

**Operating Manual  
Fast Modulator VFM 10-06**

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### Description

The fast diode current modulator VFM 10-06 is a linear modulator with improved properties for driving arbitrary current waveforms into laser diodes. Current waveforms can be CW, pulsed, modulated or mixed with frequencies up to 20 MHz and currents up to 10 A.

For achieving maximum performance it is required to mount the modulator as close as possible at the laser diode and to connect it with low inductance. Conventional wires for connecting are not allowed, this will decrease performance significantly and may lead to an unstable operating.

The modulator is small and compact and it is designed for mounting with low inductance at the laser diodes or for integrating it in laser diode modules. Ask our support for more information and for important hints.

The modulator has two analogue inputs for the current set point, a high frequency input (50 Ohm input impedance) and a low frequency input. Both inputs cover the full current range. Additionally there is a 10 turn potentiometer for generating a CW-current (bias current). All set points are added and form the effective current set point.

The user needs to make sure that the maximum current will not be exceeded!

A set point with a negative sign acts subtracting.

Furthermore the modulator has a trigger input (TTL 3,5V) which acts at the high frequency input X2. This trigger input controls the current set point 1 signal.

A logic High-level at the trigger input puts through the current set point 1 signal to the modulator, a logic Low-level inhibits the current set point 1 signal.

In this way it is possible to generate fast and clean pulses by feeding in a DC voltage at the X2 input, even if the trigger signal has a bad waveform.

### Power dissipation

Dynamic performance of the modulator normally increase with supply voltage, however the electrical power dissipation increase with supply voltage too.

A good compromise is to choose a supply voltage of approx. 5 V above the diode voltage.

Simple formulas for calculating power dissipation:

Us	Supply Voltage (V)
Ud	Diode Voltage (V)
Idcw	Diode Current CW (A)
Idpeak	Diode Current peak value (A) (for sinusoidal and rectangle currents)
tp	Pulse Duration (s)
f	Pulse Frequency (Hz)
PI	Power Dissipation (W)

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For operating with CW current:

$$PI = (U_s - U_d) \times I_{dcw}$$

For operating with sinusoidal current:

$$PI = (U_s - U_d) \times (I_{dpeak} / 1,41)$$

For operating with rectangle current:

$$PI = (U_s - U_d) \times I_{dpeak} \times t_p \times f$$

For operating with sinusoidal current plus CW current:

$$PI = (U_s - U_d) \times ((I_{dpeak} / 1,41) + I_{dcw})$$

For operating with rectangle current plus CW current:

$$PI = (U_s - U_d) \times (I_{dpeak} \times t_p \times f + I_{dcw})$$

The calculating of power dissipation with arbitrary current waveforms is difficult, therefore a good method for estimating power dissipation is to measure the temperature of the modulator.

The modulator has a precise temperature measurement system inside.

The SA-TEMP output reflects the actual temperature in the range of 0 °C ... +80 °C.

Values of 60 °C (3 V) are still not critical.

**General Instructions**

Never run a negative current set point (effective current set point), this may lead to an overshoot if you alter the negative current set point to a positive current set point.

If you use a pulse signal generator or a function generator for the current set point, always disconnect it before you change any ranges. Some generators create high voltages or undefined signals if you change ranges, this may damage diodes and the modulator.

**Starting Up**

We recommend the following procedure for starting up:

**Step 1: Precautionary Measures**

Avoid personal static charge!

Switch off all power supplies for the laser driver

**Step 2: Preparation**

Remove short circuit cable at X4- and X5.

For further steps also see wiring diagrams below.

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Disconnect the diode and short-circuit the output of the modulator:  
connect X6- to X7+ via a short thin metal sheet or clamp.

For types VFM xx-25 and VFM xx-50:

Connect the supply voltage (3 V ... 6 V, preferred 5V) for the internal electronics at X1-1 (GND) and X1-8 (SVI+).

For types VFM xx-06:

An additional power supply for internal electronics is not needed.

Connect an oscilloscope at the X3 (SA-DCACT) current monitor output, terminate the oscilloscope input with 50 Ohm.

Connect the power supply for the diode at X4- (GND) and X5+.

Check correct cabling!

### Step 3: Pre-Testing

For types VFM xx-25 and VFM xx-50:

Turn on the power supply for the internal electronics, the green LED must lit.

For all types VFM:

Turn on the power supply for the diode.

Adjust voltage according to operating manual (recommended operating voltage, max. 6V), the green LED must lit

Enable the modulator (connect X1-3 to Ground) and watch the X3 current monitor output.

For all following steps:

**Be aware of maximum diode current and maximum allowed power dissipation!**

See specifications for modulator and diode.

Turn the BIAS Current potentiometer 1 turn clockwise. You must see 1/10 of the maximum current value on the oscilloscope (DC current).

Turn back the BIAS Current potentiometer counter-clockwise to position "Zero".

Connect X2 (CA-DCSP1) with adjustable DC power supply or function generator.

If you use only the analog input X2 connect X1-7 (Trigger) with 3V ... 6V, preferred 5V.

Supply X2 with 50mV DC.

You must see 1/10 of the maximum current value on the oscilloscope (DC current).  
Disconnect X2.

Connect X1-2 (CA-DCSP2) with adjustable DC power supply or function generator.  
Supply X1-2 with 500mV DC.

You must see 1/10 of the maximum current value on the oscilloscope (DC current).  
Disconnect X1-2.

Feed in a TTL-square wave or a CMOS-square wave with a pulse length of approx.  
5  $\mu$ s and a repetition rate of approx. 100 Hz at X1-7 (CD-TRIGG).  
Feed in a positive DC-voltage which represents approx. 50% of maximum allowed diode  
current at X2 (see detailed signal description for CA-DCSP1).

The X3-signal must be a square wave with a pulse length of 5  $\mu$ s, a repetition rate of 100 Hz  
and an adequate amplitude of the diode current (see detailed signal description for SA-  
DCACT).

Switch off all power supplies and function generator.

#### **Step 4: Commissioning**

If the X3-signal is correct, disable the modulator (X1-3).

Remove the short-circuit at X6 - X7 and connect the diode.  
Adjust the supply voltage for the diode according to recommended operating diode voltages.

For types VFM xx-25 and VFM xx-50:  
Switch on the supply voltage (3 V ... 6 V, preferred 5V) for the internal electronics at  
X1-1 (GND) and X1-8 (SVI+).

Enable the laser driver at X1-3.

Adjust set points via BIAS current potentiometer, analog input X2 and / or analog input X1-2.

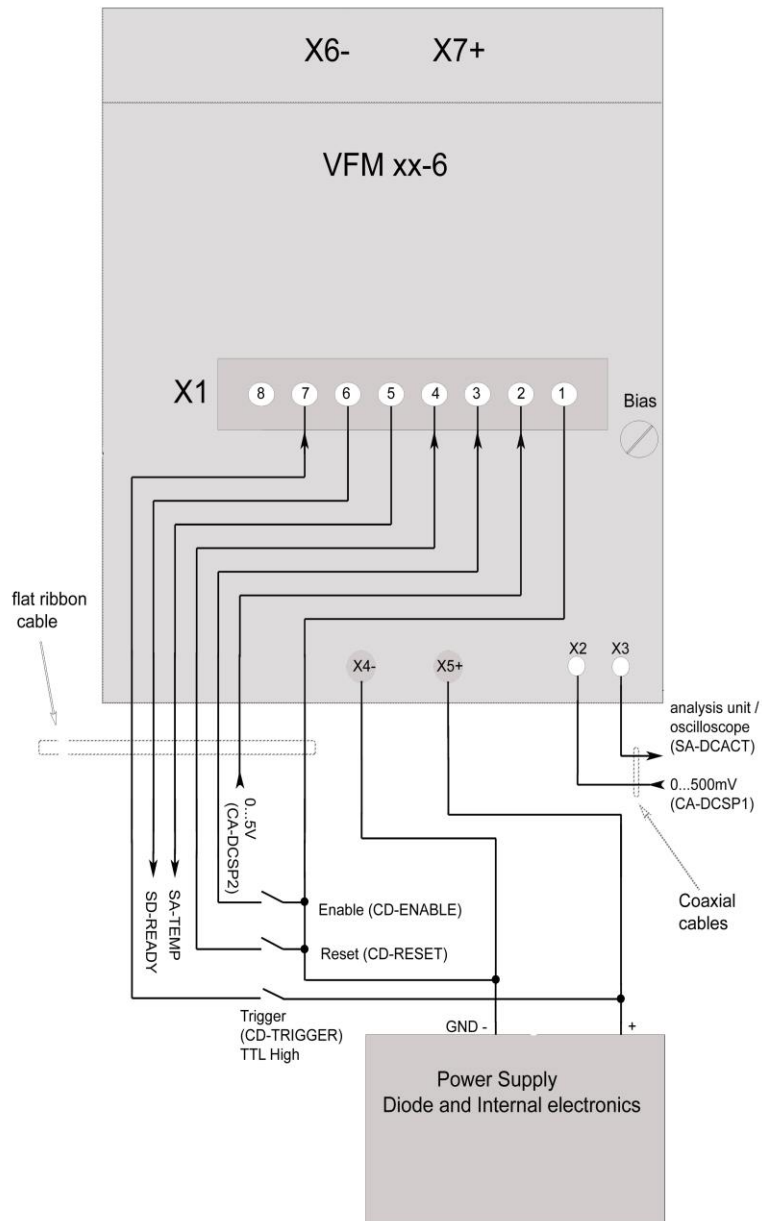
For generating pulses use the trigger input X1-7 (is effective only on analog input  
DCSP1 at X2).

**Be aware of the maximum diode current!**

**Be aware of the maximum allowed power dissipation of the modulator!**

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**Wiring diagram for VFM xx-06:**



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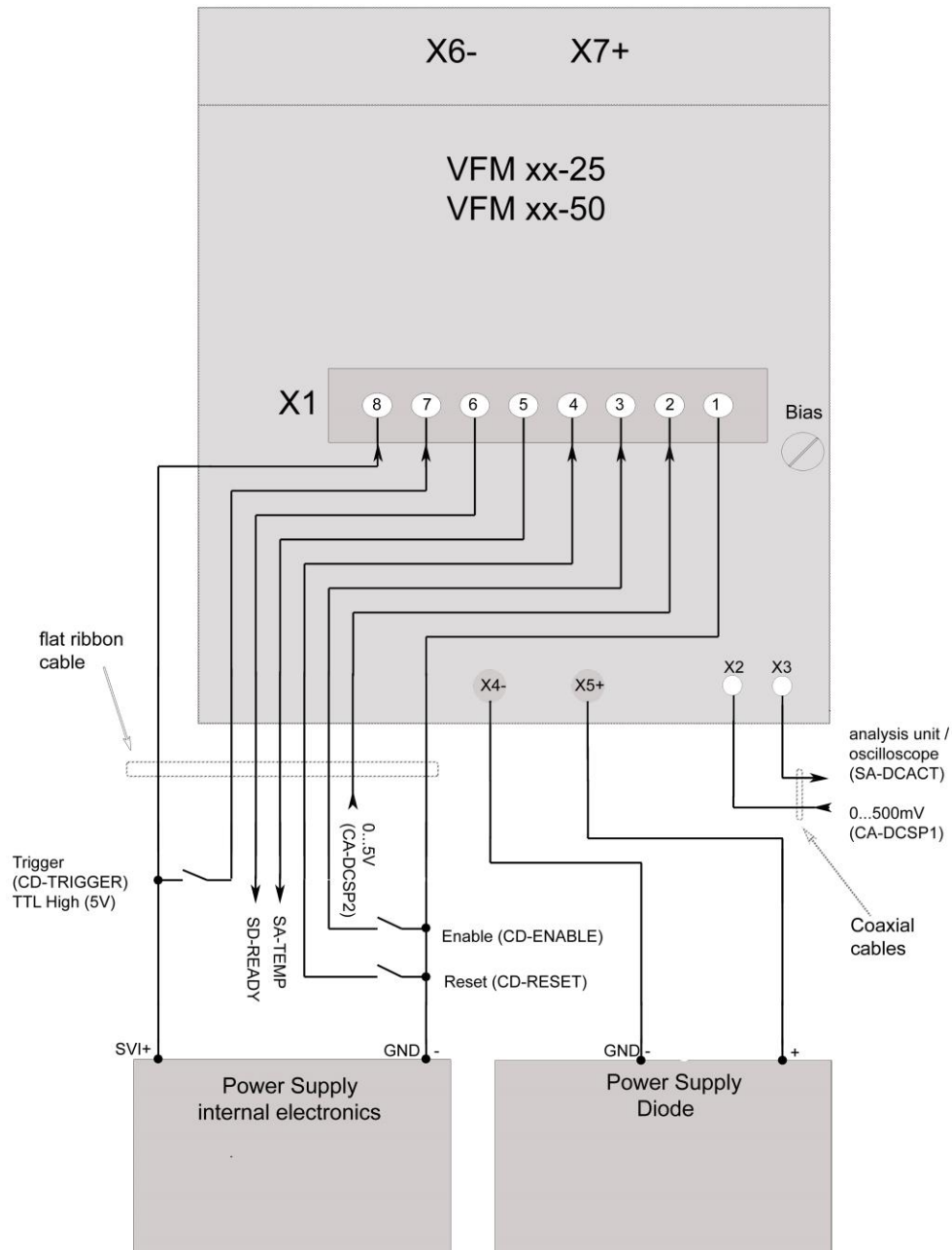
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**Wiring diagram for VFM xx-25 and VFM xx-50:**



**Adjustment elements**

10 turns potentiometer for a CW current set point (bias current)

The potentiometer covers the full current range.

Turn clockwise for increasing current.

**Indicator elements**

Green LED for indicating status Ready

Red LED for indicating status Excess Temperature

**Connectors**

- X1 8-pole single row male connector for control signals, status signals and supply voltage for the internal electronics
- X2 female coaxial jack MMCX for current set point 1
- X3 female coaxial jack MMCX for actual current (current monitor)
- X4- connection bolt & 8 mm with female thread M4 for Supply Voltage Minus
- X5+ connection bolt & 8 mm with female thread M4 for Supply Voltage Plus
- X6- connection plate with six female thread M1.6 for laser diode cathode
- X7+ connection plate with five female thread M1.6 for laser diode anode

**X1 Control Port**

8-pole single row male connector

Manufacturer: ERNI Part number 214014

Mating plug:

8-pole single row female connector

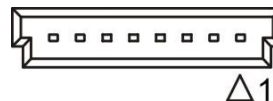
Manufacturer: ERNI Part number 224396

CA=Control Data Analog

CD=Control Data Digital

SA=Status Data Analog

SD=Status Data Digital





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### Inputs Control Port X1

Pin	Name	Function
1	GND	Signal Ground
2	CA-DCSP2	Diode Current Set Point 2
3	CD-ENABLE	Enable
4	CD-RESET	Reset
7	CD-TRIGG	Trigger
8	Nc	Do not use

### Outputs Control Port X1

Pin	Name	Function
1	GND	Signal Ground
5	SA-TEMP	Temperature
6	SD-READY	Ready

### X2 Control Port

Female coaxial jack MMCX  
CA-DCSP1  
Diode Current Set Point 1



### X3 Current Monitor Port

Female coaxial jack MMCX  
SA-DCACT  
Diode Current Actual



### X4-

Connection bolt  $\varnothing$  8 mm with female thread M4  
Supply Voltage Minus for the laser diode

### X5+

Connection bolt  $\varnothing$  8 mm with female thread M4  
Supply Voltage Plus for the laser diode

### X6-

Connection plate with six female thread M1.6, Laser Diode Cathode

### X7+

Connection plate with five female thread M1.6, Laser Diode Anode

**Signal Description****SVI+**

Supply voltage for the internal electronics

Required supply voltage: 3V ... 6 V

Supply current: 1 A approx.

Plus must be connected at X1-8, Minus at X4-.

**CA-DCSP1 (X2)**

Control Analog - Diode Current Set Point 1

Analog input 0 ... 500 mV, input impedance 50 Ohm

0 ... 500 mV corresponds to a diode current of 0 ... 10 A.

Max power dissipation must be considered!

**CA-DCSP2 (X1-2)**

Control Analog - Diode Current Set Point 2

Analog input 0 ... 5 V, input impedance 10 kOhm

0 ... 5 V corresponds to a diode current of 0 ... 10 A

Max power dissipation must be considered!

Diode Current Set Point 1, Diode Current Set Point 2 and the current value of the bias current potentiometer are added internally and build the effective current set point. The user needs to make sure that the maximum current will not be exceeded!

A current set point with negative sign acts subtracting.

**SA-DCACT (X3)**

Status Analog - Diode Current Actual

Analog output 0 ... 112 mV (off-load voltage), output impedance 50 Ohm, reflects the actual diode current. 0 ... 112 mV corresponds to a diode current of 0 ... 10 A.

For maximum performance the coaxial cable should be terminated with 50 Ohm.

In this case 0 ... 56 mV corresponds to a diode current of 0 ... 10 A.

**SA-TEMP (X1-5)**

Status Analog - Temperature

Analog output 0 ... 4 V, reflects the actual temperature of the modulator.

0 V corresponds to 0 °C, 4 V corresponds to +80 °C.

**CD-ENABLE (X1-3)**

Control Digital - Enable

Digital TTL input, High if left open.

A Low-Signal or pulling the input to GND enables diode current.

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**CD-RESET (X1-4)**

Control Digital - Reset

Digital TTL input, High if left open.

A Low-Signal or pulling the input to GND resets the modulator if there was an error (maximum allowed current exceeded or excessive temperature).

**CD-TRIGG (X1-7)**

Control Digital - Trigger

Digital TTL input, controls the current set point 1 signal at X2.

A logic High-level puts through the current set point 1 signal to the modulator, a logic Low-level inhibits the current set point 1 signal.

**SD-READY (X1-6)**

Status Digital - Ready

Digital TTL output, High if there are no errors.

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### Specification

Supply voltage for the internal electronics	3 V ... 6 V DC
Supply current	11 A approx.
Diode voltage	0 ... 4 V
Diode current CW	0 ... 10 A
Diode current pulsed	0 ... 20 A
Frequency bandwidth	DC ... 20 MHz (CA-DCSP1)
Frequency bandwidth	DC ... 100 KHz (CA-DCSP2)
Rise time	28 ns
Fall time	32 ns
Accuracy	± 0.2 %
Linearity	± 0.2 %
Temperature stability	± 100 ppm / °C
Accuracy of SA-DCACT output	± 2 %
Power dissipation	30 W max. allowed
Cooling	required
Operating temperature range	0 ... +45 °C
Dimensions	95 x 61 x 20 mm
Weight	240 g
Part Number	10100350

### Scope of Delivery

Fast Diode Current Modulator	Part Number 10100350
8-pole single row female connector	Part Number 10883510
2 pcs screw M4x6 DIN 7985	Part Number 10701642
11 pcs screw M1.6x3 DIN 7985	Part Number 10701609
11 pcs washer A1.7 DIN 433	Part Number 10705300

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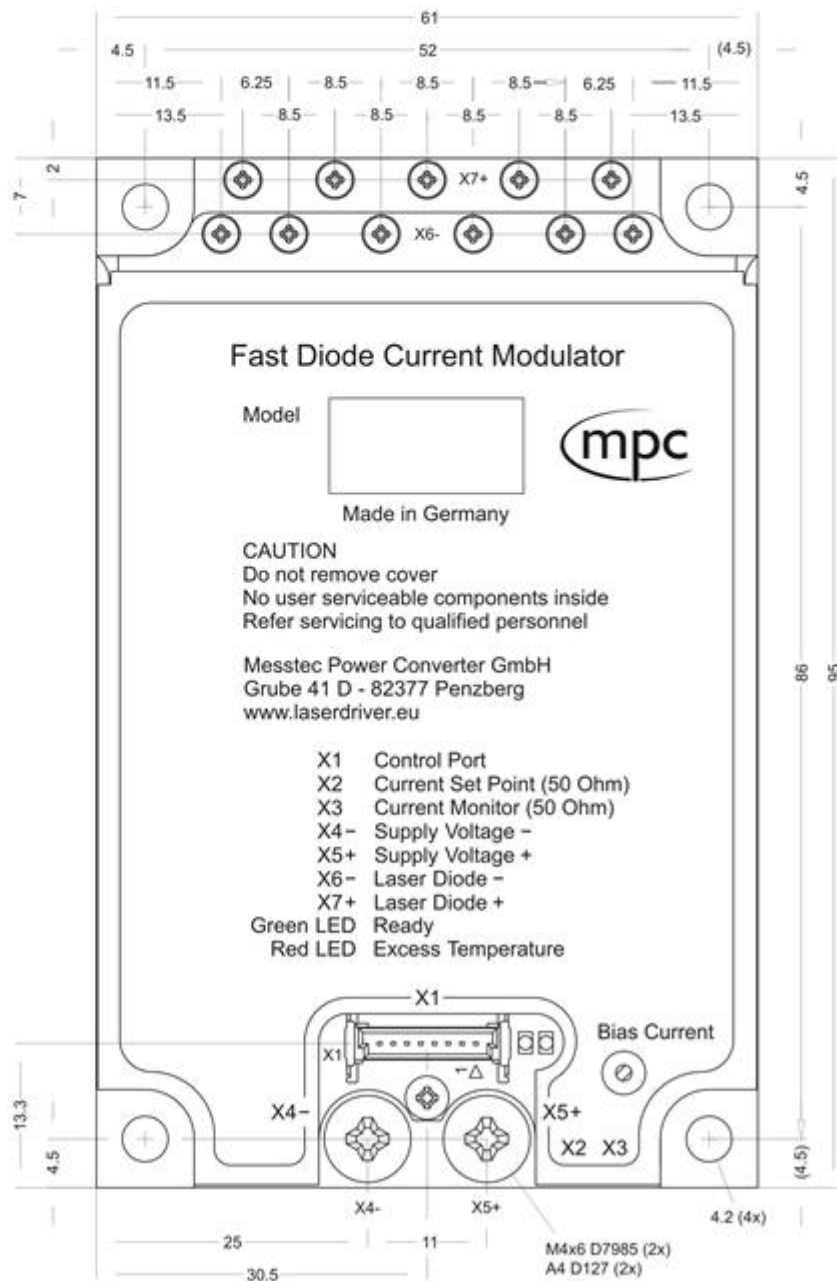
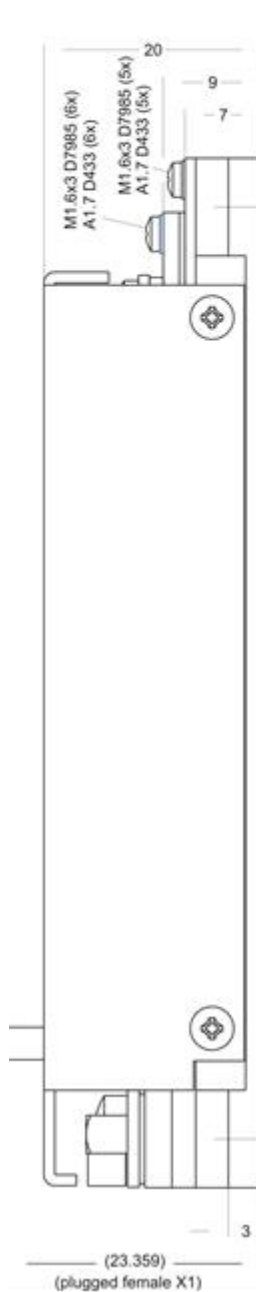
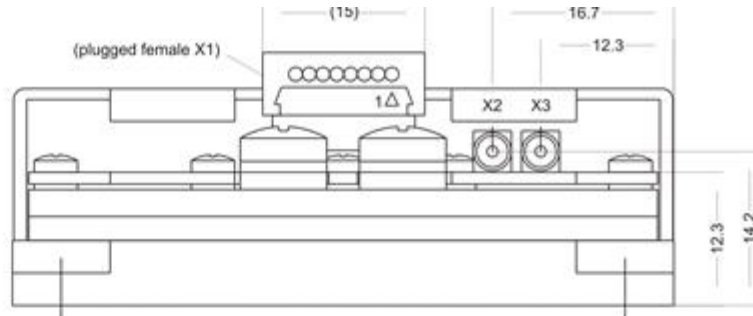
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**Section Drawing  
Dimensions (in mm)**





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Technical subjects to change without notice.