

Aptitude Colloquium at D-MATL

Within the first eleven months after starting the doctorate, you will need to submit the doctoral plan and within twelve months pass the aptitude colloquium in front of the aptitude committee. This is a very important step in the doctoral education.

Aptitude committee

The aptitude committee consists of at least three members as follows.

- representative of the doctoral committee, usually the Deputy Head or Head of Department, who acts as chairperson
- the doctoral thesis supervisor
- the second advisor

If the second advisor is not an elected professor, the aptitude committee must be supplemented by an additional member. This person must be an elected or associate D-MATL professor. The committee may include further additional members. These must be approved by the representative of the doctoral committee, if they are not elected professor or permanent scientific staff members.

Doctoral plan

The doctoral plan is prepared in consultation with the thesis supervisor. You have to demonstrate that you identified a research problem and that you have sufficient preliminary results and ideas to make sure a doctoral thesis can be written both at the level expected at ETH and feasible within a timeframe of 4 years.

It should contain

- the objectives and motivation of the doctoral thesis;
- placement in the scientific context;
- description of methodologies and procedures;
- preliminary results.

In addition, the doctoral plan must include an outline of the teaching duties, and possibility other tasks that the doctoral student is expected to perform in the research group (for example equipment responsibility, outreach or others). The supervisory relationship must also be outlined.

Aptitude Colloquium

The aptitude colloquium is conducted as early as possible within twelve months after provisional admission to the doctorate. It consists of a presentation of the doctoral plan (max. 30 min) and a discussion (30 min). Doctoral students also need to be able to answer general questions about background knowledge related to their projects.

The aptitude colloquium can be passed or failed. A failed aptitude colloquium may be repeated once within four weeks to three months after the first attempt, provided that the doctoral thesis supervisor agrees. The committee can also ask the doctoral student to implement changes to the doctoral plan.

The chairperson writes down the aptitude committee's decision and a short summary of the discussion in [this form](#) and shares it the committee members and doctoral student. The D-MATL study administration office also requires a copy of the doctoral plan with the signature of the supervisor.

Once the aptitude colloquium has been passed, the doctoral student will be definitely admitted. You will receive a confirmation by the doctoral administration office.

Scheduling

The deputy head of department acts as chairperson of the aptitude colloquia. The following professors will be deputy heads of department:

Before Feb 1, 2024: Prof. Pietro Gambardella

Feb 1, 2024 - Jan 31, 2025: Prof. Jörg Löffler

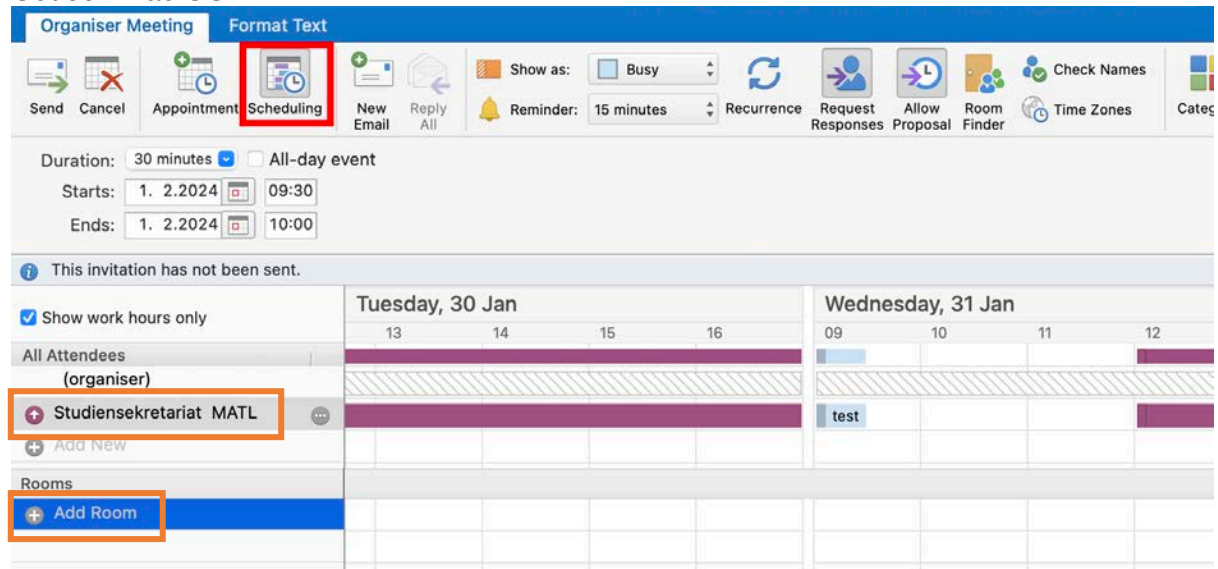
After Feb 1, 2025: Prof. André Studart

All aptitude colloquia will take place on **Wednesday mornings between 09.00 – 10.30 and 10.30 – 12.00** (i.e., two colloquia per week). If Wednesday mornings do not work for you and your supervisor (e.g., because of teaching obligations), please contact the deputy head of department to find another time slot.

In order to schedule your research plan defense, please

1. Check the Calendar studieren@mat.ethz.ch (Studiensekretariat MATL) for free slots on Wednesday mornings.
2. Create a [nuudel](#) for your committee members and look for a suitable date.
3. Once you have found a date and time, send an outlook calendar invitation to studieren@mat.ethz.ch, the chairperson and your committee members. You may also book the room at the same time, e.g., HCI J 498 (equipped for hybrid meetings) or HCP F 43.4 via Outlook (see below via Scheduling for MacOS or Scheduling assistant on Windows) if the presentation takes place in person. To do the booking and access the calendars you may also use the Outlook web application (via mail.ethz.ch).

Outlook Mac OS



If you do not manage to schedule your aptitude colloquium before the deadline listed in myStudies, please submit a [request for deadline extension](#).

For rules and details visit [our website](#) or send us your questions by e-mail (studieren@mat.ethz.ch).