

# **The M.Sc. Programmes in Environmental Management**

## **3<sup>rd</sup> semester Guidelines**

**The L-Study Board**

**Aalborg University**

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## Table of contents

Introduction .....	3
Chapter 1: The 3rd semester in relation to the study programme in general .....	4
Chapter 2: Regulations and provisions regarding EM 3rd semester .....	5
Chapter 3: Important guidelines concerning plagiarism and proper referencing .....	6
Chapter 4: Guidelines regarding the evaluation of the project .....	8
Contact information .....	9

# Introduction

The following guidelines apply to the M.Sc. programmes in Environmental Management 3<sup>rd</sup> semester at the Department of Development and Planning, Aalborg University. Regulations and provisions regarding the M.Sc. programmes as a whole (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> semester) can be found in the curriculum (studieordningen) for Civilingeniøruddannelsen i plan&Miljø. These guidelines have been elaborated as a help to students as well as supervisors and will explain and present the regulations in the curriculum (Studieordning).

Chapter 1 briefly outlines how the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester programme conforms with the M.Sc. programmes in their entirety. Chapter 2 renders regulations and provisions from the curriculum regarding the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. In chapter 3 important guidelines concerning plagiarism and proper referencing is given. Chapter 4 gives you some information regarding the evaluation of your project.

The curriculum and these guidelines describe the goals of the semester. The students have a certain degree of freedom, in co-operation with their supervisor, to decide the specific contents of the project work. The guidelines are thus only meant as guidelines, which will hopefully be used for inspiration and clarification. It is, however, important to stress that the subject of projects as well as other parts of the study plans always have to be approved by the supervisor.

Please notice the very important section on plagiarism in chapter 3 of these guidelines

Poul Alberg Østergaard  
Semester coordinator  
August 2008

# Chapter 1: The 3<sup>rd</sup> semester in relation to the study programme in general

These guidelines apply to your 9<sup>th</sup> semester in case you enrolled for your entire academic education at Aalborg University - or your 3<sup>rd</sup> semester in case you only enrolled for the Master's programmes in Environmental Management. Throughout the guidelines, the semester is referred to as the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester.

## **Admission to the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester**

Admission to EM/SEP&M 3<sup>rd</sup> semester is gained through EM 2<sup>nd</sup> semester or a JEMES 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.

## **The 3<sup>rd</sup> semester – a semester with many options**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> semester offers a number of possibilities for the students;

## **Project work at Department of Development and Planning**

The student may opt to write a project here at the Department of Development and Planning as on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semesters – though without any course work.

## **Extended Master's Thesis**

The students can also choose to prepare an extended Master's thesis by using both 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> semester for this purpose. Expectations of an extended master's thesis are naturally higher than for a normal one semester master's thesis.

Remember that one year of individual problem-based research is a long time; particularly if you do not have substantial experience with this form of work. The group of supervisors therefore *advice against* this option if you are only taking the master's programme at Aalborg University

These guidelines, however, are not made with extended theses in mind. Please refer to the 4<sup>th</sup> semester guidelines.

## **Continuing after the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester**

The 4<sup>th</sup> semester is the last semester in which the student will write his/her master thesis. The master thesis may take the subject area of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester project as its point of departure, but this is not obligatory.

All previous project exams and course exams must have been passed before embarking on your 4<sup>th</sup> semester project. You will not be assigned a supervisor and any supervisor will not be given resources to supervise you until you have officially embarked on the thesis. Under special circumstances – and subject to the approval of the supervisor and the Study Board – this may be deviated from.

## Chapter 2: Regulations and provisions regarding EM 3<sup>rd</sup> semester

**Theme:** Assessment of strategies, projects and/or plans

**Objective:** The successful student should by the end of the semester:

- have obtained an understanding of and some practical experiences with energy planning, environmental management, or planning within an environmental field of his/her own choice. Management/planning may include transfer of technology or types of solutions from one country to another.
- be able to apply the theoretical insights and methodological knowledge obtained during his/her 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester in a real life situation in different institutional and cultural contexts
- be able to sketch a strategy or plan for energy and/or environmental management and/or environmental technology transfer based on theoretical insights and methodological knowledge obtained during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.
- be able to assess the consequences of the proposed strategies or plans.

Seminars/workshops may be arranged to support the project assignment.

The project assignment values 30 ECTS.

**Examination:**

An oral examination based on the submitted project report with the participation of an external examiner from the university. The duration of the examination is maximum 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> hour but less is permitted. The examination will be graded on the Danish grading 7-point grading scale. See also chapter 4.

## Chapter 3: Important guidelines concerning plagiarism and proper referencing

The use of the internet makes it is very easy to find sources and good texts describing issues relevant to your projects. Unfortunately, the internet also facilitates the misuse of such sources as everything can be copied directly into your own documents. This, however, is illegal plagiarism; it is seriously condemned and must at all costs be avoided.

Naturally, the same applies to sources in print.

Generally, you should not use another author's phrases unless there is a specific reason for doing so. In this case, the phrases *must* be clearly marked in the report using italics and/or quotation marks combined with a reference to the author. Failure to do so is plagiarism. Even if you did not intend to cheat.

We have adapted an Oxford University rule of thumb saying that "if six or more consecutive words are the same as the source", then it must be marked as a quotation as described above and clearly referenced. Additionally – and again inspired by Oxford University - "fewer than 6 words should also be quoted when you borrow a particularly apt or striking phrase"

Paraphrasing of other authors' work must also be properly referenced. Failure to do so is plagiarism. Even if you did not intend to cheat.

It is not even acceptable to present another author's *idea* without referring to the author. Failure to do so is plagiarism. In fact, making such references merely demonstrates that you are a well read student who knows the area of study.

Diagrams, figures, tables, photos and other graphical representations not made by yourself must also be properly referenced. Failure to do so is plagiarism

**Plagiarism is utterly unacceptable and will lead to the rejection of the report and expulsion of the student from Aalborg University if discovered in a submitted report.**

The extensive use of properly referenced quotes from single sources - ~third of a page and up - on the grounds that "*they write it better than we are able to*" is *not* plagiarism and hence not illegal. However, it is poor judgement, considered poor student work and hence generally renders a poor impression.

The extensive use of properly referenced quotes from single sources may of course be relevant under special circumstances, such as if you wish to discuss an EU directive, in which case, devoting e.g. a full page to the actual text may be appropriate.

If in doubt, please consult your supervisor.

Several reference systems exist. Use one system consequently throughout the whole report and throughout the entire process *including drafts*. Sloppy reference methodology in the preparation of drafts will cause problems in the writing of your final report. You will most likely forget that parts of your text are in fact quotations – and these parts will be considered plagiarism in your submitted report. Below is a link to a description of the Chicago style (successor of Harvard) which we recommend you to use.

<http://wwwlib.murdoch.edu.au/find/citation/chicago.html>

## **Chapter 4: Guidelines regarding the evaluation of the project**

The evaluation will be based on the written and submitted report, an oral presentation and an oral defence. The grading of the project will be based on the written as well as the oral performance.

### **The oral presentation**




Each group will be given 20 – 45 minutes to present the report. The contents of this presentation should be discussed with the supervisor beforehand. The contents of the oral presentation may vary. Besides presenting the central argument of the report, the student may choose to clarify and further develop some of the central issues in the report. It can be part of the empirical investigation and/or the theoretical and methodological considerations. The student will thus get a chance to elaborate on the weak points of the report.

In short, a typical oral presentation would start by giving a general description of the problem at hand, detail how the problem was addressed and finally present the conclusions of the analyses.

### **The oral defence**

The oral presentation is followed by an oral examination and defence, which will last about 45 - 60 minutes. The oral examination will take its point of departure in the submitted report and the oral presentation.

## Contact information

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