

**University of Neuchâtel
Faculty of Economics and Business**

Master of Science in General Management (MScGeM)

Guidelines for the Internship Master Thesis

Version: 2026

1. Purpose and Scope

The internship master thesis (also referred to as the internship report or internship-based master thesis) represents the final and integrative learning experience of the Master of Science in General Management (MScGeM). It is based on a substantial professional internship carried out in an organization and aims at demonstrating the student's ability to analyze a real organizational situation or project, mobilize and apply concepts, methods, and tools acquired during the Master program, and produce a structured, rigorous, and well-argued professional report.

The internship thesis is not a purely descriptive account of activities. It must contain analysis, structuring, critical distance, and reflective discussion based on the internship experience. The report must show that the student is able to take a step back from daily operations, identify key issues, and transform practical experience into structured managerial insight.

Each student is supervised by an academic supervisor from the University of Neuchâtel and by a tutor in the host organization. The topic, scope, objectives, and expected deliverables of the internship thesis must be defined in advance and validated by the academic supervisor.

2. Conditions for the Internship

To be eligible, the internship must satisfy the following general conditions:

- The student has acquired at least 30 ECTS – at the time of the beginning of the internship
- Minimum duration: typically, at least three months full-time (or an equivalent workload – but not less than 50%)
- Maximum duration: up to nine/twelve months full-time – or part-time
- The internship must be carried out in a real organization (company, public administration, NGO, international organization, or similar), located in Switzerland or abroad.
- The tasks must require Master-level skills and be related to the domain of management (or finance, information systems, supply chain, human resources, ...) and to the objectives of the MScGeM program.
- There must be one tutor in the host organization and one academic supervisor from the Faculty's teaching staff.
- The internship and its objectives must be formally approved before it starts, according to the faculty's administrative procedures.
- The host organization must provide a professional environment that allows the student to access relevant information and to carry out meaningful analytical or project-oriented work. Purely operational, administrative or repetitive tasks without analytical content are not sufficient for an internship master thesis.

3. Objectives and Expected Contribution of the Report

The internship thesis must focus on a clearly identified professional, managerial, or organizational problem, project, or challenge. It must be structured around a guiding question, objective, or mandate defined in agreement with the host organization and the academic supervisor.

In particular, the report must show the students' ability to:

- Analyze a concrete situation using relevant managerial concepts and frameworks;
- Structure complex information and data;
- Develop reasoned interpretations and diagnoses;
- Formulate coherent, feasible, and well-argued recommendations or solutions;
- Reflect critically on the results, the limits of the analysis, and the learning outcomes.

The report must demonstrate analytical depth, conceptual rigor, professional relevance, and clarity of writing. It should be written for an informed professional audience.

4. Possible Orientations of the Internship Thesis

Depending on the nature of the internship and the agreement with the supervisor, the internship thesis may take different orientations, for example:

- An in-depth analysis of a managerial or organizational problem;
- The design, implementation, and evaluation of a project or tool;
- A strategic, organizational, or process diagnosis followed by recommendations;
- An evaluation of practices, procedures, or performance in a given domain.

In all cases, the work must go beyond description and must include a structured analytical component and justified conclusions.

5. Recommended Structure of the Internship Thesis

While the exact structure may vary depending on the nature of the internship, a standard structure is the following:

1. Cover page
2. Executive summary
3. Table of contents (and, if applicable, lists of figures and tables)
4. Introduction (context, objectives, problem statement, structure of the report)
5. Presentation of the organization
6. Description of the mission and analytical framework
7. Analysis / Main body
8. Discussion and recommendations
9. Conclusion (including limits and learning outcomes)
10. References
11. Appendices

The structure must be logical and must guide the reader progressively from the context and problem definition to the analysis, conclusions, and recommendations.

6. Content of the Main Sections

Executive Summary: The report must begin with an executive summary (approximately half a page to one page). It should present, in a concise and structured manner, the context of the organization, the objective of the internship and of the report, the approach used, and the main results and

recommendations. The executive summary must be understandable on its own by a decision-maker who does not read the full report.

Introduction: The introduction presents the general context of the internship and the organization. It explains the objectives of the internship and of the report, introduces the central problem, project, or mandate, and clarifies the scope and structure of the work. The introduction must make clear what the report is about, why the topic is relevant for the organization, and what the student aims to deliver.

Presentation of the Organization: This section provides the necessary background for understanding the environment in which the internship took place. It may include a short presentation of the organization, its activities, its position in the industry or sector, and its main challenges. Only information that is useful for understanding the problem or project addressed in the report should be included.

Description of the Mission and Analytical Framework: This section describes the role of the student during the internship, the tasks and responsibilities, and the mandate or objectives assigned by the organization. It also introduces the main concepts, tools, or analytical frameworks that will be used to structure the analysis. The objective is to clarify both what was done and how the problem will be approached from an analytical perspective.

Analysis / Main Body: This is the core of the report. It contains the structured and reasoned analysis of the central problem, project, or situation. Depending on the nature of the internship, this section may include process analyses, organizational diagnoses, evaluations of practices, market or strategic analyses, or assessments of alternative solutions. The analysis must go beyond description and must demonstrate critical thinking, structuring of information, and appropriate use of concepts and tools.

Discussion and Recommendations: This section interprets the results of the analysis and links them back to the objectives of the internship and the initial problem or mandate. It highlights the main insights and develops concrete, feasible, and well-argued recommendations for the organization. When relevant, alternative options may be discussed and compared.

Conclusion and Learning Outcomes: The conclusion summarizes the main contributions of the report and recalls the main results and recommendations. It may also discuss the limits of the work and highlight the main professional and personal learning outcomes of the internship. This section should show the student's ability to take a reflective and critical perspective on the experience.

Appendices: Appendices may include complementary materials such as detailed process descriptions, internal documents, interview guides, questionnaires, additional tables or figures, or technical elements. Appendices should contain supporting material and not elements that are essential for understanding the main argument of the report.

7. Data, Information, and Methods

Depending on the nature of the internship, the work may rely on internal documents, interviews, observations, databases, operational data, process descriptions, or other sources. The student must clearly explain:

- What data or information was used,
- How it was collected,
- How it was analyzed or processed,
- What limitations or constraints affect the data.

When confidentiality constraints apply, the student must respect them strictly and, if necessary, anonymize sensitive information or include certain documents only in a restricted appendix.

8. Formatting and Presentation Rules

Unless specified otherwise by the supervisor, the following rules apply:

- Font size: 11 pt
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Margins: approximately 2.5 cm
- Main section starting on a new page
- Text justified
- Pages numbered
- Tables and figures must be numbered, titled, and referred to in the text
- Tables and figures must be self-explanatory and include sources when applicable

Indicative length: typically, up to 20 pages (excluding cover page, executive summary, list of tables and figures, references and appendices). The quality of analysis and clarity of argumentation are more important than the number of pages.

9. References and Use of Sources

All sources used must be properly cited in the text and listed in a reference list at the end of the report. A consistent citation style must be used throughout the document (a specific style may be required by the supervisor).

Internal documents from the host organization must be clearly identified as such. When public sources are used, the original source must be cited.

10. Plagiarism, Ethics, and Use of AI Tools

Plagiarism is strictly forbidden and leads to failure and possible disciplinary sanctions. Any borrowed idea, text, figure, table, or data must be properly cited. A pledge of honor must be signed and submitted with the report.

The use of AI tools (for example for language improvement, formatting, or brainstorming) must respect academic integrity. Such use must be transparent and declared according to faculty rules. The student remains fully responsible for the content, correctness, and originality of the work.

To be included at the end of report

Disclaimer on the Use of AI

I hereby declare that, in the preparation of the report "<TITLE> ", AI tools were used in a responsible manner, especially for assisting with spelling and grammatical checks. These tools were employed to make sure that the clarity, coherence, and correctness of the written content. It is important to note that AI was not involved in any part of the research process, data analysis, or formulation of conclusions. All intellectual work, including the analysis, results, and discussions, were conducted independently. The use of AI was limited to enhancing the quality of the written language without influencing the academic integrity or the originality of the research.

Name:

Date:

11. Supervision, Milestones, and Timeline

The coordinator will communicate the name of the academic supervisor to the student. The student will define and validate the topic and scope of the internship thesis with the supervisor and respect the administrative deadlines for registration and submission. A typical process includes:

- Validation of the internship and topic before or at the beginning of the internship – at least 2 weeks – if possible;
- Definition of a plan or outline of the report;
- Regular exchanges with the academic supervisor;
- Submission of a draft version to the supervisor;
- Submission of the final version according to official procedures.

12. Submission, Archiving, and Confidentiality

The final version of the internship thesis must be submitted according to the official master program procedures. After evaluation, the thesis may be archived by the Faculty.

If the thesis contains confidential information, specific arrangements (restricted access, redacted version, or confidentiality agreement) may be required.

13. Evaluation Criteria

The internship thesis is typically evaluated based on:

- The structure and clarity of the document;
- The quality of analysis and reasoning;
- The relevance, coherence, and feasibility of recommendations;
- The appropriate use of concepts, tools, and methods;
- The quality of writing, presentation, and formal aspects;
- The professional relevance and maturity of the work;
- The student's autonomy, rigor, and engagement;

14. MScGeM Internship Master Thesis Website

<https://www.unine.ch/seco/formations/mscgem/internship/>