



## **Guideline for Master's theses: Media Change & Innovation Division (Prof. Dr. Latzer)**

Zurich, May 2023

### **Introductory remarks**

This guide describes the most important steps to be taken if students wish to write a Master's thesis with Prof. Dr. Michael Latzer (Media Change & Innovation Division). The following people and institutions are involved in this process:

Examiner / professor	Prof. Dr. Michael Latzer
Supervisor	(Senior) Research and Teaching Associate of the Media Change & Innovation Division who will supervise your work
Office of Student Affairs – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	You must book your Master's thesis on the online booking system during the regular module booking period. All information regarding the booking procedure can be found here: <a href="https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/en/studies/master/degree.html">https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/en/studies/master/degree.html</a>

Studying communication and media research as a major<sup>1</sup> and completion of all required modules is a prerequisite<sup>2</sup>.

1. Choose a topic area that corresponds with the research focus of the Media Change & Innovation Division. For guidance, you can find information about the research focus of the Media Change & Innovation Division on the following website: [www.mediachange.ch](http://www.mediachange.ch).
2. Please attend the preliminary meeting, which is obligatory for all students who would like to start the Master's thesis in the next semester. This meeting usually takes place at the end of the semester - for dates and locations, please refer to the information website of the Master's program<sup>3</sup>. This meeting is a prerequisite for booking the Master's thesis module. In this meeting, you will receive further information regarding the requirements for the concepts, important deadlines, and potential supervisors. To write the Master's thesis in the Media

<sup>1</sup> Students of the minor study program who wish to write their Master's thesis at the Department of Communication and Media Research need to ask for permission and must discuss this with a professor of the IKMZ.

<sup>2</sup> Module Group "Research Design and Methods" (or equivalent) successfully completed. For more information on the requirements, click here: <https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/en/studies/master/important-documents.html>

Study guide 'Internet & Society':

[https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:369358f6-f547-47bd-bcf3-dbcc13357a62/wl\\_m\\_internet\\_society\\_2022.pdf](https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:369358f6-f547-47bd-bcf3-dbcc13357a62/wl_m_internet_society_2022.pdf)

Study guide 'Communication Science and Media Research' in German:

[https://www.phil.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:9221d54e-2085-424b-8dd7-3f2d9431c21d/MK\\_06M-7254-090\\_Kommunikationswissenschaft\\_und\\_Medienforschung.pdf](https://www.phil.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:9221d54e-2085-424b-8dd7-3f2d9431c21d/MK_06M-7254-090_Kommunikationswissenschaft_und_Medienforschung.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/en/studies/master/degree.html>



Change & Innovation Division, you are expected to have attended at least one seminar by Prof. Latzer or another member of the Media Change & Innovation Division.

### **Requirements for the concept of the Master's thesis**

The concept of your Master's thesis serves as a project plan (e.g., including your schedule and resources) and must contain all essential aspects of your Master's thesis. Your concept must comply with the formal requirements, which are described in the "Merkblatt zur Erstellung wissenschaftlicher Arbeiten am IKMZ"<sup>4</sup> (see also: APA Style Guide<sup>5</sup>). Your concept should have a coherent structure and set out the topic area, the research question as well as the theoretical and methodological approaches. This first short concept is five pages long and includes the following elements:

1. Introduction  
Working title, starting point, research interest, research aim, problem statement and main research question (which is guiding the research project); present the importance of the main research question.
2. Theory & literature review  
Overview of current research and existing research findings. Refer to literature used and connect to relevant theories.
3. Research aim, research question(s) & hypotheses  
Derive your specific research questions & hypotheses from the state of research. Describe the research aim of your work.
4. Methods  
Describe the methods you will use to address your topic (data collection, processing, analysis) and justify your choice of methods. Differentiate your choice from other possibilities.
5. Outline of your thesis  
Give an approximate scope of each chapter & subchapter.
6. Literature  
List of relevant literature (both literature which you have already read and still have to read).
7. Schedule and project plan  
Determine which work steps you can accomplish and when; plan realistically: schedule only 60% of your time resources, set milestones.

### **Master Colloquium: Media Change & Innovation Division**

Participation is only possible if the following criteria are met:

1. All compulsory modules of the main study program have been successfully completed<sup>2</sup>; one seminar has been completed with Prof. Latzer or another member of the Media Change & Innovation Division.
2. Students have attended the obligatory preliminary meeting.
3. The short concept has been submitted on time (deadlines are 1 February and 1 September of

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:1d8e7f7a-9c06-47f8-b750-752aa5097134/merkblatt\\_wa\\_2019.pdf](https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:1d8e7f7a-9c06-47f8-b750-752aa5097134/merkblatt_wa_2019.pdf) (only available in German)

<sup>5</sup> <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/>



each year) and accepted. If the concept is rejected, you will be informed by the beginning of the semester and before the start of the colloquium.

Students have to book the master colloquium via the online booking system during the regular module booking period, separately from the Master's thesis module and the registration for the Master's degree. The short concept serves as the basis for the master colloquium. The concept is to be presented orally during the colloquium and further elaborated during the colloquium. Progress must also be presented in the colloquium on a regular basis.

### **Requirements for the Master's thesis**

The Master's thesis is 50-90 pages long (excluding appendix). The following aspects, among others, will be taken into account when assessing the Master's thesis:

- Relevance of the topic
- Formulation of the research question
- Literature review (scope, differentiation and critical analysis of previous research)
- Structure of the thesis, coherent integration of theoretical approaches
- Quality of the methodological part
- Plausible and clear presentation of results; references to the theoretical background
- Summary of the work, background, findings, conclusion about the theory, reflection on the limitations and weaknesses of the thesis.
- Independence during the working process
- Fulfilment of formal criteria: Structure, writing style, grammar, spelling, referencing

### **Submission and acceptance of the Master's thesis**

The Master's thesis is a two-semester module (30 ECTS, workload: 900 hours).

Please find all important information regarding the booking procedure as well as the successful submission of the Master's thesis on the website of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.<sup>6</sup> Please note that the thesis must be submitted at the latest one year after booking the module. This includes 6 weeks to correct the Master's thesis.

**You must submit your Master's thesis to your supervisor(s) on 1 December (Fall Semester) or 1 June (Spring Semester) at the latest. If you are unable to meet the deadline for submitting your Master's thesis, you will be deemed to have failed the module.**

After submitting the final version of the Master's thesis, a revision is usually no longer possible. The submission of the complete thesis includes:

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/en/studies/master/degree.html>



1. Two printed copies of your Master's thesis.
2. The signed declaration of integrity.<sup>7</sup>
3. The complete thesis and all collected data (e.g., SPSS files) in an electronic format. Text files are checked for plagiarism, data sets are checked if there is a suspicion of lack of integrity in collection, input and analysis.
4. Abstract of your work (150-300 words), which concisely describes the research question, the method used and the most important results.

For further information regarding the booking procedure or for cancelling the module, please visit the website of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences<sup>6</sup> or contact the Office of Student Affairs.

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<sup>7</sup> Please download and sign the 'Lauterkeitserklärung' here: <https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:0357bfb5-ef9b-4762-a4ba-cd858c959b79/lauterkeitserklaerung.pdf>