**Department of Chemistry and Bioscience**


**1. Master’s thesis contract**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full Name |  |
| Student number |  |
| Educational program |  |
| Duration | Start:  | 1End: | ECTS: |
| Main supervisor |  |
| Co-supervisor(s) |  |
| External supervisor(s) |  |

1Deadline for handing in the MSc thesis in Digital Exam

**2. Project description**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Working title |  |
| Introduction to the subject |  |
| Purpose |  |
| Experimental needs (equipment, travel, economy etc.) |  |
| Time schedule (e.g. Gantt Chart) |  |
| Planned supervision |  |
| Has this contract been approved by the main supervisor (yes/no)? |  |

**3. Intellectual property rights**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Can the student publish the project without acceptance of the supervisor? |   |
| Can results of the project be used in joint publications by the student and the supervisor? |  |
| Will Aalborg University be allowed to take over commercial rights to inventions made in the project (more information below)? |  |
| Will this agreement be supplemented by a non-disclosure agreement involving external partners (more information below)? |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Head of studies | Date: |  |

Please fill in the contract following the guidelines below. When the contract has been approved by your main supervisor, e-mail the contract to your study secretary and cc to your main supervisor.

**How to fill in the contract**

According to [Universitetsloven](https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2024/391) §18 stk. 5, the Head of Studies approves the assignment formulation, a plan for supervision, and the submission deadline for master's theses.

Procedure for approval

* The student(s), the main supervisor, and optionally co-supervisors and external partners fill in and describe the project in the contract.
* The contract is sent by the student to the study secretary no later than October 1 or March 1 for theses which start respectively September 1 or February 1. The contract is sent cc to the main supervisor and does not need to be signed.
* The study secretary ensures that the contract contains the necessary information and meets formal requirements.

The contract is approved by the Head of Studies, on condition that it has also been accepted by the principal supervisor. The Head of Studies returns the approved contact to the student, the main supervisor, and the study secretary who archives it in Workzone.

**1. Master’s thesis contract**

Basic information on the project and the participants needed for registration in STADS and Digital Exam.

* Start. Projects normally starts September 1 (60 ECTS projects) or February 1 (30 ECTS projects).
* End. The deadline for handing in the MSc thesis in Digital Exam will normally be the first Monday in June.
* ECTS. Master’s thesis projects are normally 30 ECTS or 60 ECTS (long master’s thesis projects).

**2. Project description**

The project description is written by the student in collaboration with the main supervisor. The description should help to plan and implement the project and provide an overview of the requirements for time, equipment, financial and supervision resources. The project description must allow the student to fulfill the learning objectives of the project (see below) and support the competence profile of the [educational program](https://studieordninger.aau.dk/).

Long master’s thesis projects

Long master’s thesis projects of more than 30 ECTS must be of experimental nature in accordance with [Bekendtgørelse om universitetsuddannelser tilrettelagt på heltid](https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2021/2285) §22 stk. 3. Elements considered to be of an experimental nature include experimental work in laboratories and in the field, as well as virtual experiments and simulations. The elements of experimental nature must constitute a substantial part of the long master’s thesis projects and aim to provide new data that can contribute to new knowledge, insight, development, or innovation. New data can be based on own measurements and observations or by obtaining and compiling data from literature, archives, and databases in new ways. The student must participate in planning and carrying out the experimental work and interpret and use the experimental data they generate. A thesis cannot thus be regarded as being of an experimental nature if it only deals with e.g. literature reviews or interpretation of other people's data.

**3. Intellectual property rights**

Students own the rights to their own results, according to [Bekendtgørelse om eksamen og censur ved universitetsuddannelser](https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2021/2271), § 48. Often, however, supervisors contribute intellectually to the result of the project, projects may be carried out as parts of ongoing research activities at AAU, or projects may be carried out in collaboration with external partners. Therefore, an agreement on how the results of the project can be used can be necessary.

Can the student publish the project without acceptance of the supervisor? The student and the supervisors should agree whether the project can be made publicly available in [AUB’s Student Project Library](https://projekter.aau.dk/projekter/en/) or other places after the MSc thesis has been completed. Inappropriate publication may hamper publication via other sources and patenting or violate additional agreements with external companies or public institutions regarding the transfer of rights (read more about this below). This question can be answered No or Yes, in more details, or left empty.

Can results of the project be used in joint publications by the student and the supervisor? Here, it can be agreed in advance if results from the project can be published by the student and supervisor jointly. Without an agreement (see also above), the student has the right to publish own results and/or apply for patenting. However, different situations may apply if the supervisor has contributed intellectually or in practice to the results of the project (supervisor's contributions belong to Aalborg university), and supervisors can choose not to offer certain projects if the results cannot be used in joined publications or used jointly in other contexts. Department of Chemistry and Biosciences has a strong tradition for involving students in the ongoing research at the department to provide students the most interesting and relevant project opportunities, and ensure relevance, funding, and professional supervision of the projects. Authorships should be agreed between the student, supervisor and other partners based on general copyright principles. Disagreements are brought before the Head of Studies. This question can be answered Yes or No, in more details, or left empty.

Will Aalborg University be allowed to take over commercial rights to inventions made in the project? Here, it can be agreed in advance if the rights to results or inventions produced by the student in the project can transferred to Aalborg University, if the university so wishes. If necessary, the transfer will take place in such a way that the student is equated with AAU employees according to [Aalborg University's remuneration rules](https://www.en.patent.aau.dk/digitalAssets/101/101561_10567_vederlagsregler-ved-aau-1-.pdf),

*Opfindelser der er frembragt af kandidatstuderende tilhører den/de studerende. Hvis en opfindelse er frembragt af både studerende og ansatte på universitetet, tilhører denne som udgangspunkt den/de studerende og den/de ansatte i sameje. Der kan, såfremt universitetet ønsker at overtage rettighederne til den/de ansattes opfindelse, indgås en aftale om frivillig overdragelse af den/de studerendes ideelle andel af opfindelsen til universitetet. Den/de studerende vil blive vederlagt for denne overdragelse ved at blive omfattet af universitetets vederlagsregler på samme vilkår som ansatte ved universitetet.*

This question can be answered Yes or No, in more details, or left empty.

Will this agreement be supplemented by a non-disclosure agreement involving external partners?

For projects carried out in collaboration with external partners, it may be expedient to prepare a non-disclosure agreement (NDA). If it is deemed necessary to also regulate rights to results and inventions, it may be expedient to prepare a non-disclosure and rights agreement. In these cases, please see also the section below. Supervisors and external examinators (censors) are bound by confidentiality regarding the project and business information from external companies included in the master’s thesis in accordance with [Forvaltningsloven](https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2014/433) §27.

*§ 27. Den, der virker inden for den offentlige forvaltning, har tavshedspligt, jf. straffelovens § 152 og §§ 152 c-152 f, med hensyn til oplysninger om 2) tekniske indretninger eller fremgangsmåder eller om drifts- eller forretningsforhold el.lign., for så vidt det er af væsentlig økonomisk betydning for den person eller virksomhed, oplysningerne angår, at oplysningerne ikke videregives.*

Thus, there is no need for non-disclosure agreements solely because of the report and the oral exam. More information on collaboration between students and external partners is available in [English](https://www.students.aau.dk/choices-along-the-way-and-jobs/gain-experience-while-you-study/project-collaboration) or [Danish](https://www.studerende.aau.dk/valg-undervejs-og-job/faa-erfaring-mens-du-studerer/projektsamarbejde). This question can be answered No or Yes, in more details, or left empty.

**Additional information on** **non-disclosure agreements**

If projects are carried out in collaboration with external partners, they may request a non-disclosure agreement or a non-disclosure and rights agreement. We have worked out the following step-by-step guideline on how to make such agreements. The student, Aalborg University (the supervisors), and external partners are, in a legal sense, separate entities. If AAU employees will contribute intellectually, with new knowledge, practical work, inventions etc. to the project, please pay special attention to Bullet 6.

1. Non-disclosure agreements or non-disclosure and rights agreements are, as starting point, made only between students and external partners. Such agreements are made on a voluntary basis and do not directly involve AAU. Still, AAU has prepared a set of [Standard contracts](https://www.studerende.aau.dk/valg-undervejs-og-job/faa-erfaring-mens-du-studerer/projektsamarbejde#download-skabeloner-til-samarbejdsaftale) in Danish and English. We recommend all students to present the standard contracts to the external partner and use them in all cases, these are acceptable. The standard contract is signed only by the student and the external project partner(s).
2. If external partners insist using their own contract, we recommend students to read the contract carefully before signing and pay particular attention to the following conditions. 1) The results of the study can be used in the master’s thesis and the exam. 2) If external project partners requests time to read the draft thesis before it is submitted, they should do it without causing major delays. 3) Avoid clauses that may limit future job opportunities. 4) If possible, avoid confidentiality clauses longer than 3 years. 4) If possible, avoid clauses that prevent the master’s thesis from being shared with others. 5) If relevant, try to include a reimbursement agreement (e.g. 20.000 DKK) if the contract transfers the rights to results and inventions from the student to the external companies. 5) Insist that the contract is written in an easily understandable way and possibly in Danish. If you are in doubt about the wording or the content of the contract, we recommend you ask your supervisor or Head of Studies for advice before signing.
3. If external partners insist that a non-disclosure agreement is signed also by the supervisor or other AAU employees, AAU has collected a number of contracts from companies in [Sharepoint](https://aaudk.sharepoint.com/sites/studenteraftaler/Delte%20dokumenter/Forms/AllItems.aspx), which have been preapproved by AAU. Pre-approved contracts are only available for some of the companies that have collaborated with AAU students at earlier semesters. These contracts must also be approved and signed by the Vice-head of Department/Head of Studies.
4. If external partners insist that the supervisor or other AAU employees sign a non-disclosure agreement and no preapproved contract is available, or if the supervisor or other AAU employees contribute with confidential information the fastest procedure is if students and the company make one non-disclosure-agreement using the [Standard contracts](https://www.studerende.aau.dk/valg-undervejs-og-job/faa-erfaring-mens-du-studerer/projektsamarbejde#download-skabeloner-til-samarbejdsaftale) and the supervisor and the company a second one using AAU’s [Standard NDA](https://www.forskningsservice.aau.dk/kontraktenheden/standardaftaler) (Standard Gensidig Hemmeligholdelsesaftale). These contracts must also be approved and signed by the Head or Vice-head of Department/Head of studies.
5. If external partners insist that the supervisor or other AAU employees sign their own non-disclosure agreement, and no preapproved contract is available, please send the unsigned contract and a short description of the project to the Head of Studies or alternatively the studyboard. AAU will engage in making a new pre-approved contract if the following conditions are met.
	1. There will likely be more student collaborations with the partner in question in the coming years.
	2. This and future collaborations with the partner have sufficient value for AAU students to use resources negotiating a new contract with the company.
	3. The company accepts that the standard agreement will apply over a period of several years, after which it can be updated/renegotiated.
	4. The company sends a draft agreement as a starting point for the negotiation. Such a draft agreement must be suitable for the purpose of completing a student project.

Please be aware that the approval of new contracts may be time consuming.

1. If the supervisor of the project or other AAU employees contribute intellectually, with new knowledge, practical work, inventions etc. to the project, these remain the property of AAU. If external partners are involved, or if the project is carried out as part of ongoing research involving external partners, and the project may potentially be commercialized, the Master’s thesis contract should be accompanied by a collaboration agreement, e.g. AAUs standard [Collaboration Agreement](https://www.forskningsservice.aau.dk/kontraktenheden/standardaftaler) (Samarbejdsaftale), between the external partners, the student, and Aalborg University, approved and signed by the Head or Vice-head of Department. If the project setup is complex, please consult Head of studies, Kontraktenheden, or other relevant persons.

**Learning objectives (from the curriculum)**

KNOWLEDGE

Students who have passed the module should be able to

* explain the scientific basis and scientific issues within the competence profile of the education
* explain the highest international research within the thesis subject area

SKILLS

* master the scientific methods and general skills related to the thesis subject area
* write an electronic project report following the standards of the field of study, use the correct terminology and document extensive use of relevant and original scientific literature, and communicate and discuss the project's research-based foundation and problem and results in writing, graphically and verbally in a professionally reasoned and coherent way
* use relevant software to present, analyze and visualize theories, hypotheses and data in writing as well as orally
* critically assess and select relevant original scientific literature and current scientific methods, models and other tools used in the project and assess and discuss the problem of the project and results in relevant scientific and social contexts
* evaluate the potential of the project for further development, assessing and incorporating relevant economic, ethical, environmental and other societal relevant factors

COMPETENCES

* participate in and independently implement technological and scientific development and research, develop and implement experimental work and solve complex tasks using scientific methods
* handle the planning, implementation and management of complex and unpredictable research and/or developmental tasks and take professional responsibility to implement independent academic assignments and interdisciplinary collaborations
* independently take responsibility for own professional development and specialization