insurance

are particularly important. **This also applies to students from abroad.** When giving up gainful employment, it must be checked whether the insurance cover in the event of a non-occupational accident is still sufficient, as the employer's insurance benefits no longer apply.

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### ZHAW-Account (set-up, notebook configuration, software)

After meeting all enrolment requirements, you will receive an email to your private e-mail address with instructions on how to create your login details to access your student account at the ZHAW. You will need these to access the Moodle pages and for your student e-mail address.

It is of great importance that you maintain your ZHAW mail inbox and check it daily. All communication regarding your studies takes place exclusively via your ZHAW account.

- ❖ **Students who directly transfer from the Bachelor's level to the Master's level keep their existing ZHAW students e-mail.**
- ❖ All other: please check your junk e-mail folder! Unfortunately, it sometimes happens that our mails end up in spam.
- ❖ ICT introduction for new students see [ZHAW Self-Service-Portal](#) (Studierende, ICT-Einführung neue Studierende)
- ❖ The ZHAW account is irrevocably deleted 30 days after exmatriculation.

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### ZHAW Students Campus Card

We will send out the Campus Card registered by post as a registered letter approximately 2 weeks before the start of the semester (only within Switzerland). **Students from abroad** are invited to pass by our office ([GA210](#)) and pick up the Campus Card or send us the new address in Switzerland if you prefer

to receive your card by post. **Students who directly transfer from the Bachelor's level to the Master's level keep their existing Campus Card.**

The ZHAW Campus Card is your student ID card with which you can obtain numerous [benefits as a student](#). You can use your Campus Card to pay for meals in the cafeteria and for printing and scanning at the fixed printing stations on campus. Please note the prices displayed on the printers. You will find these scanning and printing stations in the main building GA and in front of the reception in the RT building.

The Campus Card must be validated before the date printed on it expires (possible at the earliest one month in advance).

- ❖ [Campus Card Services \(ZHAW Self-Service-portal\)](#)
- ❖ [Fact sheet about the ZHAW Campus Card](#)
- ❖ For the public transport offer, please contact [SBB.ch](#) directly (the public transport isn't provided via the ZHAW Campus Card!)

## During your studies

### Module registration / Individual Study Agreement (= ISA)

Your ISA is the basis for a smooth study. Based on your ISA, you will be enrolled in the corresponding modules. It is therefore important that you regularly check your ISA and keep it up to date. All functions of the ISA tool are described in the [User Guide](#). As soon as the tool is opened for planning the next semester, you will be informed by email.

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### Moodle (E-Learning)

For any questions about the course and your Moodle access you can contact the module coordinator according the [module description](#) directly.

### ZHAW Moodle platform for the ZHAW specialisation skills

All information about the lectures in the specialisation skills can be found here in the [ZHAW Moodle platform](#).

### MSLS Moodle platform for the cooperation modules

All information about the lectures in the cooperation modules can be found here in the [MSLS Community Centre](#). Login with your ZHAW Account and for the course area you need a specific course enrolment key (provided by the coordination office exactly 4 weeks before the module beginning).

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## Courses, Examination plan, Grading and Timetables

### Specialisation Skills - Modules provided at the ZHAW

The actual weekly timetables for all specialisation modules at the ZHAW can be found [here](#). The publication takes place 4 weeks before the start of each semester. Changes can occur continuously, so please always check the version on our homepage.

- ❖ **The examination dates** of the specialisation modules are communicated by the corresponding lecturer.

- ❖ **Grading:** The Grades of the specialisation modules and Master's thesis are rounded to the hundredth.
- ❖ **Failed module:** In case of failure, the whole specialisation module must be repeated for the next implementation term. If you have any questions, please contact us directly ([msc-ls@zhaw.ch](mailto:msc-ls@zhaw.ch)).
- ❖ A compulsory module must be passed in the second attempt to continue with your studies.

## Cooperation modules - External modules in cooperation with the BFH, HES-SO and FHNW

The entry requirements of each module are detailed in the module descriptions. Students should study them carefully and must do the preparatory work before starting the module. In some cases, **the amount of preparatory work is considerable** (e.g. Module D1 or block weeks) and students have to organize their studies accordingly. Please be aware that **some modules have an entry test which counts for the final grade** of the module.

- ❖ **Grading and assessments:** the final grades for the cooperation modules are rounded on half grades.
- ❖ **The examination plan** for the cooperation modules is published on the MSLS Community centre.
- ❖ Detailed course information will be published on the Moodle page **four weeks before the module starts**.

## Core Competences (CC)

- ❖ **Central Teaching:** Friday (half day, according to the course information on Moodle), online
- ❖ **Decentral Coaching:** Tuesday morning, at the ZHAW in Wädenswil
- ❖ **Failed module:** In case of failure, you can change to another cooperation module (as long as you have open modules left) or repeat the same module again on the next possible occasion.

## Cluster-specific modules (CS)

- ❖ Mix of presence and online days (no hybrid!)
- ❖ Teaching days: Thursday (The whole day, according to the information on Moodle)
- ❖ Course locations: Olten, Berne or online and for the block weeks according to the course information on Moodle.
- ❖ **Failed module:** Repetition of whole module on the next possible occasion or change to another cooperation module (as long as you have open modules left).
- ❖ In case of a module grade 3.5, you can do a re-examination (this regulation only applies to the CS modules).

## Re-examination for CS modules

In the case of a grade of 3.5, you can retake the examination. The form of the resubmission as well as the specific timing and location are to be determined by the module coordinator. If the re-examination is deemed satisfactory, the student receives the mark 4.0; if no resubmission is made or if this is not deemed satisfactory, the grade of 3.5 becomes final.

	Core Competences (CC)	Cluster-specific Modules (CS)
<b>Grade <math>\geq</math> 4.0</b>	Pass	Pass
<b>Grade = 3.5</b>	Fail	Re-examination: Pass = 4.0 / Fail = 3.5
<b>Grade <math>&lt;</math> 3.5</b>	Fail	Fail

## Differences between the ZHAW and Cooperation

Due to the many different parties involved, the same rules apply to all the students and schools within the cooperation. This also means that the rules may differ from the ZHAW's internal regulations. Here are some examples:

What	ZHAW	Cooperation
Timetable	on our <a href="#">homepage</a>	according to the course information on <a href="#">Moodle</a>
Module information	via module coordinator	on the Moodle platform
Moodle	<a href="#">ZHAW Moodle platform</a>	<a href="#">MSLS Community Centre</a>
Exam dates	communicated by the corresponding lecturer	examination plan on Moodle
Grading	rounded to the hundredth	rounded to half grades
Re-exam	No	Yes (for CS-modules)

## Administrative

### Absences

Excused absences from performance assessments that are relevant for the calculation of the module grade: Please submit a doctor's certificate/justification **within 7 days** of the examination date to [msc-ls@zhaw.ch](mailto:msc-ls@zhaw.ch).

General absences during lectures: Contact the module coordinator/lecturer directly.

**Unexcused are assessed with a grade of 1.0. Further information can be found [here](#) (document in German).**

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### myZHAW & important Dates for students

There are many important dates and deadlines during your studies that must be followed. We have created an overview ([MSLS important Dates](#)) which contains all relevant dates with the deadlines to be kept.

**If you miss a deadline, you have a one-time joker for your study time. Depending on the situation, the joker can be used to accept late changes/submissions. Please note, there are deadlines for a joker as well.**

- ❖ Important links: [here](#) you will find all documents that you might need during your studies
- ❖ [A-Z Guide](#) for students (only available in German)
- ❖ [myZHAW](#): here you can view your module registrations and module grades

## Legal information / Study regulation

All legal information can be found [here](#).

- ❖ General Academic Regulations (Rahmenprüfungsordnung) ([German/English](#))
- ❖ Regulations on Admission, Matriculation and Ex-matriculation at the ZHAW ([German/English](#))
- ❖ Studienordnung MSc Life Sciences ([German](#))

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## Master's thesis

Information sheets and guidelines concerning the Master's thesis can be found [here](#). The details of the milestones can be found in the [module descriptions](#) for the Master's thesis. The [information sheet on the Master's](#) thesis in Life Sciences contains details such as submission modalities, extensions of submission deadlines, etc.

**Note:** Milestones will not be graded individually. Instead, they will be assessed as a whole after the submission of the Master's thesis.

## Topic form (submission via Complexis)

The assignment/problem definition, submission of the Master's thesis and the assessment by the correctors are handled via the Complexis tool (see our [Complexis user guide for students](#)).

The basis for registration is the ISA planning. The last milestone for the Master's thesis stands for the submission by the officially scheduled deadlines.

- ❖ Students who are writing their Master's thesis part-time and need to define the assignment earlier can use the [Master's thesis Assignment Form/Aufgabenstellung](#) and upload it after activating their Complexis account and fill in the remaining data.
- ❖ On the basis of the ISA planning, we send an e-mail to the students concerned with a call for submission of the topic form and inform them of all important information and deadlines. The Complexis access is activated (**approx. 1-2 months before the start of the semester in which you will submit your Master's thesis**).

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## Semester payment process from the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester

The call for payment of the next semester invoice will be sent to you by e-mail at the [advertised deadlines](#). With the payment you validate your enrolment every semester (re-registration procedure - Rückmeldeverfahren RMV).

- ❖ Please make sure that you meet these deadlines, otherwise **your enrolment will expire** (no extension possible).
- ❖ After the payment has been made, the link for downloading the respective semester confirmation will be available in myZHAW.

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## ZHAW Facilities & Services

### Alias – official ZHAW student representative organisation

All students pay the [Alias membership](#) fee with their semester fees.

## ASVZ – Zurich Academic Sports Association

All students pay the [ASVZ membership fee](#) with their semester fees. You can use a range of ASVZ activities. Your member card is your ZHAW Campus Card.

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## Entrepreneurship Support

There are several supports if you are interested in entrepreneurship:

- ❖ Startup Campus Courses (Business Ideas, Business Concept, Business Creation, Business Growth) – free innosuisse courses for startups from inspiration up to startup growth: <https://www.startup-campus.ch/trainings/>
  - ❖ ZHAW Startup Challenge – spring semester startup program for early stage startups with pitching prices: <https://www.zhaw.ch/de/forschung/entrepreneurship/entrepreneurship/startup-challenge/>
  - ❖ Sustainable Impact Entrepreneurship – several programs with prizes and experts to support sustainable entrepreneurship: <https://www.zhaw.ch/de/fokusthemen/zhaw-sustainable/sustainable-impact-program/impact-entrepreneurship/>
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## International Office

If you are interested in a semester abroad, you can find all information on our exchange options on our [homepage](#).

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## Leisure time – (language courses, art, culture, technology, etc.)

ZHAW students and employees in Wädenswil benefit from a wide range of leisure activities. For all information, please visit [our homepage](#).

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## Library

For the use of the ZHAW Library Services please check [the website](#) and see the specific [library guide](#). To be able to use the library's services, you need to go by with your Campus Card to set up your account. The library is located on the Grüental campus in building GE.

- ❖ There are numerous [introductory events](#) for new students.
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## Mensa and self-catering

Enjoy the fine meals prepared by Reto Strauss and his team for ZHAW employees, students and visitors. Enjoy meals and snacks, all at student-friendly prices. Microwaves are available for those who prefer to bring their own food. We have two cafeterias. These are in the Reidbach Campus, main building RT (5th floor) and in the Grüental Campus in building GD. Your ZHAW Campus Card entitles you to the reduced menu price for students. You will find credit loading stations (no cash) in each main building and in each cafeteria for loading credit onto your Campus Card.

- ❖ [Menu Mensa Güental \(GD\)](#) and [Menu Mensa Vista \(RT\)](#)
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## Service Centre vs. Service Desk

The Service Centre is available at both our locations in GA 202 (next to reception) and at reception in the RT 140. The Service Centre processes print orders for a fee and issues Campus Cards. Any credit on the Campus Card can be paid out there.

- ❖ Contact: [servicecenter-waedenswil@zhaw.ch](mailto:servicecenter-waedenswil@zhaw.ch), opening times (MO-FR, 08.00 – 12.00 o'clock)

The Service Desk provides support for technical problems. If the issue cannot be dealt with directly, they will forward it to the relevant specialist teams. You can submit a new support request via the [Self-Service Portal](#).

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## ZHAW Counselling offer during your studies and compensation of disadvantages (NTA)

The ZHAW offers students a range of [confidential counselling services](#) (counselling in difficult situations, financing your studies, military/civil service, studies and family commitments, high-performance sport commitments, studying abroad, career services, coaching and psychological counselling, discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying).

Students with disabilities or chronic illnesses are entitled to compensation to address disadvantages and enable equal opportunities in their studies. Compensation for disadvantages allows for different treatment, leading to equality with people without disabilities or chronic illnesses. More information on [barrier-free university](#) is available on the website (only in German).

## Behaviour in an emergency

The ZHAW endeavours to ensure a safe environment for students, lecturers, staff and visitors alike. We emphasise targeted information, prevention and comprehensive services in the event of an emergency. In an emergency, the instructions of the police or ZHAW security must be followed. All ZHAW lecturers and staff are trained to give instructions on certain rules of behaviour in a ZHAW room in unclear threatening situations. Students are asked to follow these instructions.

- ❖ [Emergency situations – first steps](#)
- ❖ [Emergency situations – behaviour](#)
- ❖ [Emergency kit training video](#)

## Important Contacts

If you have questions about your studies, please feel free to contact us at the following e-mail address: [msc-ls@zhaw.ch](mailto:msc-ls@zhaw.ch)

For specific questions about the specializations, please feel free to contact the respective Programme director.

- ❖ Locationmap [Campus Grüental \(GA main building\)](#) and castle (GS, GQ, GU)
- ❖ Locationmap [Campus Reidbach \(RT main building\)](#)