



# UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

## SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

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FACULTY OF MEDICINE

### **Handbook for master's studies**

<https://ugla.hi.is/kerfi/view/page.php?sid=3464>

Updated August 2018

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## Wellcome to master's studies at the Faculty of Medicine

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This handbook for master's studies brings together information, collected from various sources that should be useful for master's students. Services provided are introduced and rules explained, such as timelimits, teacher-student interaction and preparation of the thesis. Further general information is available on the [UI website](#) and the website of the [Faculty of Medicine](#) (FoM) and students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these. The handbook is a live document and updated regularly, at least once every year. It is therefore very important that teachers and students provide input and suggestions on content as well as presentation.

## General information for the academic year 2017-2018

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The office of the Faculty of Medicine is located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor in Læknagarður, Vatnsmýrarvegur 16, tel. 525-4881, e-mail: [medicine@hi.is](mailto:medicine@hi.is). Opening hours are daily between 10 am and 4 pm. Information on staff contacts, courses etc. can be found on the [FoM website](#).

## Rules on master's studies at the School of Health Sciences

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Studies for a MSc degree at the School of Health Sciences are governed by [Rules](#) # 140/2014 and these include additional special rules for master's studies at the FoM (article 17). The entry requirement is a BS degree (180 ECTS), completed with a minimum grade as further specified for each programme. Master's studies consist of a research project, normally 90 or 60 ECTS, except in the programme for Speech pathology (30 ECTS), and taught courses, in total 120 ECTS. Normal length of study is two years (four terms) and maximum length is six terms from enrolment. It is possible to enrol on a part-time basis, for up to four years. In this case at least half the number of study units for full study must be completed each academic year and all examinations passed four years after enrolment. Students are required to be registered and pay registration fees for the full duration of their studies. Studies for a master's degree entail training in scientific methods by pursuing a research project and attending courses.

## Professor of research studies

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Helga M Ögmundsdóttir is professor of research studies. She is in charge of post-graduate studies at the FoM and represents the FoM in the Committee for Doctoral Studies at the School of Health Sciences. Her office is next door to the FoM office on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Læknagarður. Appointments can be booked by sending a message to [helgaogm@hi.is](mailto:helgaogm@hi.is) or calling 525 4897.

## Administrator of research studies

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[Heiðrún Hlöðversdóttir](#) is the administrator of research studies. She takes care of general organisation of the PhD programme and progress reports. She is the first point of contact for students and teachers and directs matters as appropriate. Her office is next door to the FoM office on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Læknagarður. Students are encouraged to contact her if they have

any questions regarding their studies. Appointments can be booked by sending a message to [rnn.laeknadeild@hi.is](mailto:rnn.laeknadeild@hi.is) or calling 525 4864.

### Office staff

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Ingunn Baldursdóttir is the person responsible for post-graduate studies at the Office of the Faculty of Medicine, including registration of study units, receiving applications for study and theses and communicating with the Student Registry. The office is open daily between 10 am and 4 pm and students can send questions to [ib@hi.is](mailto:ib@hi.is) or call 525 4881.

### Office manager

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Erna Sigurðardóttir is the manager of the Office of the Faculty of Medicine, [ernas@hi.is](mailto:ernas@hi.is)

### Dean

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Engilbert Sigurðsson is the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, [engilbs@landspitali.is](mailto:engilbs@landspitali.is)

Ingibjörg Harðardóttir is the deputy Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, [ih@hi.is](mailto:ih@hi.is)

### Committee for Post-Graduate Studies

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The Committee for Post-Graduate studies (CPGS) serves two faculties, Medicine and Odontology and manages master's studies on behalf of the faculty boards. The committee is responsible for organizing and administering post-graduate studies in accordance with the general rules of the University of Iceland and the rules of the two faculties. This includes study design and structure as well as receiving and answering all student matters. Applications for study, for leave from studies and assessment of previously earned study credits shall be sent to the committee as well as other matters arising regarding individual students and their studies.

Members of the committee:

Chair: Helga M. Ögmundsdóttir [helgaogm@hi.is](mailto:helgaogm@hi.is)

Administrator: Heiðrún Hlöðversdóttir [rnn.laeknadeild@hi.is](mailto:rnn.laeknadeild@hi.is)

Representing Medical life sciences: Stefán Þ. Sigurðsson [stefsi@hi.is](mailto:stefsi@hi.is), Margrét H.

Ögmundsdóttir [mho@hi.is](mailto:mho@hi.is) and Ragnar Bjarnason

[ragnarb@landspitali.is](mailto:ragnarb@landspitali.is)

Representing physiotherapy: Árni Árnason [arnarna@hi.is](mailto:arnarna@hi.is)

Representing radiotherapy and biomedical science: Helga Erlendsdóttir

[helgaerl@landspitali.is](mailto:helgaerl@landspitali.is)

Representing Faculty of Odontology: Ingólfur Eldjárn [eldjarn@centrum.is](mailto:eldjarn@centrum.is)

Representing Public Health Sciences: Kristjana Einarsdóttir [ke@hi.is](mailto:ke@hi.is)

Student representative: Birna Þorvaldsdóttir [bth60@hi.is](mailto:bth60@hi.is)

### Student services

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[The University Centre](#) (Háskólatorg) is located beside the Main Building of the University and is connected to Gimli, Oddi and Lögberg. Together these four buildings form a cluster in the middle of the University area that is always full of life. It is a meeting point for students and staff alike to eat together, study or take part in the many events at the Centre. Various service units for students are also located at the University Centre. [The Service Desk](#) providing personal services is located in the Centre.

## Facilities for students

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Supervisors assist their master's students at the Faculty of Medicine with regard to work facilities. There is a small computer lab in room 105 in [Læknagarður](#). No specific reading rooms are allocated to master's students in Læknagarður or [Stapi](#), other than those belonging to laboratories or study programmes. Master's students have access to [reading rooms and computer labs](#), run by the University IT Services. A subsidiary of the student canteen, Háma, is located on the ground floor of Læknagarður where students can buy and consume food and drink. Páll Mortensen is the caretaker of Læknagarður, tel. 5254878 and mobile 8961365, Ragnheiður Birna Úlfarsdóttir is the caretaker of Stapi, tel. 5254366 and mobile 8652162.

## Libraries

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The [Health Science Library at Landspítali University Hospital](#) is located on the ground floor of Eirberg and offers a comprehensive service for students, including assistance with literature searches, teaching the use of electronic databases and reference managing software, inter-library loans and loans of reference books for the health sciences. The staff are very experienced in assisting master's students. The main [University Library](#) is located in the building of Þjóðarbókhlaða and offers reading space for students and a study room that can be booked for group meetings.

The website of the [University Hospital Library](#) contains a wealth of material as well as offering web access to electronic databases and journals and e-books. Students at the School of Health Science can apply for access from their home computer by contacting through the webpage [Lerki – fjaraðgangur](#).

Other useful websites include [Hvar.is](#) and [Leitir.is](#) that, along with the University Hospital Library, offer students access to a great variety of scientific source material that is available to Icelandic institutions free of charge. Master's students are encouraged to gain experience and practice from the beginning of their studies in finding and retrieving information and familiarize themselves with the various electronic databases and journal collections. These skills will make life easier especially when it comes to writing the thesis.

## Reference managing software

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Students are encouraged to use reference managing software such as [Endnote](#) or [Endnote Web](#) from the beginning of their project work as this will greatly facilitate building up and organizing the background material as well as the final composition of the reference list. A guide to using Endnote is available at the website: <http://endnote.com/training>. Another software that can be downloaded for free is [Zotero](#).

## Grants

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As a general rule students and supervisors apply together for funding and students must therefore consult their supervisor before embarking on an application. It should be kept in

mind that applying for funding is a time-consuming process and should be prepared in good time.

## **Master's study programmes and courses**

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The Faculty of Medicine offers the following master's study programmes:

[Biomedical Science](#); [Health Sciences](#); [Public Health Sciences](#); [Medical Life Sciences](#); [Physical Therapy](#); [Radiography](#); and [Speech Pathology](#). Each programme consists of core courses, elective courses and a research project. The core courses are mandatory but the elective courses are specifically selected for each student and his/her particular specific aims of study. The mandatory courses are: General Statistics for master's and doctoral students [LÆK101F](#) (6e); General methodology for master's and doctoral students [LÆK102F](#) (6e) and for master's students in and Biomedical Sciences, Biomedical Laboratory Science and Radiography participation in the Master's seminar, Málstofa (3e) is also required. Students can not register for the seminar but participation is recorded. The seminar is held once every term and is announced by the administrator for post-graduate studies at the beginning of each term. Students who have obtained a diploma degree from the Faculty of Medicine get full credit for all courses completed at master's level. Courses are credited for up to five years after completion. Courses completed for up to the last ten years can be credited provided the student can demonstrate that he/she has maintained his/her knowledge e.g. in employment. Courses on topics where knowledge is not likely to have changed much can also be credited for up to ten years after completion. In case of doubt the Committee for Post-Graduate Studies can consult course supervisors at the Faculty of Medicine.

Accreditation of previously completed courses and studies is always subject to approval by the master's student's supervisor, and it has to be shown that they are relevant for the aims of the current study and fulfil the requirements made by the Committee for Post-Graduate Studies. Courses from under-graduate study programmes can be credited up to 20 ECTS but in such cases the relevance of the course has to be argued very clearly. The pass mark for under-graduate courses credited to master's studies is one mark unit higher (on the scale of 10) than at the under-graduate level. Applications for accreditation of courses shall be signed by the supervisor and sent to the administrator for post-graduate studies. For each course detailed information must be provided on name of course, ECTS, grades, course description, teachers, assessment and, for courses outside the University of Iceland, copies of certificates etc., as well as explanation of relevance

As an option for elective courses students should consider reading courses, that can account for up to 10 ECTS. Applications are submitted to the administrator and have to be approved by the supervisor.

Students should familiarize themselves with the study programme that they have chosen, including special requirements, see [Course Catalogue](#) on the web.

## **Courses at other universities**

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Students wishing to take courses at another university can consider [the exchange programmes](#) available at UI.

## Advice and guidance for students

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From the beginning of studies each master's student shall have a supervisor, who is a permanent faculty member in the discipline concerned, with whom he/she consults on issues regarding the planning of the studies, choice of courses and other relevant aspects. The student and his/her supervisor sign a [contract](#) on their collaboration and, if relevant, a [contract with a company](#) where the project is undertaken and submit the signed forms to the administrator.

## Supervisor and advisor

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The supervisor and student submit a plan for the research project for approval by the CPGS. The supervisor and student sign the collaboration contract detailing rights and duties of each party. The supervisor is in most cases also the main advisor but an external advisor can be included provided that he/she fulfils requirements as specified in the rules. In such cases the supervisor is responsible for the general conduct of the project and that this meets the requirements of the FoM, but the direct project supervision is in the hands of the advisor.

## Master's study committee

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For each student the CPGS appoints at the beginning of the study three persons to a master's study committee, consisting of the supervisor, advisor (if applicable) and a third member. This committee advises the student on his/hers plans for the study and the project and approves these. The committee is responsible for the quality of the study and monitors progress in courses and research project.

## Change of advisor/supervisor

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A change of advisor/supervisor may become necessary for a variety of reasons, e.g. if the student changes his/her project. Should such a need arise, the student discusses this first with his/her advisor/supervisor before sending a request for change to the administrator for forwarding to the CPGS.

If a advisor/supervisor leaves his/her employment or is temporarily absent on sabbatical, sick leave or for other reasons it may be necessary to call in additional assistance to supervise the student and his/her project.

Finally, there may be a breach in trust between the student and his/her advisor/supervisor, e.g. if one party feels that the other has not fulfilled their responsibilities. In such cases the student or advisor/supervisor can apply to the CPGS that the advisor/supervisor be replaced.

## The role of the student

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The student is responsible for his/her study and is encouraged to be independent in his/her work. The student familiarizes him/herself with the rules of the FoM and follows these. It is important for the student to follow advice and respond to comments from his/her advisor/supervisor. It is also the responsibility of the student to keep the advisor/supervisor fully informed and get approval for outside contacts, e.g. presentations of the research

project or applications for funding. The student is responsible for handing in a progress report on his/her studies by December 1<sup>st</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Student counselling and career advice

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[Student and Career Counselling](#) offers advice on academic studies as well as personal and psychological assistance and organizes a variety of useful courses for students on e.g. study technique, preparation for exams, goal-setting and time management.

## Student vaccinations

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For students working with infectious material it is very important to be fully informed about potential risks in laboratories and hospitals and that they adhere to appropriate rules of conduct and risk prevention of the institution.

## Research project

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Work in the research project can begin as soon as the student and supervisor start their collaboration. Students who enrol first without a research proposal are obliged to hand in a research proposal within 6 months of enrolment. The research proposal and [supporting documents](#) is developed by the student and supervisor together along with the advisor, if appropriate. It is very important that the project is well defined from the outset. The research plan along with attachment and the contract between the MS student and supervisor (or company) is delivered to the administrator. The students present their research proposals at a special seminar and reviewers mark an assessment form. Reviewers may send suggestions for improvements to the administrator who conveys these to the applicant and gives a deadline for handing in a revised version.

## Study progress

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The administrator sends a form for a progress report to the students to be filled and submitted by December 1<sup>st</sup> for the autumn term and May 1<sup>st</sup> for the spring term. The progress reports are used to monitor progress and assess credit units. The supervisor must confirm the validity of the report and supplies information on proportionate time devoted by the supervisor and other members of the student's master's study committee so that payments may be calculated. A request to record credits for the research project is then sent to Student Registration who update the student's record for that term. The last 30 credit units are recorded after completion of the MS-examination.

## Leave from studies

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A student who wishes to take a leave from his/her studies can apply to the CPGS for permission to do by sending a written application to the administrator. If the CPGS grants the leave the student has to inform the Student Registration and pay the appropriate proportion of the registration fee.



## Writing and delivering the master's thesis

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The master's thesis shall be written according to the appropriate conventions, [see rules](#) and [guidelines](#) on Ugla. The School of Education runs a writing laboratory, Ritver, where students can obtain advice on academic writing in Icelandic and English on a peer basis and discuss their projects. For references the [APA style](#) shall be used. Unpublished information shall be cited in the text only (not included in the list of references) e.g. as Guðrún Jónsdóttir verbal information or written information plus date. The author's permission to use such information shall be confirmed in writing. Great care must be taken in the use of this type of information as their acquisition can not be traced by the general reader. Use of information from unpublished manuscripts is also subject to the author's permission. Web references can be used, mentioning authors or person responsible along with date of acquisition. Information from the websites of recognized institutions (e.g. WHO) can be cited without name of author or responsible person. Journal titles shall be abbreviated according to [international standards](#) (Index Medicus - abbreviations of journal titles). Names of Icelandic authors shall be written according to English usage and sorted alphabetically by the last name (patronymic). Students are also reminded to use reference managing software, e.g. *Endnote* or *Endnote Web* as emphasized earlier.

The FoM uses a specific layout, see [sniðmát](#). Please follow the instructions provided in the layout when setting up your thesis. The thesis shall be printed on 80/100 g/m<sup>2</sup> paper in the size A4. The cover shall be in the colour of the School of Health Sciences in stiff cardboard or and the thesis shall be stapled and glued in the spine. The student shall also submit an electronic version in PDF format to the administrator when the thesis is handed it and to the collection of theses on [www.skemman.is](http://www.skemman.is) within 3 weeks of graduation.

The master's thesis can be written in Icelandic or English. Students who are not writing in their native tongue are strongly advised to consult a language professional. Theses written in English shall contain an Icelandic abstract. Theses written in Icelandic shall contain an English abstract. The thesis shall be carefully proofread as corrections and deletions are not permitted after the final version has been handed in to the FoM. Chapter heading, sub-chapter and sub-sub-chapter headings shall be according the layout. Manuscript(s) written by the student on the subject of the thesis for publication in scientific journal(s) shall be attached in an appendix. Review articles related to the subject of the research project written by the student during the study period may also be included in an appendix.

Several printing offices have experience in printing the layout, such as [Háskólaprent](#), [Leturprent](#), [Pixel](#) or [Samskipti](#) and there may be others. Students are advised to obtain a cost estimate.

## Handing in the master's thesis

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When the student's master's study committee is satisfied that the project is ready for examination and has reviewed and confirmed that all requirements have been fulfilled they submit a request for a master's examination to the CPGS. The supervisor fills in the performance [checklist](#) and sends this to the CPGS, along with a letter stating that the student is ready to be examined and the thesis is ready. In the letter it has to be confirmed

that the student has completed required course work and the date of seminar presentation included. The master's study committee also suggests potential examiners (it is advisable to obtain verbal consent (important to include e-mail)) with brief reasons to support why they are suitable examiners. A preferred date for the examination may be suggested. The letter must also include information on who is the supervisor and who is an advisor (this information will be used when the examination is announced). All members of the master's study committee must sign the letter.

The CPGS appoints the examiners following evaluation of their qualifications (in most cases following the suggestions of the master's study committee). The administrator sends a formal request to the appointed examiners and upon their acceptance a date for the examination is decided taking account of the wishes of the master's study committee.

A thesis manuscript shall be handed in to the FoM in three copies. This must be a final version of the text but not bound. The administrator sends the thesis to the examiners 4 weeks before the examination date. Examiners can make comments at this stage which have to be submitted at least 1 week before examination and request amendments. The examination must take place at least 3 weeks before the next graduation date, information on graduation dates can be found in the [university calendar](#).

Four copies of the bound thesis shall be handed in to the FoM at least one day before the examination. This must be accompanied by a signed declaration of [handling of the thesis](#). Please note that it is not recommended to block access to the thesis except for very valid reasons. Furthermore, an electronic copy of the final version of the thesis in PDF format must be submitted to [Skemman](#) on the day of examination, at the latest.

## Master's examination

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Students complete their master's study by undergoing a master's examination. This must take place at least 3 weeks before expected graduation. A master's examination at the FoM is an open event, chaired by a chair of examination appointed by the CPGS. The student presents his/her work in a 30-minute lecture. The format of the lecture or slides is not prescribed but students are free to use standardized designs from [hönnunarstaðal Háskóla Íslands](#). The examiners then have one hour total to examine the students. The examination chairman can also allow free questions from the audience at the end of the examination. There are no marks given for master's examinations at the FoM but the examiners submit a written report on the thesis and the examination.

## Library books returned

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Every student must have returned material borrowed from the university library at least two weeks before graduation. Furthermore, every student is obliged to maintain his/her active registration at the University of Iceland and pay registration fees throughout his/her period of study, see further in [Kennsluskrá](#).

It is very important that students register for the correct graduation. Students can register for the expected graduation in Ugla. If graduation is postponed to the following academic year,

the student has to pay the appropriate registration fee, cancel the planned graduation and register for the correct graduation.

## Completed master's theses from the Faculty of Medicine

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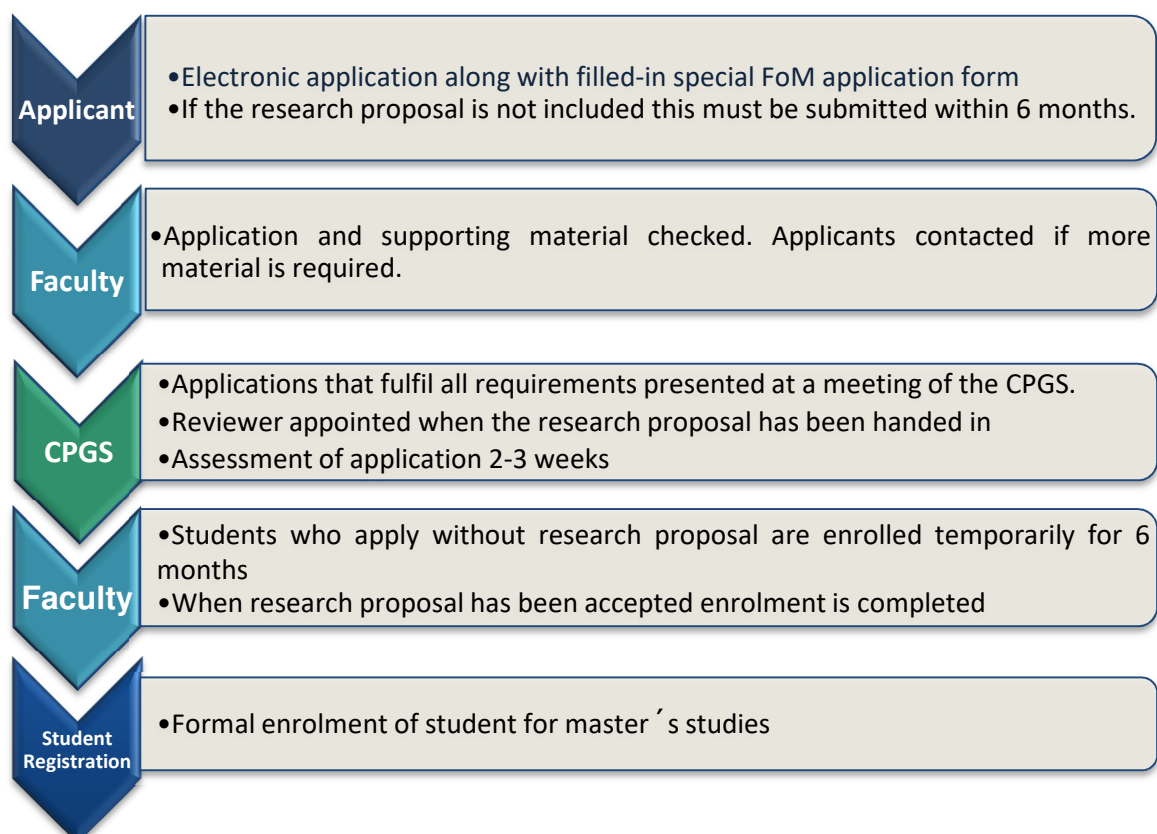
The FoM website contains abstracts of and information on master's theses of students who have graduated with a master's degree from the FoM, see [meistaraverkefni](#). Master's theses are kept in [Skemman](#), the electronic database of theses. Each student decides with his/her supervisor on the type of access granted to the thesis.

## Rules on master's studies at the Faculty of Medicine

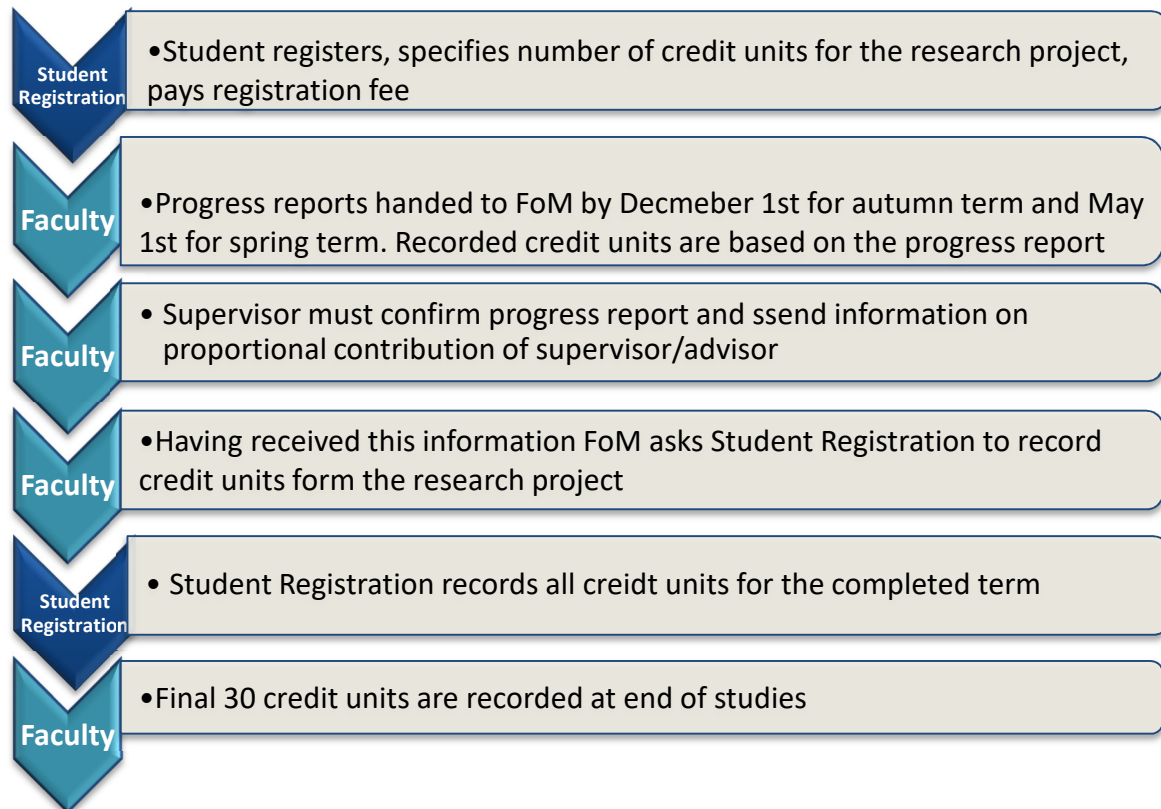
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- [Regulation no. 140-2014 on Master's study at School of Health Sciences](#)
- Law nr 85/2008 Regulation for the University of Iceland no. 569-2009 Overview of master's studies at the Faculty of Medicine

## Beginning of studies



## Study progress



## End of studies

