



## PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM

Making the Most of Masters aims to improve collaboration between employers and universities by providing opportunities for masters students to undertake work based projects as an alternative to a traditional university dissertation. Projects should address a real need within the host organisation and be beneficial to both host and student.

The Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland (MASTS), pools the majority of Scotland's marine research capacity. MASTS members provide Masters courses in a range of marine related disciplines and many of their students are keen to undertake applied projects outside of academia.

### Notes on Topic Selection

A relevant academic will work with your organisation to refine your proposed topic and ensure it meets both your needs and the academic requirements of the student. Projects should typically be achievable within a 12–16 week timeframe (including writing the final report).

Your proposed project could be:

- A specific project title or topic for the student to deliver;
- A general idea of a business need which requires further development;
- A core research theme to be developed by the student into a bespoke project;
- An intended outcome for the organisation.

The level of detail you provide will determine the extent to which further discussion may be required with the relevant programme director to ensure suitability.

**Covid implications** – the ongoing situation around Covid may suit desk-based/data studies that will easily facilitate remote working and remote supervision. If restrictions allow, in person projects are always welcomed.

### What's Next?

Please send your completed form to the MASTS Programme Coordinator & Deputy Dean of Grad School, Dr Emma Defew ([masts@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:masts@st-andrews.ac.uk)) before **16:00 on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021**.

Following submission of the form, it will be channeled to the leaders of the various Masters programmes that operate within the MASTS community and a representative from the most relevant programme or department will get in touch to discuss the project scope, delivery and the selection of an appropriate student. If more than one student expresses an interest in your project, discussions will take place to ensure the most suitable student is matched with your project. The projects themselves usually won't start until May or June.



**Making the Most of Masters**

## **MASTS - Making the Most of Masters – Project Proposal Form**

**Name and address of Organisation:**

Marine Scotland Science, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen AB11 9DB

**Name of the key contact in Organisation:**

Dr Alexander G Murray

**Contact e-mail and phone number:**

[Sandy.murray@gov.scot](mailto:Sandy.murray@gov.scot) Phone 0131 244 4327

**Title of proposed project:**

Risk factors and trends associated with fish escapes from aquaculture in Scotland

**Project outline and intended outcomes:**

Escaped fish from farms are an economic loss that can spread disease and parasites. They can interbreed with wild fish, changing genetic structure of wild fish populations. Reporting of escapes has been a legal obligation for fish farmers since 2002, but some data preceded this.

Data reported on escapes includes dates, cause, numbers of fish involved, locations and species escaping. These data can be combined with other data on farm status and environment. The student will assess issues of data quality and consistency of reporting in discussion with MSS staff. Specific risk factors for escapes will be assessed along with a more general understanding of trends and regional patterns in escapes, and the distribution of escape event sizes in terms of numbers of fish. This analysis will be used to inform policy and management to minimise the impacts of escapes.

**Any additional comments e.g. details of specific disciplines required, methods to be used, travel involved, where the work would take place (i.e. at the host site or at the University), whether you foresee any Intellectual Property or confidentiality issues (and if so, what form might these take?):**

This study will be largely desk based, requiring a statistically literate student with an understanding of biological data. Most of the data required for analysis is publically available, although additional data on the industry might be used. Therefore, confidentiality issues should not arise. We would hope the student would visit the Marine Laboratory to discuss the data and analysis aims and present results, but remote working will be a practicable option for a motivated student.