



Confidentiality etc.

– when students do project courses at a company

DTU's students often do project courses at companies, authorities, or organizations.

The project course is carried out as part of the student's diploma, BSc or MSc Eng degree, and must be concluded with an exam or a report. The student agrees on the academic content with their DTU supervisor.

For BEng students' internships in a company, special rules apply which are not described here.

The student, DTU, and the company are three different, independent parties. The student is not employed by DTU, and is therefore not obliged to adhere to the requirements and rules that apply to DTU's employees, for example in relation to confidentiality or the transfer of rights to inventions and software.

The relationship between the company and the student may be regulated by an agreement. DTU is not party to such an agreement.

The relationship between DTU and the company is largely regulated by law, and therefore DTU does not generally enter into agreements with companies on student project courses.

In the special cases where a company insists on entering into an agreement with DTU, Legal & Tech Transfer has drawn up a standard agreement for student projects that can be used in such cases. This standard agreement must be used as it stands and is not negotiable.

Relationship between the company and the student

DTU's students and the company may enter into an agreement that regulates the conditions which the company and the student consider relevant. In a contract, the company and the student can, for example, agree on which tasks the student should solve, whether the student should have an acknowledgement, whether the student should keep some information confidential, and who should have the right to the results which the student creates.

DTU encourages the company to generally consider whether it is necessary to give the student access to confidential information. If it is necessary to give the student access to confidential information, DTU encourages the company to clearly identify this information, so that the student knows what needs to be kept secret, and so they can thus seek to avoid including the confidential information in their report.

The company and the student can possibly enter into an agreement that the company must have a short period of, for example, seven days to review the report for confidential information before the student submits the report to DTU, and in this way the company can ensure that the report does not contain confidential information or that it is clearly marked. The company must be aware that the student is not free to postpone the submission deadline, so an agreed deadline must be respected.

If the company and the student enter into an agreement on confidentiality, it is important that the student is allowed to share data and results with the DTU supervisor. If it is necessary for the student project course that the student shares the company's confidential information with their DTU supervisor, the company should ensure that the agreement with the student does not prevent this.

If the project course concludes with a report or an MSc thesis, it is also important that the student can submit the entire report or thesis with any confidential information to DTU, and that the report or thesis can be handled according to DTU's rules.

If the report contains confidential information, it should be clearly stated in the report so that the supervisor, external examiner, etc. are aware of it.

In all cases, the student's report or MSc thesis will be plagiarism-checked and shared with an external examiner. If a complaint is made, the report will also be shared with the relevant persons in the complaints system.

Unfortunately, DTU cannot provide assistance with any kind of agreement between the company and the student, as the student is not employed at DTU.

Relationship between company and DTU

DTU's role in the project course is limited to the tasks associated with educating students to become engineers. This relates in particular to supervision of the student and completion of the exam.

Thus, DTU's supervisor does not contribute directly with research to the project course.

Supervisor's contribution to inventions or software

It is very unusual for the supervision to lead to the supervisor contributing to the creation of new inventions or software in connection with a student's project course with a company.

In the very rare cases where the supervisor contributes to an invention or software in connection with a student project course with a company, the supervisor's share of the invention or software must be treated in accordance with DTU's general rules.

DTU's duty of confidentiality

A DTU supervisor's obligation to keep confidential information secret is regulated by Danish law, which means, among other things, that the supervisor has a duty of confidentiality. This follows from [Section 27 of the Public Administration Act](#) with reference to [Section 152 of the Danish Criminal Code](#).

The duty of confidentiality does not prevent DTU from filing the project report or mentioning the existence of the project course.

If it is relevant to ensure the secrecy of the company's confidential information, the exam can be held behind closed doors. In this context, it is useful if the company informs the student that the exam must take place behind closed doors.

Plagiarism check

DTU conducts a plagiarism check of all project reports etc. The plagiarism check is carried out by screening the report using artificial intelligence in a system for which DTU has purchased a licence and which is bound by confidentiality.

Re-exams

If the project is to be assessed by an external examiner, the chairperson of the relevant examiner corps appoints an academically relevant examiner.

The external examiner is subject to the administrative rules on professional secrecy and impartiality.