



Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich  
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

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## Department of Health Sciences and Technology (D-HEST)

### Detailed Stipulations regarding the Doctorate

dated 27 January 2022

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

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*The ETH Zurich Executive Board,*

at the request of the Department of Health Sciences and Technology at ETH Zurich<sup>1</sup> and pursuant to Art. 52 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate at ETH Zurich of 23 November 2021<sup>2</sup>, hereby decrees the following detailed stipulations regarding the doctorate:

### Section 1 – General Provisions

#### Article 1 Scope and purpose

<sup>1</sup> These stipulations govern the department-specific details for the doctorate at the Department of Health Sciences and Technology (D-HEST) at ETH Zurich. They are based on the fundamental provisions of the Ordinance on the Doctorate at ETH Zurich (DO) of 23 November 2021<sup>3</sup> and on the Rector's Implementation Provisions for the ETH Zurich Ordinance on the Doctorate of 23 November 2021<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> The measures described below are intended to contribute to the quality assurance of doctoral theses at the D-HEST. Principal factors that determine the quality of doctoral theses are the doctoral student, the supervision of the doctoral student and the project topic.

#### Article 2 Doctoral commission

<sup>1</sup> The composition, tasks and protocol of the Doctoral Commission are regulated in article 34 of the D-HEST by-laws.

<sup>2</sup> The Doctoral Commission is composed of at least three full, associate or assistant professors.

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution of the D-HEST department conference of 9 December 2021 (approval of the detailed stipulations).

<sup>2</sup> SR 414.133.1

<sup>3</sup> SR 414.133.1

<sup>4</sup> RSETHZ 340.311

<sup>3</sup> The members of the D-HEST Doctoral Commission including the chairperson are elected for a term of two years by the Department's Conference. Members can be re-elected.

<sup>4</sup> The Doctoral Commission's chairperson is responsible for implementing the commission's resolutions.

<sup>5</sup> The Doctoral Commission may make decisions by way of written consent. Decisions are made with a simple majority. In the event of equality of votes, the chairperson has the deciding vote.

## **Section 2 – Recruitment and Admission to the Doctorate**

### Article 3 Recruitment

<sup>1</sup> Doctoral students are recruited either by individual professors or by the responsible persons of the doctoral programs.

<sup>2</sup> Doctoral students registered with a doctoral program remain subject to all regulations of ETH Zurich and the department.

### Article 4 Admission

<sup>1</sup> Academic Services check whether the formal criteria for the admission of the doctoral student have been met.

<sup>2</sup> The doctoral student's academic qualifications are reviewed by the doctoral thesis supervisor.

### Article 5 Doctoral plan

<sup>1</sup> The doctoral plan must provide information on the following points:

- a) the research objectives;
- b) teaching tasks;
- c) further tasks;
- d) the personal curriculum agreed upon (Art. 34 para 1 lit. b DO) if the doctoral student's admission was subject to the completion of extended doctoral studies.

<sup>2</sup> The doctoral plan must be submitted by the doctoral student within ten months after provisional admission. Deadline extensions must be approved by the Doctoral Commission.

<sup>3</sup> The doctoral plan must be dated and signed by the doctoral student and the doctoral thesis supervisor.

<sup>4</sup> The second advisor and the date of the aptitude colloquium must be communicated at the latest when the doctoral plan is handed in.

<sup>5</sup> The doctoral plan should not comprise more than 8 pages (not counting cover page and bibliography). The department can provide the appropriate template.

## Article 6 Organising and conducting the aptitude colloquium

<sup>1</sup> The objective of the aptitude colloquium is to assess whether a doctoral student is capable of running an independent research project and writing a thesis. The subject of the aptitude colloquium is the research project described in the doctoral plan.

<sup>2</sup> Each professor will indicate time slots during which he or she can chair an aptitude colloquium. The slots communicated are binding. The exact booking system will be defined by the Doctoral Commission.

<sup>3</sup> The number of time slots to be indicated for the chairing of aptitude colloquia is as follows:

- a) Full and associate professors indicate six time slots per year.
- b) Assistant professors with Tenure Track indicate three time slots per year.
- c) Assistant professors without Tenure Track indicate one time slot per year.
- d) Adjunct professors indicate three time slots per year.

<sup>4</sup> The departmental Doctoral Administration Office contacts the professors who have indicated their availability on the date the doctoral student prefers for the aptitude colloquium. The aptitude colloquium usually takes place in the doctoral thesis supervisor's premises. The doctoral student reserves a suitable room for the aptitude colloquium and informs all members of the aptitude committee and the departmental Doctoral Administration Office accordingly. If the aptitude colloquium takes place by video conferencing, the doctoral student will be responsible for the technical support.

<sup>5</sup> If no professor is available on the planned date of the aptitude colloquium, the doctoral student has to find a chairperson on his or her own or choose another date.

<sup>6</sup> If a professor cannot chair the aptitude colloquium on the date indicated to the department, he or she has to find a replacement.

<sup>7</sup> The aptitude colloquium is conducted as follows:

- a) 20-minute presentation of the research project by the doctoral student;
- b) minimum 15-minute discussion of the presentation, moderated by the chair of the aptitude colloquium;
- c) evaluation and decision by the members of the aptitude commission.

<sup>8</sup> If the result of the evaluation is not unanimous, the Doctoral Commission will decide the matter within one month of the aptitude colloquium.

<sup>9</sup> An examination which concluded with a "failed" result may be repeated once, provided that the doctoral thesis supervisor agrees. The doctoral thesis supervisor may only refuse a repetition if the aptitude committee unanimously assessed the first attempt as "failed". Any repetition must take place within three months of the first definitive result.

## Article 7 Aptitude committee

<sup>1</sup> The aptitude committee is composed of the following persons:

- a) the chairperson as representative of the Doctoral Commission (chair);

- b) the doctoral thesis supervisor;
- c) the second advisor;
- d) further persons in individual cases, on the doctoral thesis supervisor's request to the chair of the Doctoral Commission.

<sup>2</sup> All members of the D-HEST Professors' Conference may chair an aptitude colloquium, except for D-HEST associated members.

<sup>3</sup> On request of the supervisor to the chair of the Doctoral Commission, a different composition of the members of the aptitude colloquium is possible as an exception.

### **Section 3 – Supervision of the Doctorate**

#### Article 8 Supervision of the doctoral thesis

<sup>1</sup> Doctoral theses can be supervised by ETH Zurich professors.

<sup>2</sup> At the D-HEST, also adjunct professors and *Privatdozenten* can supervise a doctoral thesis if they work full-time for ETH Zurich, at a research institute of the ETH domain or in a joint professorship with another Swiss university.

#### Article 9 Counselling

<sup>1</sup> At D-HEST, the Deputy Head of Department in his/her role as Trusted Intermediary can be contacted by all doctoral students for counselling on non-scientific matters in relation to the doctorate.

<sup>2</sup> All doctoral students can reach out to all other ETH internal and external persons and units offering individual counselling and support as well as to AVETH support.

#### Article 10 Progress report and annual status conversation

<sup>1</sup> After final admission to the doctoral studies, the doctoral student and the doctoral thesis supervisor meet for a status discussion once a year.

<sup>2</sup> The doctoral student must submit a written progress report to the doctoral thesis supervisor in preparation for the annual status conversation. The report must describe the following:

- a) the progress of the research project;
- b) the description of the next steps;
- c) the progress of the doctoral studies;
- d) the working situation in the research group;
- e) the personal development possibilities.

<sup>3</sup> The annual status conversation is conducted according to the regulations in the Rector's Implementation Provisions.

## **Section 4 – Doctoral Studies**

### Article 11 Regular doctoral studies

<sup>1</sup> One credit point corresponds to a workload of 25–30 hours. For the awarding of credit points, an individual performance confirmed by a certificate of performance is required.

<sup>2</sup> At least a third of the required 12 credit points for the doctoral study must be acquired in subjects outside the field of research.

<sup>3</sup> For the participation in committees of the D-HEST, in ETH Zurich members associations or selection committees, a maximum of 2 credit points can be awarded.

<sup>4</sup> For the participation at scientific congresses, one credit point is awarded for each independent contribution as presenting author. A maximum of two credit points can be awarded.

<sup>5</sup> For the reporting and awarding of the credit points acquired, the application for doctoral students provided by the rectorate must be used.

<sup>6</sup> The study program coordinator is responsible for the approval and confirmation of the performance assessments during the individual doctoral studies.

### Article 12 Extended doctoral studies

<sup>1</sup> The doctoral thesis supervisor and the doctoral student agree on the study achievements to be completed, set out in a personal curriculum. Any disagreements are settled by the Doctoral Commission.

<sup>2</sup> The personal curriculum is a component of the doctoral plan (Art. 5, para 1 lit. d.).

## **Section 5 – Doctoral Thesis and Doctoral Examination**

### Article 13 Conducting the doctoral thesis project outside the ETH domain

Doctoral thesis projects outside the ETH domain require the approval of the Doctoral Commission.

### Article 14 Doctoral thesis

<sup>1</sup> Every doctoral thesis must include an introduction chapter, chapters or sections which illustrate the different research topics addressed in the doctorate as well as a discussion of the research outcome and an outlook.

<sup>2</sup> The introduction chapter defines the doctoral student's individual contribution to the research area and the connection of the individual chapters to the overarching research theme.

## Article 15 Cumulative doctoral thesis

<sup>1</sup> A cumulative doctoral thesis consists of manuscripts or proceedings, that

- a) have already been published in peer-reviewed journals or media or in books,
- b) or have been accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals or books.

<sup>2</sup> Proceedings in engineering science are equal to manuscripts if they are subject to peer review before publication.

<sup>3</sup> Cumulative doctoral theses must include an introduction chapter which gives a clear statement of the doctoral student's own individual contribution as well as the connection of the individual manuscripts to the overarching research theme.

## Article 16 Notification and approval of co-examiners

<sup>1</sup> The doctoral thesis supervisor nominates the co-examiners to the Doctoral Commission for approval three months before the doctoral examination at the latest.

<sup>2</sup> The following co-examiners do not require approval by the Doctoral Commission:

- a) full and associate ETH Zurich professors
- b) ETH Zurich assistant professors

<sup>3</sup> All other co-examiners require the approval by the Doctoral Commission unless they have already been approved earlier, for which the D-HEST keeps a list.

<sup>4</sup> The doctoral thesis supervisor submits applications for co-examiners to the departmental Doctoral Administration Office. The applications must give a reason for the involvement of the co-examiners.

<sup>5</sup> Upon receipt, the applications are forwarded to the Doctoral Commission for approval and subsequently, the rector is informed about the approved applications.

## Article 17 Organising and conducting the doctoral examination

<sup>1</sup> The doctoral student informs the departmental Doctoral Administration Office at least 30 days before the doctoral examination about the preferred examination date.

<sup>2</sup> The departmental Doctoral Administration Office is responsible for the organisation of the doctoral examination.

<sup>3</sup> Each professor will indicate time slots during which he or she will chair a doctoral examination. The slots communicated are binding. The exact booking system will be defined by the Doctoral Commission.

<sup>4</sup> The number of time slots to be indicated for the chairing of a doctoral examination is as follows:

- a) Full and associate professors indicate six time slots per year.
- b) Assistant professors with Tenure Track indicate three time slots per year.

- c) Assistant professors without Tenure Track indicate one time slot per year.
- d) Adjunct professors indicate three time slots per year.

<sup>5</sup> The departmental Doctoral Administration Office contacts the professors who have indicated their availability on the planned date of the doctoral examination and reserves a suitable room. On request, the departmental Doctoral Administration Office organizes technical support for a video conference.

<sup>6</sup> If no professor is available on the planned date of the doctoral examination, the doctoral student has to find a chairperson on his or her own or choose another date.

<sup>7</sup> If a professor cannot chair the doctoral examination on the date indicated to the department, he or she has to find a replacement.

<sup>8</sup> The doctoral student registers for the doctoral examination with the ETH Doctoral Administration Office at least 15 working days before the planned examination date.

<sup>9</sup> The doctoral examination is public. In case of special contractual agreements (confidentiality of research results) the doctoral thesis supervisor can declare the entire doctoral examination as non-public.

<sup>10</sup> The doctoral examination comprises a presentation of the doctoral thesis by the candidate. The presentation lasts a maximum of 20 minutes. Subsequently, there is an oral examination of at least 60 minutes.

#### Article 18 Examination committee

<sup>1</sup> The doctoral examination can be chaired by professors and adjunct professors.

<sup>2</sup> At least one member of the examination committee must have no co-authorship relationship with the doctoral student.

### **Section 6 – Transitional Provisions and Final Clauses**

#### Article 19 Transitional provisions regarding regular doctoral studies

Doctoral students who were provisionally – but not yet definitively – admitted before 1 January 2022 can choose if they want to pursue regular doctoral studies under the new regulations in accordance with DO Art. 36 or under the previous regulations. Doctoral students who complete their individual doctoral studies under the previous regulations in accordance with DO article 65, follow the provisions set out in Annex 1.

#### Article 20 Final Clauses

These detailed stipulations enter into force on 1. January 2022. They replace the detailed stipulations of the D-HEST on doctoral studies of 1 January 2018.

## **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 Zurich<sup>5</sup>, in conjunction with item 1 para 3 of the Directives for Doctoral Students Employed at ETH Zurich<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>At the D-HEST, the application of salary rates for doctoral students is handled transparently and fair. Each professor defines a uniform salary rate for his or her doctoral students. The D HEST recommends to all its institutes to issue standardized regulations.

<sup>2</sup> If a doctoral student takes over considerable extra duties, e.g., in teaching, the group's administration or the maintenance of lab equipment, this shall be compensated by corresponding salary arrangements.

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<sup>5</sup> SR 172.220.113.11

<sup>6</sup> RSETHZ 622



**Department of Health Sciences and Technology (D-HEST)****Detailed Regulations for Individual Doctoral Studies**

of 14 December 2016 (as of 1 January 2018)

Important: English is not an official language of the Swiss Confederation. This translation is provided for information purposes only and has no legal force.

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Approved by the Executive Board on 12 December 2017

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*D-HEST,*

pursuant to Art. 23 Abs. 3 of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich of 1 July 2008<sup>1</sup>, in accordance with clause 9 of the Rector's Implementation Provisions to the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich of 17 October 2013<sup>2</sup>,

*decrees the following detailed regulations for individual doctoral studies:*

1. The Study Coordinator is responsible for the approval and confirmation of the performance assessments during the individual doctoral studies.
2. A credit point requires a work effort of 25 to 30 hours<sup>3</sup>. For the awarding of credit points an individual performance confirmed by a certificate of performance is required<sup>4</sup>.
3. At least a third of the required credits for the doctoral study must be acquired in subjects outside the field of research<sup>5</sup>. To receive credit points, performance assessments for courses from the ETH Zurich Course Catalogue may differ upon agreement with the responsible lecturers from the performance assessments listed in the *Course Catalogue for Bachelor or Master students*.
4. A maximum of 2 credit points can be awarded for participation in committees of D-HEST, in ETH Zurich members associations or selection committees.
5. For the participation at scientific congresses one credit point is awarded for each independent contribution as first author. A maximum of two credit points can be awarded.
6. For the reporting and approval of the gained credit points, the [confirmation sheet for doctoral students](#) supplied by the Rectorate must be used.
7. For doctoral students who began their doctorate before the 1 January 2012 in another department of ETH Zurich and who have changed to a specialist area in D-HEST, the

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<sup>1</sup> SR 414.133.1

<sup>2</sup> RSETHZ 340.311

<sup>3</sup> Art. 24 Abs. 2 Doktoratsverordnung ETH Zürich (DV)

<sup>4</sup> Art. 25a Abs. 1 DV

<sup>5</sup> Art. 25 Abs. 2 DV

previously given admissions and approvals are valid without limitation. Transitional regulations according to Ziff. 8 apply.

## 8. Transitional Regulations

The following additional transitional regulations apply to Ziff. 7 of these Detailed Regulations:

A. Doctoral studies beginning before 1 January 2012 and completing after 1 January 2013

For these doctoral students the credit points gained before 31 December 2011 are accredited according to the regulations of the former department.

For credit points gained after 1 January 2012, solely the present Detailed Regulations of D-HEST apply.

B. Accreditation of Admission Requirements

Doctoral students who began their doctorate in 2013 (1.1. – 31.12.), and who were required to fulfil additional admission requirements according to Art. 10 of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies can have these credit points accredited to their doctoral studies.

C. In cases of uncertainty

In cases of uncertainty regarding the accreditation of credit points mentioned under points A or B, the decision is taken by the Chair of the Doctoral Committee of D-HEST.

## 9. These Detailed Regulations are effective from 1 January 2018. They replace the Detailed Regulations of 11 December 2013.