Universität Zürich[UZH]

Department of Geography
Geographisches Institut

Study guide to the Master of Science program in

Geography



Surface lakes of the Sermeq-Kujalleq Glacier in Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland)
Adrien Wehrlé

Starting Fall Semester 2026
Academic Year 2026/2027

1.	**Preface**	**3**
2.	**Geography at the University of Zurich (UZH)**	**4**
	2.1 Aim of the study programme	4
	2.2 Educational foci	4
3.	**Occupational fields for Geographers**	**5**
	3.1 Selected fields of work	5
	3.2 Employment Situation	6
4.	**MSc studies at the UZH Faculty of Science**	**6**
	4.1 Enrolment	6
	4.2 Beginning of studies and study duration	7
	4.3 The credit-point system (ECTS credits)	7
	4.4 Structure	7
	4.5 Structure of major and minor	8
	4.6 Compulsory, core elective and elective modules	8
	4.7 Module booking	8
	4.8 Assessments	9
	4.9 Mobility	9
	4.10 Degree	10
	4.11 Transfer of additional credits	10
	4.12 Official regulations for Master's degrees at MNF	10
	4.13 Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities or chronic illnesses	11
5.	**The MSc programme in Geography**	**11**
	5.1 General information	11
	5.2 Structure	12
	5.3 Emphasis within the Master of Geography	12
6.	**Structure and content of the MSc programme**	**13**
	6.1 Compulsory modules	14
	6.2 Core elective modules	15
	Elective modules	16
	6.3 Field trips	17
	6.4 Tutorials	18
	6.5 Internships	18
7.	**Geography as a minor**	**19**
8.	**Teaching Diploma for Upper Secondary Education (Matura school)**	**19**
	8.1 Geography as a First Teaching Subject	19
	8.2 Geography as a Second Teaching Subject	20
9.	**Varia**	**20**
	9.1 Students' Society Geography (Fachverein)	20
	9.2 Geographie Alumni UZH	20
	9.3 Libraries	21
	9.4 Important University Information Offices	21
	9.5 Further Offers	23

1. Preface

Welcome! We are pleased that you are interested in choosing the Master's study program in Geography at the University of Zurich.

In this guide ("Wegleitung"), the study programme is explained for students starting their studies in the fall semester 2026. For students who have started their studies before the fall semester of 2026, the study guide of the corresponding year (beginning of studies) and transitional regulations are relevant. This study guide describes the structure as well as the administrative matters of the MSc programme in Geography (GEO). For further questions, the Student Advisory Service of the Department of Geography (GIUZ) is your first contact point:

Contact:

Office	Y25-K-10 Winterthurerstrasse 190 8057 Zurich Universität Irchel (UZH)
Phone	+41 (0)44 635 51 18 (Student Advisory Service)
Email	TEACHING-SUPPORT@GEO.UZH.CH
Website	STUDENT ADVISORY SERVICE GEOGRAPHY AND EARTH SYSTEM SCIENCES

Appointments can be booked via the Student Advisory Services website.

Further information about the study programme and particularly about individual courses can be found on the following websites:

UZH FOR STUDENTS
COURSE CATALOGUE UZH
COURSE CATALOGUE ETH ZURICH

To allow students to efficiently plan their studies, an information event about the Master's programme is held at the end of the Bachelor's programme. For new students at UZH, usually a short introduction event takes place in the week before or the first week of every semester. Details can be found here. For further information, please contact the student advisory service.

More information on the Master's programme in Geography can be found on the website of the Department of Geography:

STUDYING AT GIUZ

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2. Geography at the University of Zurich (UZH)

At the Department of Geography, we examine existential questions about the present and the future of the living environment on our planet. Based on the motto „*One Earth – Many worlds*", we ask questions such as: How do humans interact with their environment? What kind of spatial relations develop between humans and their environment? Global change, nonlinearization, virtual worlds, environmental changes and urbanization are some of the core challenges Geography touches upon.

The study programme in Geography (GEO) offers a unique combination of research perspectives and unites approaches of natural, social and computational sciences. The Master's study programme in Geography allows for specializations in individual research fields of Geography. Profound knowledge of ongoing research projects is imparted, and critical discussions of socially relevant topics are encouraged in our programme. Furthermore, students' intellectual and communicational skills are promoted.

2.1 Aim of the study programme

- Students understand the functioning and transformation of the living space on a local, regional and global scale.
- Students can implement approaches of natural, social and computational sciences to analyze questions appropriately.
- Students can act responsibly as interdisciplinary thinking human beings.

2.2 Educational foci

The Department of Geography of the University of Zurich has the following foci of education:

Remote Sensing

- **Earth System Sciences (ESS):** Coevolution of social-ecological systems, biosphere- and hydrosphere- human interactions.
- **Remote Sensing of Environmental Change (RSEC):** Novel open-source methods are being developed to quantify environmental changes and understand climate change impacts on the cryosphere, forests, and geomorphology by combining multi-sensor satellite data with airborne observations, including historical and future Earth observation imagery.
- **Remote Sensing Laboratories (RSL):** Generating products of remote sensing of the earth surface, classification of land use, SAR and LIDAR, image spectrometry, instruments and methods for capturing environmental problems and processes with the use of data generated with satellites, planes or drones.
- **Remote Sensing of Water Systems (RSWS):** Developing and applying novel approaches, building upon coupled models and observations to advance water systems research.
- **Spatial Genetics (SG):** Mapping the spatial distribution of plant genetic diversity, including its characteristics and effects on ecosystem functioning.

Geographic Information Science

- **Geocomputation (GC):** Methods of geoinformatics with a focus on uncertainties in environmental modelling, methods of spatial localization and search in text and images, extraction of geo-semantical information from unstructured geographical sources.
- **Geographic Information Visualization and Analyses (GIVA):** Geographic information visualization, science in spatial cognition, methods of analysing space, application of geographic information technologies in human and social sciences.
- **Urban Analytics (UA):** Focus on developing computational methods, the research explores urban systems by integrating traditional and big data sources.

Human Geography

- **Labour Geography (LGG):** Transformations of forms of work, working conditions and labour markets with a focus on digitalisation, migration, gender and care work.
- **Political Geography (PGG):** Geographies of violence and power, geographies of moral, political ecology, and development studies.
- **Space, Nature and Society (SNS):** Social and spatial aspects of nature, its perception, meaning, value, appreciation, appropriation, and development.
- **Social Geography and Urban Studies (SURB):** Transformation of cities and urban societies, urban marginalization, global socio-spatial inequalities and possibilities for urban change.
- **Economic Geography (WGG):** Geographies of global commodity chains and transnational markets; work, gender and space; urban and regional development.

Physical Geography

- **Environment and Climate (eClim):** Research on climate-related risks, impacts, and adaptation in mountain regions combines natural and social sciences to co-produce solution-oriented knowledge with policy and practice.
- **Glaciology and Geomorphodynamics (3G):** Climate history and climatic consequences, natural hazards, research on ice ages and high mountain areas.
- **Geochronology (GCH):** Dating of soils, landscapes and surface processes.
- **Hydrology and Climate (H2K):** Water cycles, catchment hydrology, hydrological processes, climate impact on water resources.
- **Soil Science and Biogeochemistry (2B):** Carbon cycle in the system of plant and soil, geography of vegetation and geo-ecology, history of landscape.

3. Occupational fields for Geographers

Geographers can benefit from a wide range of occupational fields in the job market. Due to Geography's broad scope, employment can be found in a variety of fields, although graduates might have to compete with graduates of other disciplines for the same jobs. Nevertheless, skills, which are high in demand – teamwork, project work and interdisciplinary collaboration – are acquired in the Geography study programme.

3.1 Selected fields of work

- **Spatial planning:** City, regional & land use planning, site evaluation, city and regional research, economic and structural policy, economic promotion, disposal, transport and mobility research, traffic planning, tourism.
- **Environment, landscape and human beings:** Environmental and landscape planning, nature and environment protection, natural hazards, biotope mapping, geo-ecology, geo-technology, ecosystem research, ecological management, environmental economy, soil protection, soil science, climatic research, hydrology, soil protection, development cooperation, international organizations, insurances, meteorology.
- **Information and communication:** Press and public relations, media, publishing, statistics, market research, information services, remote sensing, (computer) cartography, geo-informatics (GIS), banks, museums, libraries.
- **Schools:** Teaching at secondary, diploma, vocational and other schools.

3.2 Employment Situation

After graduation, geographers find jobs both in Switzerland and abroad. Thanks to the social importance of topics such as environmental protection, urban and regional planning or natural hazards, the majority of graduates in geography will continue to find interesting and challenging work in the future. Likewise, the importance of data analysis has increased, which has a positive influence on the employment situation of geographers in this area.

Examples of specific job descriptions and information on the current employment situation are available at the following link:

AFTER YOUR STUDIES

4. MSc studies at the UZH Faculty of Science

The courses at the Faculty of Science ("Mathematisch-naturwissenschaftliche Fakultät", MNF) are structured into Bachelor's and Master's degrees. The Master's degree is based on previous knowledge acquired during the Bachelor's programme. Further information about our Bachelor's programme is provided in the **BACHELOR'S DEGREE STUDY GUIDE (GERMAN ONLY)**.

The Master's programme conveys advanced scientific knowledge and enables students to carry out independent scientific work. The structure of the Master's programme at GIUZ is described below.

After obtaining a Master's degree in Geography, excellent students can strive to acquire a PhD degree. This depends on available funds and the acceptance in a promotion programme, and/or finding an advisor willing to lead a dissertation project.

Moreover, a Master's degree is the fundamental requirement for acquiring the teaching diploma for high schools. The didactical education is provided by the Institute of Education (IfE) of the UZH.

Within the study programme "Master of Science in Geography", a specialization in a specific field of geography is possible, but not mandatory. For a completed Master's programme in Geography, the diploma „Master of Science in Geography" (MSc UZH in Geography) is awarded.

4.1 Enrolment

Enrolment is necessary to follow a study programme at UZH. All students must be enrolled as long as they require services from the University. These services include participation in courses, the claim for counselling and support, the use of libraries and IT services, taking exams, as well as the validation of degrees. Semester fees have to be paid up to and including the semester in which the Master's exam is taken and the validation of the graduation took place, even if no other modules are taken that semester.

Registration

Before the first matriculation, students need to register at the Student Administration Office of UZH. This is also the case after a deregistration due to the interruption of studies. The requirements for admission to the University of Zurich are explained here:

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

Application deadlines:

- Fall Semester: 30th of April
- Spring Semester: 30th of November

The enrolment is automatically renewed every semester through the online semester enrolment tool at:

SEMESTER ENROLMENT

STUDY START AND REGISTRATION

4.2 Beginning of studies and study duration

Generally, the beginning of Master's studies is in the fall semester. If students begin their Master's study programme in the spring semester, they may need to consider certain preconditions for modules (e.g. module B is only bookable after completion of module A). However, a start in the spring semester is easily feasible.

The standard study duration for MSc programmes is three or four semesters. After studying 12 semesters, the semester fee will be doubled. The Faculty Board might permit exceptions upon handing in a justified request. In any case, before a student completes 12 semesters, they should contact the student advisory service to discuss the further course of studies.

Further information can be found on p. 1 of the Ordinance on Tuition Fees at the University of Zurich/ **VERORDNUNG ÜBER DIE STUDIENGEBÜHREN AN DER UNIVERSITÄT ZÜRICH (GERMAN ONLY).**

4.3 The credit-point system (ECTS credits)

Every degree programme at UZH uses the principle of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). A Master's degree consists of 90 or 120 ECTS credits (if a minor is added). For all coursework, students get ECTS credits based on an official assessment. The following principles apply:

- ECTS credits are awarded only after an official assessment.
- One ECTS credit corresponds to a workload of 25-30 hours, which includes lectures and time for individual work (self-study, solving exercises, preparation for exams, etc.).
- 30 ECTS credits can be gained per semester in full-time study.
- Only whole ECTS credits can be obtained.

Students have online access to their transcript of records (overview of all passed and failed modules) at any time. The student affairs office of the faculty needs to be informed about any discrepancies within four weeks after a module has ended.

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS

4.4 Structure

The degree programmes at the MNF are structured into Bachelor's and Master's degrees (Bachelor of Science: BSc; and Master of Science: MSc). For the enrolment in a Master's curriculum, a Bachelor's degree in geography or a similar subject is required. The Master's programme provides in-depth scientific education and prepares candidates for autonomous scientific work. The structure of the Master's programme is explained below.

The courses of the Master's study programme are structured into compulsory modules, core elective modules and elective modules. Students can decide for themselves which and how many modules they would like to book and complete each semester. Most modules are taught during one semester (fall or spring), however, some modules cover two subsequent semesters. In addition, some modules require the (successful) completion of other modules. This and further information on individual modules are provided in the online course catalogue.

UZH COURSE CATALOGUE

The MSc degree also forms the basis for pursuing a teaching education for high school ("Lehrdiplom"). The didactical education is provided by the Institute of Education (IfE) of UZH. This track requires excellent knowledge of the German language and a tailoring of the MSc curriculum to modules that are compulsory for the teaching diploma.

TEACHING DIPLOMA

INFORMATION ON THE TEACHING DIPLOMA

4.5 Structure of major and minor

The Bachelor's (180 ECTS credits) and Master's study programmes (90 or 120 ECTS credits) at the Faculty of Science (MNF) are divided into major and minor subjects. Within the Master's programme (90 ECTS credits), no minor is included. Nevertheless, an additional minor (30 ECTS) can be completed if the study programme is extended to 120 ECTS credits.

At the Faculty of Science (MNF) a new minor can be started at the Master's level. At other faculties, a minor at the Master's level may require a certain minor at the Bachelor's level. A list of all major and minor subjects of UZH can be found on the following website.

UZH Degrees

4.6 Compulsory, core elective and elective modules

The study programme includes three different types of modules: compulsory, core elective and elective modules. Modules can contain one or more course types such as lectures, exercises, seminars or field trips. Every module is completed by an assessment. The type of assessment depends on the module and is published in the online course catalogue. There are three different kinds of modules:

- **Compulsory modules** are mandatory for all students of a certain study programme. Students who fail the assessment of a module can repeat it once. If the repetition results in a failure, the student is excluded from all study programmes which contain this module as a compulsory module.
- **Core elective modules** are modules which can be chosen from a given list. If a student fails the assessment of a core elective module twice, the module can be replaced by another core elective module (that needs to be passed).
- **Elective modules:** are modules which can be selected freely. Elective modules can be substituted without restrictions.

4.7 Module booking

Information about modules can be found in the online course catalogues ("Vorlesungsverzeichnis"), see links below. The general structure of a curriculum is defined in the study guide, but the students can compose individual schedules by themselves.

Module Booking UZH

How to book modules UZH

After having paid the semester fees, it is possible to book modules online. The faculty's deadlines must be considered. It is recommended to book modules at your earliest convenience. For the MNF, the online booking tool opens around five weeks before the lecture period. Booking modules is usually possible until one week after the start of lectures, however, some modules need to be booked earlier. A deregistration of modules at the MNF is usually possible until the first week of the semester.

Booking and Cancelling Modules

Module booking ETH Zürich

Modules at ETH must be booked separately. This requires prior registration as a "special student" at ETH, which must be confirmed each semester. Afterwards, ETH modules can be booked directly online via myStudies.

Module Booking ETH Zurich: registration as Special Students UZH

myStudies ETH Zurich

4.8 Assessments

Registration for Exams:
With the booking of a module at UZH, students are automatically registered for the assessment of the respective module. In most cases, you can unsubscribe from the module, including the exam, without specifying any reason within the first weeks of the lecture period, but check the course catalogue for specific module deadlines. A deregistration after the cancellation deadline is only possible upon submission of a medical certificate or a written request. If students are ill on the day of the examination, they must apply for cancellation within 5 working days of the examination and hand in a medical certificate (doctor's note).

ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMS

Applications are made through the online student portal. Afterwards, missed exams (no-shows) will be graded as failed. In the final diploma, only passed assessments will be listed.

LAUNCHPAD STUDENTSERVICES

For modules at ETH, the exam registration has to be carried out separately. Depending on the type of examination, a deregistration is possible until shortly before the exam.

Students have online access to their transcript of records (overview of all passed and failed modules) at any time.

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS

Grading of Exams
The module coordinator is responsible for assessments. The form of the assessment – written exam, assignments, or other tasks – is communicated in the course catalogue. They can be graded (1-6) or marked with a pass/fail.

At UZH, you can see the results in your account after about 4 weeks. Afterwards, the Faculty Board validates the results before they become final. You have the right to see the graded exam and to consult the teacher(s) who graded the exam. The date and time will be communicated by the teacher or by the secretary.

At ETH, the results are first validated and then disseminated via myStudies. At a later stage, the results are automatically communicated to UZH and listed for your degree.

MYSTUDIES ETH ZURICH

Regulations for repeat examination
The regulations follow those of the institute that offers the module, i.e. the UZH Department of Geography or the ETH Department of Earth Science. Usually, exams can be repeated once for every module. After two failed attempts, the respective module cannot be booked anymore. In the unfortunate case of two failed attempts for a compulsory module, all curricula which require that specific module cannot be continued. If a student fails a core elective module at the repeat examination, it can be replaced once by another core elective module, also with the possibility to repeat the exam once. Elective modules can be replaced without constraints. After a failed module, the students need to register for the repeat exam. The application for the repeat exam is binding, and it is not possible to unsubscribe. Students can also opt to repeat the entire module.

The described regulations are also applicable to the Master's exam. A one-time repetition of the Master's thesis, with a new topic, is possible.

4.9 Mobility

It is possible to spend one semester at another university. This must be discussed with, and approved by, the Student Advisory Service of the Department of Geography. The host university must be recognised by UZH, and the modules taken must fall within the scope of the Geography curriculum. Credits obtained abroad may be counted towards the elective modules of the Master's degree and, under certain conditions, towards compulsory and core elective modules (see the section chapter 4.6).

Overall, at least 60% of the 90 ECTS credits must be completed through UZH modules. Please note that modules taken at ETH cannot be counted towards this requirement. For this reason, the Geography curriculum allows for only one exchange semester. Exceptions may be granted by the Faculty Board upon submission of a written request. Studying at another university in Switzerland or abroad is a very exciting and valuable experience. Furthermore, it offers the possibility of improving a foreign language. All necessary information about studying abroad can be found on the website of GIUZ. The student advisory service supports students in planning mobility stays at other universities.

Please note: Applications must be submitted until 15 January for the following academic year (autumn to autumn!). This means that the registration deadline is the same for students who wish to take up a mobility stay in the spring or autumn semester.

EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

4.10 Degree

The diploma certificate is written in German and English. It lists the weighted average of the grades, which is calculated following the study regulations. If applicable, separate grades are listed for the major and for the minor subject. A list with all completed modules with the ECTS credit points is attached, as well as a "Diploma Supplement" which summarizes general information about the educational background in Switzerland and particularly at the University of Zurich and about the specific MSc curriculum.

The Master's degree does not automatically get issued upon completion of all necessary ECTS credits. An online request has to be submitted by the student to obtain the Master's degree. If all requirements are met, the corresponding title will be validated at the next meeting of the Committee for Student Affairs by the Faculty of Science, but only if the application was submitted at least four weeks before the meeting. Otherwise, the diploma will be issued after the subsequent meeting.

MASTER'S DEGREE GEO

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

4.11 Transfer of additional credits

It is possible to credit up to a maximum of 10 additional ECTS credits to each study unit (major and minor). This can include modules of UZH and ETH, as well as language courses of the language center of UZH and ETH. A maximum of 4 ECTS credits can be credited for language courses (BSc and MSc together). Only full modules qualify (i.e. not individual courses or half modules), and compulsory modules cannot be excluded from the calculation.

The additional ECTS credits are listed in the final transcript of records as "academic achievement not counted towards degree" but are not included in the calculation of the final average grade.

4.12 Official regulations for Master's degrees at MNF

The following regulations are (legally) binding:

- The **framework of academic regulations** ("Rahmenverordnung") contains the general regulations for all BSc and MSc studies at the Faculty of Science at the University of Zurich.
- The **study regulations** ("Studienordnung") contain information about the individual study degrees at the MNF. This concerns for example modules, exams and credit points.
- This **study guide** ("Wegleitung") provides practical information about the study programmes in Geography and Earth System Science at the Department of Geography.

Both the framework of academic regulations and the study regulations are published on the MNF website:

FACULTY OF SCIENCE REGULATIONS

4.13 Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities or chronic illnesses

The Disability Office at UZH supports students with disabilities or chronic illnesses and provides individual guidance on accessibility and equal opportunities. Through reasonable adjustments for students (NTA), students can request accommodations such as extra exam time or alternative exam formats. The NTA must be actively applied for: after consulting with the Disability Office and submitting medical documentation, a report is prepared, which forms the basis for submitting the application to the faculty within the deadlines. The faculty then decides on the specific measures.

UZH Disability Office

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities or chronic illnesses (NTA)

5. The MSc programme in Geography

5.1 General information

For admission without restrictions to the Master's study programme in Geography, a Bachelor's degree in Geography from the Faculty of Science of UZH, or an equivalent degree from another recognized university, is required. The faculty decides about a possible admission for students with a degree from a university of applied sciences.

With any geography-related Bachelor's degree from a recognized academic institution, you can apply for the Geography Master's. Admission to the programme depends on your academic record and may require taking BSc Geography modules. These credit points are in addition to the 90 ECTS credits of the master's. The list of BSc modules to be taken is tailored to your background and provided during the application procedure (indication of restriction see table below). Please note that most BSc courses at UZH and ETH are only offered in German. However, English courses are given as additional requirements whenever possible. Non-German speakers may have to finish equivalent modules at their home institution or another recognized university.

The information given here is an indication; please contact the Student Advisory Service with your specific case. An official assessment is only given at the time of admission. The final list of additional requirements depends on the choices during your Bachelor's curriculum and is provided during the application procedure.

If you apply for the GEO Master's from outside of UZH, you must submit a motivation letter, your CV and the full overview of your BSc degree in the online admission procedure. For details, see **Admission to the Master's Programme** and **Admission requirements**. It is recommended to apply for a start in September (fall semester), but it is possible to start in spring. In the case of admission with additional requirements, you can start with those modules anytime.

The MSc programme is almost exclusively taught in English. Few MSc modules can be offered in German but none of these are compulsory.

The Master's programme enables a specialization within the field of geography. The Master's degree qualifies for academic jobs, builds the professional scientific foundation for qualification as a secondary school teacher, and is necessary for a PhD.

Structure

The figures on the next page show the general structure of the Geography Master's programme. It includes an interdisciplinary compulsory module, core elective modules, elective modules, the Master's thesis, and the Master's exam. It is possible to complete an additional minor of 30 ECTS credits, which extends the study programme to 120 ECTS credits.

Students with an emphasis (see below) can choose between a 30 ECTS credits and a 60 ECTS credits Master's thesis. This decision must be made at the beginning of the Master's studies, as it influences the general structure of the study programme. Each of the elements is discussed in more detail in chapter 5.4. With a thesis of 30 ECTS credits, a minimum of 30 ECTS credits in core elective modules and up to 24 ECTS credits in elective modules must be completed. With a thesis of 60 ECTS credits, a minimum of 18 ECTS credits in core elective modules and up to 6 ECTS credits in elective modules must be completed. Both options sum up to a total of 90 ECTS credits if no minor is chosen.

5.2 Emphasis within the Master of Geography

An emphasis on one thematic subject area (TSA) in Geography is possible within the Master's programme. This emphasis is mentioned in the Master's diploma in addition to the Master's title. This will be in the form of „Master of Science in Geography, X", with „X" being replaced by the emphasis.

To obtain a Master's degree with a designated emphasis within the Master of Geography with a 30 ECTS credits Master's thesis, a minimum of 18 ECTS credits in core elective modules and the Master's thesis have to be completed within the field of the emphasis.

With 60 ECTS credits Master's thesis (which is only possible in the TSAs Physical Geography and Remote Sensing), the designated emphasis within the Master of Geography is decided in consultation with the supervisor and recorded on the Master's agreement. A minimum of 18 ECTS credits in core elective modules and the Master's thesis have to be completed within the field of the emphasis.

The following emphases are possible:

- **Physical Geography**: With a 30 ECTS Master's thesis: The 18 ECTS credits of core elective modules need to be chosen from at least two of the four units of Physical Geography (e.g. two modules out of 3G and one out of 2B, H2K or GCH or one module each out of three different units)
- **Human Geography**
- **Geographic Information Science and Systems**
- **Remote Sensing**
- **General Geography**: In addition to the emphases, it is possible to obtain a Master's degree in General Geography. This emphasis is especially suitable for candidates studying towards a teaching diploma for upper secondary education. For the degree in General Geography, a minimum of 6 ECTS credits in core elective modules must be chosen out of three TSAs (Physical Geography, Human Geography, Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Science). The Master's thesis may be written in any of the TSAs from which core elective modules were chosen.

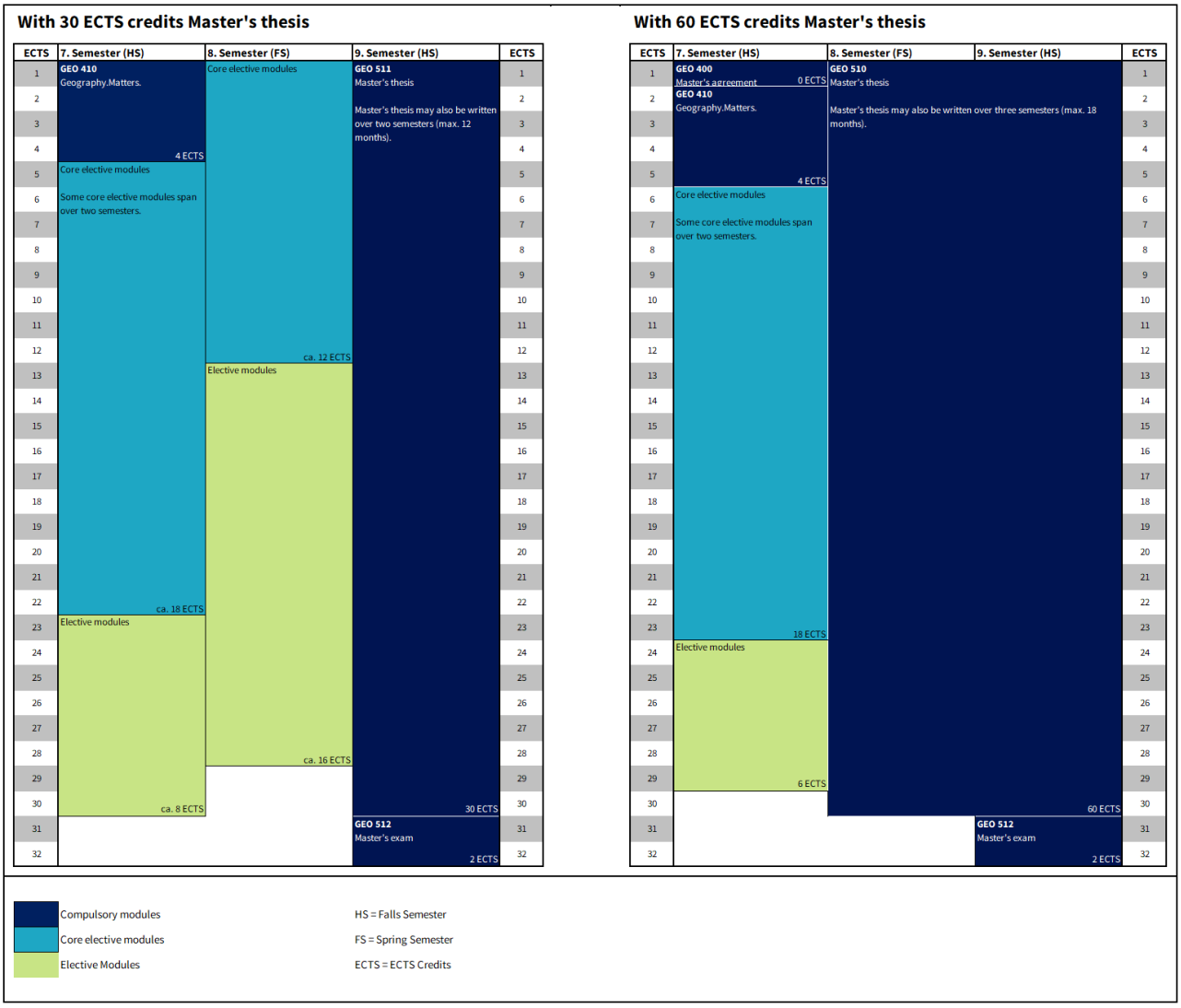


Figure 1: General structure of the Geography Master's programme

6. Structure and content of the MSc programme

The curriculum covers 90 ECTS credits and contains compulsory, core elective modules and additional elective modules. Students can choose between a 30 ECTS credits and a 60 ECTS credits Master's thesis (the latter only in the TSAs of Physical Geography and Remote Sensing). This decision must be made at the beginning of the Master's studies, as it influences the general structure of the study programme.

Explanation of the abbreviations (derived from the German expressions)

Course type		Assessments	
VL	Lecture	PP	Poster/presentation
UE	Practical course	MP	Written exam
SE	Seminar	SA	Paper/essay
E	Field trip	GA	Group assessment
BL	Block course	GP	Group presentation
VU	Lecture practical course	PA	Project assessment
PR	Internship	KW	Calendar week

6.1 Compulsory modules

ECTS	Module title	Type	Semester	Assessment
4	GEO 410 Geography. Matters.	VU	HS	SA, PP, MP
30	GEO 511 Master's thesis	SA	HS/FS	SA
60	GEO 510 Master's thesis*	SA	HS/FS	SA
2	GEO 512 Master's exam	PP	HS/FS	MP

* If GEO 510 (60 ECTS credits Master's thesis) is chosen, a Master's agreement (GEO 400) needs to be made in the first semester of the Master's programme. GEO 400 is an additional compulsory module that needs to be booked by the student.

30 ECTS credits Master's thesis (GEO 511)
The 30 ECTS credits Master's thesis has to be completed within one year (12 months). The amount of work corresponds to a student working on their Master's thesis 100% for half a year or 50% for one year, respectively. To successfully pass, a minimum grade of 4.0 is required. In the event of an insufficient grade, a new thesis with a different topic must be written.

60 ECTS credits Master's thesis (GEO 510)
The 60 ECTS credits Master's thesis has to be completed within one and a half years (18 months) and is only possible in the TSAs Physical Geography and Remote Sensing. The amount of work corresponds to a student working on their Master's thesis 100% for a year or part-time for one and a half years, respectively. To successfully pass, a minimum grade of 4.0 is required. In the event of an insufficient grade, a new thesis with a different topic must be written.

A 60 ECTS credits thesis is meant to be more research-oriented than a 30 ECTS credits thesis and is recommended for students willing to publish a scientific paper based on their thesis. Furthermore, it is a good option for students considering doing a PhD after their master's studies.

To obtain a Master's degree with a 60 ECTS credits Master's thesis, a Master's agreement (GEO 400) needs to be made with the supervisor of the thesis during the first semester of the Master's programme. The conditions for a designated emphasis within the Master of Geography are defined in consultation with the supervisor and recorded in the Master's agreement. No supervisor is obliged to offer the 60 ECTS credits Master's thesis.

Master's exam (GEO 512)
The Master's exam takes place shortly after submission of the Master's thesis. It consists of a public presentation and a disputation (that is not public). Hereby, the student not only proves to be well-versed in the matter of the Master's thesis, but is also able to position the thesis in the wider context of geographic research.

The Master's exam is passed when the Master's presentation and the disputation together are graded with at least a 4. A failed Master's exam can be repeated once. If the repetition is insufficient as well, a Master's degree in Geography at the Faculty of Science cannot be obtained anymore. Further information can be found on the information leaflet about the Master's thesis and the Master's exam.

MASTER'S THESIS AND EXAM

TIMETABLE MASTER'S THESIS AND EXAM

6.2 Core elective modules

The choice of core elective modules determines the emphasis within the Master's study programme. Some of these modules require the prior (successful) completion of other modules (e.g. certain core elective modules from the Bachelor's study programme).

Emphasis on Geographic Information Science and Systems

ECTS	Module title	Type	Semester	Assessment
6	GEO 454 Geovisualization	VL, UE	FS	GA, GP, PA
3	GEO 870 Making sense of empiric data	VU	HS	PP, GP, PA
3	GEO 871 Retrieving Geographic Information	VU	HS	SA
3	GEO 873 Cognitive Issues in GIScience	VU	HS	PP, GP, PA
6	GEO 875 Spatial Databases	VL, UE	HS	tbd
3	GEO 877 Spatial Algorithms	VL, UE	FS	GP, PA, SA
3	GEO 879 Mobility Issues in GIScience	VL, UE	HS	GP, PA, SA
3	GEO 880 Computational Movement Analysis – Detecting Patterns and Trends in Environmental Data	VU	FS	SA
3	GEO 888 GIS for Environmental Monitoring*	VU	FS	PP, SA
5	SDS 210 Programming with Spatial Data	VL, UE	FS	PA

Emphasis on Remote Sensing

ECTS	Module title	Type	Semester	Assessment
1	GEO 440 Remote Sensing Insights: Colloquium	SE	FS	PP
5	GEO 441 Remote Sensing Applications: Making Impact	KO, SE	FS	PA, PP
4	GEO 442 Remote Sensing Theory: Understanding Signals	VL, UE	HS	MP
4	GEO 443 Advanced Methods in Earth Observation – assessing spatial and temporal dynamics	VL, UE	HS	MP
4	GEO 444 Advanced Photogrammetry and 3D imaging (starting FS28)	Tbd	FS	tbd
5	GEO 445 Data acquisition and processing from drone and ground surveying	BL, VU	HS	

Emphasis on Human Geography

ECTS	Module title	Type	Semester	Assessment
6	GEO 421 Critical Development Studies	VL	HS	PP, SA
6	GEO 422 Urban Geography: Research and Methods	VL	FS	PA, SA
6	GEO 423 Political Geography	SE	HS	SA
3	GEO 424 Participatory Methods	SE	HS	SA
6	GEO 425 Political Ecology: From Critique to Transformation	SE	FS	PA, SA
6	GEO 432 Gender, Work and Space	SE, E	HS	SA
6	GEO 433 Global Economic Geographies of Agriculture and Food Systems	SE	FS	Oral Exam, GA
3	GEO 831 Excursion Amsterdam: Urban social movements, contemporary challenges and colonial histories	E	FS	SA
3	GEO 835 Geography of Sustainability Transitions	VL	FS	GP, SA
3	GEO 837 Geographies of Environmental Governance	SE	HS	PA, SA
3	GEO 838 Self-organised Seminar	SE	FS	PA
3	GEO 839 Health Geographies	SE	FS	SA

6	GEO 846 Spatial Theory Lab	VU	HS	PP, PA
6	GEO 887 Agroecology and Food Systems	VU	HS	SA, MP

Emphasis on Physical Geography

ECTS	Module title	Type	Semester	Assessment
6	GEO 411 Modelling of Cryosphere	SE, PR, E	FS	SA, GP
3	GEO 417 Environmental archives and age determination I**	PR, BL	HS	SA
3	GEO 418 Environmental archives and age determination II**	E	FS	SA
6	GEO 463 Currents Challenges in plant-soil systems	VU	HS	SA
6	GEO 471 Hydrological field measurements and calculations	VU	FS	PP, SA
6	GEO 475 Hydrological Modelling	VU	HS	MP, SA
3	GEO 815 Quantification and modelling of the Cryosphere	VU	HS	PP, SA
3	GEO 820 Stable isotopes in ecosystem science	VU	FS	SA
3	GEO 851 Glacier Mass Balance Measurements and Analysis – from local observations to global assessments	VU, E	HS	SA
3	GEO 856 The high-mountain cryosphere: processes and risk	VU	FS	MP
3	GEO 857 Snow and Avalanches: Processes and Risk Management	VU	FS	MP
3	ESS 841 Analyzing the plant-soil system: Theory	VL	HS	PP, SA
6	ESS 842 Analyzing the plant-soil system: Practice	UE	FS	PP, SA

*The module GEO 444 will be offered from FS28 onwards. As a replacement, GEO 888 can be credited once in FS27 as a core elective module in the Remote Sensing area.

**Modules GEO 417 and 418 must be taken together. The ECTS credits for GEO 417 are only awarded upon successful completion of module GEO 418 in the following semester (spring term).

Elective modules

Besides compulsory and core elective modules, elective modules must be completed. Basically, all modules of the course book of UZH and ETH are eligible.

From the GIUZ department

- Core elective modules, which are not already taken as such
- Modules of the Minos Spatial Data Science (With the module code SDS; SDS 210 is a compulsory elective module in the MSc GIS programme)
- Elective modules of the department
- Additional field trips

Other subjects

The whole offer of UZH and ETH primarily on Master level. Subject to certain restrictions by the responsible field or instructor.

Internship

See information below (chapter 6.5)

Further modules

Other modules, which are a reasonable addition, can be chosen, e.g. language and communication courses of the language center of UZH and ETH. A maximum of 4 ECTS credits for language courses can be credited (BSc and MSc together).

When choosing elective modules, the following points must be considered:

- Modules can have specific prerequisites that are defined in the course catalogue.
- The content of your elective modules should support your individual study goals.
- Sports courses cannot be credited as elective modules.
- Modules at ETH have to be booked at ETH via myStudies.

The following elective modules are offered by the Department of Geography; this represents a selection only and is not an exhaustive list.

ECTS	Module title	Type	Semester	Assessment
1	GEO 717 Google Earth Engine	BL	FS	SA
1	GEO 802 Data Information Literacy	BL	HS	SA
3	GEO 805 Natural hazard and risk assessment in high-mountain areas	BL	HS	PP
3	GEO 808 Political Economy: Space and Capital in the 21st Century	SE	FS	SA
1	GEO 812 Getting started with R for spatial analysis	BL	HS	-
6	GEO 818 Dendro-Ecology	VL, BL	HS/FS	SA, PP, SA
1-3	GEO 7xx Modules with integrated field trips	E	HS/FS	SA

6.3 Field trips

The GIUZ publishes an overview of elective modules and MSc core elective modules with field trips on its website. Within the elective area, additional external field trips may also be taken, offered by UZH Alumni Geo, ETH Zurich, and other geography institutes at various universities in Switzerland and abroad.

For GEO-7xx modules with integrated excursions, there are no restrictions regarding credit recognition within the elective area.

FIELD TRIPS WEBSITE GIUZ
UZH ALUMNI GEO FIELD TRIPS

Recognition of external field trips

One day of excursion corresponds to 0.5 ECTS credits; however, only whole ECTS credits are awarded. For multi-day excursions, a maximum of 1 ECTS credit (equivalent to 2 days) can be recognised.

Credits for field trips are awarded based on confirmation of participation. The form “Confirmation of Field trip” can be downloaded from the GIUZ website under “Downloads / Guidelines”. This form must be submitted online no later than the end of the last semester of the Master’s programme.

DOWNLOADS FORMS
SUBMISSION FOR TRANSFER OF CREDITS

Field trips at ETH Zurich (Earth Sciences)

The range of Earth Sciences excursions can be found on the ETH Zurich website.

FIELD TRIPS ETH ZÜRICH

6.4 Tutorials

Students who work as tutors in a module offered by the Department of Geography obtain 2 ECTS credits per module in the elective section. During the entire period of study (Bachelor's and Master's studies), a maximum of 5 ECTS credits can be credited.

Tutorials are a useful and recommended addition to the studies and a valuable experience. Tutors support the instructors in exercises and seminars of the lower semesters. The correction of assignments is also part of the activity as a tutor. Acquired knowledge and skills are applied and passed on. Future teachers can collect first-hand experiences in teaching. Apart from the 2 ECTS credits per tutorial, tutors receive financial compensation as well.

Open positions for tutorials for the following semester are published on the website in the middle of the semester. Students are also informed about open tutor positions and application deadlines by email.

JOBS GIUZ
SUBMISSION FOR TRANSFER OF CREDITS

6.5 Internships

A research or vocational internship can be a useful addition to an academic education. For a four-week internship, 2 ECTS can be credited as an elective module. During the entire study (Bachelor and Master), a maximum of 5 ECTS credits, which correspond to a ten-week internship, can be credited. A faculty member must approve of the internship before its completion.

INTERNSHIP FORMS

An internship report of approximately 5-10 pages is handed in to this faculty member. In addition, a short form of the report is intended to show other students different options for gaining work experience and to help them organize their own internship. For this purpose, the internship is briefly described on approximately one A4 page, whereby the important key points are mentioned.

The report is to be submitted as a Word document in English or German and should contain the points listed on the second page of the template. The form must be uploaded and submitted via the homepage for “Submission for Transfer of Credits”.

Links leading to relevant websites can be included in the text and must be listed additionally at the end of the report. One or two images are requested for illustration purposes and must be handed in separately. They need a minimum resolution of 920x556 pixels in landscape format.

INTERNSHIP REPORTS
SUBMISSION FOR TRANSFER OF CREDITS

By submitting their report, students agree to its upload to the GIUZ's online internship catalogue and thereby its public accessibility. Internship positions must be organized independently. Open positions are published on our website.

OPEN POSITIONS
UZH CAREER SERVICES - HOME
HOMEPAGE IAESTE SWITZERLAND

7. Geography as a minor

Geography is offered as a minor study programme comprising 30 or 60 ECTS credits at Bachelor level, and 30 ECTS credits at Master level. In the case of a 30 ECTS credit minor at Bachelor level and an additional 30 ECTS credit minor at Master level, the requirements for a 60 ECTS credit minor must be fulfilled.

If, at Master level, a consecutive 30 ECTS credit minor programme follows a 60 ECTS credit minor completed at Bachelor level, this must be arranged in consultation with the academic advisory service prior to the start of the Master's programme.

GEOGRAPHY AS MINOR (GERMAN ONLY)

8. Teaching Diploma for Upper Secondary Education (Matura school)

The Teaching Diploma for Upper Secondary Education **can only be completed in German**.

To teach geography at a Swiss upper secondary school (Matura school), a teaching diploma in geography for upper secondary education is required. Geography may be chosen as either a first or second teaching subject. Didactic training can begin during the master's programme. However, a completed Master's degree in Geography or Earth System Science is a prerequisite for obtaining the teaching diploma. The pedagogical training is offered by the Institute of Education (Institut für Erziehungswissenschaften, IfE), and requires dual enrollment in both the academic faculty and the IfE.

TEACHING DIPLOMA FOR UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL (MATURA SCHOOL)

MORE INFORMATION ON TEACHING DIPLOMA

Application Deadlines for Dual Enrollment in the Teaching Diploma Programme (Upper Secondary Education)

- Start in the Fall Semester: April 30th
- Start in the Spring Semester: November 30th

Contacts and further information

Institut für Erziehungswissenschaften (IfE) UZH
Abteilung Lehrerinnen und Lehrerbildung Maturitätsschulen (LLBM)
Kantonsschulstrasse 3, 8001 Zürich

+41 (0)44 634 66 55
sekretariat.llbm@ife.uzh.ch

Dr. Itta Bauer
Geography Teacher Training
Büro: Y25-L-08
Winterthurerstr. 190, Universität Irchel,8057 Zürich

+41 (0)44 635 51 47
itta.bauer@geo.uzh.ch

8.1 Geography as a First Teaching Subject

The basis for obtaining the teaching diploma for upper secondary schools (Matura schools) with geography as either a monodisciplinary subject (i.e., teaching geography exclusively) or as the first teaching subject (i.e., in combination with a second subject) is a completed Bachelor's and Master's degree in Geography (BSc in Geography and MSc in Geography, respectively). While the teaching diploma may be pursued in geography alone, it is also possible—but not mandatory—to obtain the qualification in a second teaching subject, such as history, biology, chemistry, physics, or mathematics, etc. The second subject must be selected from either the Faculty of Science or the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Subjects offered by the Faculty of Business, Economics and Informatics or by ETH Zurich, such as sports, are not eligible. Students interested in qualifying for a second teaching subject are strongly advised

to begin taking modules in that discipline already during their bachelor's studies. In addition, they must complete the didactic training specific to the second subject. For detailed information regarding subject requirements and eligibility, students should consult the Institute of Education (IfE).

8.2 Geography as a Second Teaching Subject

Students who are pursuing a minor in Geography may select Geography as their second teaching subject, provided they are also completing the teaching diploma for upper secondary schools (Matura schools) in their major field of study. This option is available exclusively to students whose major is in a subject that is taught at Swiss upper secondary schools (e.g., history, biology, or physics). The subject-specific academic requirements for Geography as a second teaching subject amount to 90 ECTS credits. Because the required modules are predefined, early planning of the minor programme structure is strongly recommended. A detailed list of the subject-specific requirements is available on the website of the Department of Geography (GIUZ).

INFORMATION ON TEACHING DIPLOMA

9. Varia

9.1 Students' Society Geography (Fachverein)

The Student Society Geography's primary aim is the protection of the interests of geography students towards the department. It is related to the University of Zurich Student Association (VSUZH). The Student Society offers the possibility to establish contacts between the students, but it also aims to cooperate with the lecturers as well as with other student societies.

The Geoteam regularly organizes events such as the very popular "DoBar" ("Do" for Thursday in German) at the Irchelbar and the "Geofest". For the continued existence and representation of students' interests, students are always needed and welcome to join!

geoteam@geo.uzh.ch

STUDENT ASSOCIATION GEOTEAM

9.2 Geographie Alumni UZH

The "Geographie Alumni UZH", offers different field trips and lectures on geographical issues.

Geography Alumni UZH serves as a link between the university and the public. Its primary goal is to make scientific research accessible in an understandable form through specialized lectures on current key topics and field trips in Switzerland and abroad. Geography Alumni UZH includes current geography students, active and former geography teachers, university graduates, and faculty members from various academic disciplines. The organization fosters and enables a close-knit professional and personal network. As a regional chapter, Geography Alumni UZH is a member of the ASG (Swiss Association of Geography, Verband Geographie Schweiz). In collaboration with the ASG, Geography Alumni UZH jointly sponsors the journal Geographica Helvetica (Swiss Journal of Geography). This journal is open access and is managed by an editorial team with leadership at the University of Zurich.

HOMEPAGE GEOGRAPHICA HELVETICA

HOMEPAGE GEO ALUMNI

Membership

The membership fee is CHF 20 per year for students, and CHF 60 per year for all other members.

9.3 Libraries

Several different libraries are available to students, including:

Main Library of the University of Zurich, Winterthurerstrasse 190.
The Library of the Department of Geography is integrated into the Main Library of the University of Zurich.
Zentralbibliothek Zürich, Predigerplatz.
ETH Library, ETH-City Campus.
Schweizerisches Sozialarchiv, Stadelhoferstrasse 12.

9.4 Important University Information Offices

Student Administration Office (Kanzlei)
University Main Building, Rämistrasse 71, 8006 Zürich, room E 8
Opening hours: Monday - Friday: 9.30-12.30 o'clock

+41 (0)44 634 22 17

kanzlei@uzh.ch

Homepage

Student Affairs Office, Faculty of Science (MNF)
University Irchel, room 10-G-23
Opening hours: Tue / Thu: 10.00-12.30 / 13.45-16.15,
Wed: 10.00-12.30 (mornings only during non-lecture period)

+41 (0)44 634 40 07

bama@mnf.uzh.ch

Homepage

Psychological Counselling Service
Plattenstrasse 28, 8032 Zürich
Consultations (appointments by arrangement) are free of charge and strictly confidential.

+41 (0)44 634 22 88

pbs@ad.uzh.ch

Homepage

Advisory Centre for Grants and Loans
University Main Building, Rämistrasse 71, 8006 Zürich, room KOL Ea 4c
Opening hours: Tue - Fr: 10.00-12.30. Appointments by arrangement.

+41 (0)44 634 22 04

studienfinanzierung@ad.uzh.ch

Homepage

Disability office
University Main Building, Rämistrasse 71, 8006 Zürich, room KOL Ea 4c
Opening hours: Tue - Fr: 10.00-12.30. Appointments by arrangement.

+41 (0)44 634 45 44

fsb@sib.uzh.ch

HOMEPAGE

Global Student Experience (Exchange Programmes)
University Main Building, Rämistr. 71, 8006 Zürich, room KOL E 17
Opening hours: Mo - Fr: 9.30 - 12.30 or by arrangement

+41 (0)44 634 41 57

outgoing@int.uzh.ch

HOMEPAGE

Academic Sports Association Zurich (ASVZ)
Secretary and information desk: Polyterrasse ETH
September-Mai: Monday - Friday 10.00 - 16.00 / Thursday 10.00 - 19.00
June-August: Monday - Friday 10.00 - 14.00 o'clock

+41 (0)44 632 42 10

info@asvz.ethz.ch

HOMEPAGE

Liaison Office between the Armed Forces and Universities
TH Main Building, Rämistrasse 101, 8006 Zurich, Room E 10.2
The Liaison Office between the Armed Forces and Universities only seeks alternative solutions once applications have been rejected and provides support with requests for reconsideration in cases of hardship.

HOMEPAGE (GERMAN ONLY)

Accommodation Agency
Accommodation (rooms and flats) service for students, lecturers and employees of the UZH and ETHZ
Sonneggstrasse 27, 8006 Zürich
Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday - Fr 11.00 - 13.00 o'clock

+41 (0)44 632 20 37

zimmervermittlung@ethz.ch

HOMEPAGE

Studentische Wohngenossenschaft (Woko)
Sonneggstrasse 63, 8006 Zürich
Opening hours: Monday - Thursday 11.00 - 15.00 o'clock
Phone hours: Monday - Thursday 9.00 - 13.00 o'clock

+41 (0)44 632 42 90

woko@woko.ch

HOMEPAGE

9.5 Further Offers

Career Services

Hirschengraben 60, 8001 Zürich

+41 (0)44 634 21 54 or 62

HOMEPAGE (CAREER SERVICES)

HOMEPAGE (STUDENT JOBS)

HOMEPAGE UZH ALUMNI (MARKETPLACE ETC.)