



Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

Department of Earth Sciences (D-ERDW)

Detailed stipulations regarding the doctorate dated 27 January 2022

This English translation serves information purposes only and has no legal force. The original German version is the legally binding document.

The Executive Board of ETH Zurich,

at the request of the Department of Earth Sciences at ETH Zurich¹ and pursuant to Art. 52 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate ETH Zurich of 23 November 2021²,

hereby decrees the following detailed stipulations regarding the doctorate:

Section I – General

Art. 1 Subject and purpose

These detailed stipulations govern the department-specific details for the doctorate at the Department of Earth Sciences at ETH Zurich (D-ERDW). They are based on the basic provisions of the Ordinance on the Doctorate ETH Zurich (DO) of 23 November 2021³ and on the Rector's Implementation Provisions⁴ of 23 November 2021 for the Ordinance on the Doctorate ETH Zurich (IP).

The measures described below are intended to contribute to the quality assurance of doctoral theses in the D-ERDW. The doctoral students and their supervision, as well as the project topic, are decisive for the quality of the doctoral theses.

Art. 2 Doctoral committee (cf. Art. 4 DO)

The doctoral committee of the D-ERDW consists of three professors. They are elected by the department conference in accordance with Art. 7 of the bylaws of the Department of Earth Sciences (GO D-ERDW) for a term of two years and extended by one year by tacit re-election. They may be re-elected.

¹ Resolution of the D-ERDW department conference of 30 November 2021 (approval of the detailed stipulations).

² SR 414.133.1

³ SR 414.133.1

⁴ RSETHZ 340.311

Section 2 –Doctoral plan and aptitude colloquium

Art. 3 Doctoral plan (cf. Art. 11 DO, Sec. 3 IP)

¹ The doctoral plan must be submitted to the aptitude committee no later than two weeks before the aptitude colloquium is held. Before the doctoral plan is submitted, it must have been discussed with the doctoral thesis supervisor.

² After the aptitude colloquium has been passed, the final version of the doctoral plan is prepared, countersigned by the doctoral thesis supervisor and presented to the doctoral committee for approval.

³ All of the documents (doctoral plan, study plan and corresponding forms) must be submitted to the D-ERDW doctoral administration no later than four weeks following the aptitude colloquium.

Art. 4 Aptitude colloquium (cf. Art. 12-15 DO, Sec. 4 IP)

¹ The doctoral student organises the aptitude colloquium in consultation with the doctoral thesis supervisor and coordinates the date with the D-ERDW doctoral administration. The aptitude colloquium takes place 9-12 months after provisional admission. The result is communicated to the doctoral student by the chairperson of the aptitude committee immediately after the examination.

² The aptitude colloquium is structured as follows:

- a. a public presentation of maximum 30 minutes,
- b. a public discussion followed by
- c. questions posed to the doctoral student by the members of the aptitude committee in a session of at least 30 minutes that is closed to the public.

³ Other lecturers at the D-ERDW and thesis advisors are admitted and pose questions to the candidate after the examiners.

Art. 5 Aptitude committee (cf. Art. 16 DO)

An academically qualified member of the aptitude committee is not involved in the doctorate and comes from another research group. If other qualified advisors (cf. Art. 28 DO) have already been chosen, they are also part of the aptitude committee. The doctoral committee considers and approves the members of the aptitude committee.

Section 3 – Supervision of the doctorate

Art. 6 Approval for an adjunct (titular associate) professor or a *Privatdozent* to act as doctoral thesis supervisor (cf. Art. 5, para. 1, lit. b. DO)

As a general rule, an adjunct (titular associate) professor is authorised to act as doctoral thesis supervisor. A *Privatdozent* requires approval to act as doctoral thesis supervisor.

Art. 7 Special points of contact

The “Mittelbau” (Academic Association of Scientific Staff) of the D-ERDW offers an extracurricular point of contact for doctoral students.

Art. 8 Second advisor (cf. Art. 28 DO)

If a second advisor resigns from the function of supervisor, they must be replaced within three months. The doctoral thesis supervisor and the doctoral student are responsible for this.

Section 4 – Individual doctoral studies

Art. 9 Regular doctoral studies (cf. Art. 36 DO, Sec. 10 IP)

¹ At the time of the aptitude colloquium, a study plan must be prepared outlining the individual programme or ECTS credits to be earned. This study plan requires the approval of the doctoral committee. Any change to the study plan requires renewed approval by the doctoral committee.

² During their doctoral studies, doctoral students must earn at least 12 ECTS credits. At least one third of the required ECTS credits must be earned outside the field of research of the doctoral student.

³ The courses offered for doctoral studies at the D-ERDW include all required and elective courses for Master’s degree studies in Earth Sciences as well as for the Teaching Diploma in Geography.

⁴ For continuing education in fields related to the doctoral studies, consideration is given to expanding existing knowledge and acquiring new knowledge that is needed to successfully complete the doctoral thesis.

⁵ At the recommendation of the doctoral thesis supervisor, the doctoral committee decides on the recognition of study achievements completed outside the courses offered at ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich (UZH).

⁶ The ECTS credits used in the Teaching Diploma in Geography may only be recognised if approved by the doctoral committee.

Section 5 – Doctoral thesis and doctoral examination

Art. 10 External doctoral thesis (cf. Art. 25 DO, Sec. 6 IP)

At the request of the doctoral thesis supervisor and after reviewing the framework conditions for completion, the doctoral committee decides with respect to any completion of a doctoral thesis outside the ETH domain.

Art. 11 Notification and approval of co-examiners (cf. Art. 40, para. 3 DO, Sec. 11.3 IP)

¹ The request for approval of co-examiners is submitted to the department conference (in accordance with Art. 8, para. 4 f. GO D-ERDW) for approval. The request must be submitted to the D-ERDW doctoral administration no later than two weeks prior to the department conference.

² Pursuant to Art. 40, para. 3, lit. b. DO, Sec. 11.3 c. IP, the external expert co-examiner may not be involved in the research activity of the doctoral thesis.

³ As a rule, the second advisor is a co-examiner.

⁴ The co-examiners must be approved by the time the doctoral thesis is submitted to the examination committee.

Art. 12 Procedure prior to the doctoral examination and submission of examination copies and reports (cf. Art. 39 DO, Sec. 11.4 IP)

¹ No later than three months prior to the planned doctoral examination, the doctoral student contacts the D-ERDW doctoral administration to make initial clarifications with respect to the organisation of the examination. The procedure is described in detail on the D-ERDW website.

² No later than 30 working days prior to the doctoral examination, the doctoral student must submit the documents to the D-ERDW doctoral administration to confirm the ECTS credits.

³ The doctoral thesis must be sent to the doctoral thesis supervisor and the members of the examination committee in electronic form no later than 30 working days prior to the planned examination. A printed version is delivered at the request of the members of the examination committee.

⁴ A printed examination copy of the doctoral thesis must be submitted to the D-ERDW doctoral administration no later than by the date of the official registration for the doctoral examination (with Academic Services).

⁵ The doctoral thesis supervisor and the co-examiners submit their signed report to the chairperson of the examination committee and the D-ERDW doctoral administration no later than 18 working days prior to the doctoral examination. If reports are not available on time, the date of the examination must be rescheduled subject to compliance with the 18-day deadline.

Art. 13 Doctoral examination (cf. Art. 39 DO, Sec. 11.6 and 11.7 IP)

¹ The official invitation (dispatch) to the doctoral examination is made following written approval of the chairperson of the examination committee. It must be made no later than 10 days prior to the doctoral examination.

² Doctoral examinations at the D-ERDW are public. The chairperson may require that only persons holding a doctorate be allowed to attend the examination. The examination lasts at least 90 minutes and consists of:

- a. A presentation on the research topic of the doctoral thesis by the candidate that lasts a maximum of 30 minutes.
- b. An oral examination that lasts at least 60 minutes. After consultation with the members of the examination committee, the chairperson determines the order of the round of questions among the members. The chairperson may also ask questions.
- c. Finally, the chairperson allows other persons present to pose questions on the topic. She or he may limit this to the persons present who hold a doctorate. The chairperson may reject questions outright and let any answers to questions be disregarded in the assessment.

³ The doctoral examination may be conducted in German or English.

Art. 14 Assessment of the doctoral examination and procedure following the doctoral examination

¹ At the end of the doctoral examination, all D-ERDW lecturers present will be invited by the examination committee to discuss the examination. At the end, the examination committee decides independently whether the examination was passed and whether an award should be proposed. If the result of the examination is:

- a. *Passed with no corrections*, the final version must be submitted to the D-ERDW doctoral administration within six months;
- b. *Passed with corrections* – Option 1 (will be evaluated by the supervisor and must take place within six months including delivery of the final version to the D-ERDW doctoral administration);
- c. *Passed with corrections* – Option 2 (will be verified by several members of the examination committee and must take place within six months including delivery of the final version to the D-ERDW doctoral administration);
- d. *Failed*, repetition of the doctoral examination must take place within six months of the date of the examination.

² The chairperson of the examination committee informs the D-ERDW doctoral administration about the examination results.

Section 6 – Final provisions

Art. 15 Transitional provisions regarding the doctoral plan and the research plan (Art. 60 DO)

The provisions pursuant to Annex 1 apply to doctoral students who were admitted provisionally, but not yet definitively, before 1 January 2022.

Art. 16 Transitional provisions regarding definitive admission (Art. 62 DO)

Doctoral students who were admitted provisionally, but not yet definitively, before 1 January 2022 will be definitively admitted if their research plan has been successfully defended.

Art. 17 Transitional provisions regarding regular doctoral studies and the academic record (Art. 65 DO)

The following rules apply to doctoral students who decide for doctoral studies under the previous law:

- Two credits per paper are awarded for presentation of a paper to colloquia or seminars of the department or of the institute.
- Two credits are awarded for a paper or presentation of a poster to a national or international symposium.

Art. 18 Entry into force

These detailed stipulations enter into force retroactively as of 1 January 2022. They replace the D-ERDW Detailed regulations governing individual doctoral studies of 18 February 2013.

Application of the salary rates

The salary rates for doctoral students are applied in accordance with Art. 8, para. 3 of the Ordinance governing scientific employees at ETH Zurich⁵, in conjunction with Sec. 1, para. 3 of the Directives for doctoral students employed at ETH Zurich⁶.

At D-ERDW, the same salary rate should be applied within a professorship. The professors and institutes ensure a fair distribution of work in the area of teaching and with respect to support of the research activity. If workloads become above average, the professors are required to compensate this through performance bonuses.

⁵ SR 172.220.113.11

⁶ RSETHZ 622

Annex 1

Detailed regulations governing individual doctoral studies of 18 February 2013

Approved by the Executive Board on 12 May 2015

Art. 4 Research plan defense

¹ Doctoral students at the D-ERDW undergo a research plan defense in which the background, the scientific issue, the broader context, and the objectives of the dissertation as well as the work carried out to date are presented and discussed. The research plan defense is another requirement for final admission to the doctorate as outlined in Art. 62 DO.

² The examination committee consists of at least three lecturers or professors (examiners), including the supervisor. At least one is a professor from the department. In addition, at least one of the examiners is not from the same research group. The examination committee is approved by the doctoral committee on recommendation of the doctoral thesis supervisor.

³ A preliminary version of the research plan is presented to the supervisor and the examination committee prior to the research plan defense.

⁴ The research plan defense takes place within 9-12 months following commencement of doctoral studies.

⁵ Procedure:

- a. public lecture of maximum 30 minutes
- b. discussion open to the public
- c. period of minimum 30 minutes closed to the public for the examiners to pose questions to the candidate. Professors and the thesis advisors are admitted and pose questions to the candidates after the examiners. These questions relate in particular to the background, the objectives and the further course of action.
- d. Consultation among the examiners, professors and thesis advisors. Failure to pass is determined by a simple majority.
- e. The candidate is informed immediately of the result. In the event of a failure to pass, the specific reasons are provided in detail.

⁶ In the event of a failure to pass, the research plan defense may be repeated once within a period of three months.

⁷ After passing the research plan defense, the final version of the research plan is completed, countersigned by the doctoral thesis supervisor, and submitted to the doctoral committee for approval, in accordance with Art. 60, para. 2 lit. d DO.