

D-MATL: Detailed Stipulations Governing Doctoral Studies

PLEASE NOTE: THIS ENGLISH TRANSLATION IS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY. ONLY THE GERMAN VERSION OF THE STIPULATIONS IS LEGALLY BINDING.

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For further information: D-MATL Study Administration

Pursuant to the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies at ETH Zurich of 1 July 2008, Art. 2 ('Doctorates'), Para. 1a

¹ *The ETH Zurich confers:*

a. regular doctorates as proof of the graduate's ability to conduct high-level scientific research based on an independently produced original study;

the Department of Materials has determined the following detailed stipulations:

Art. 1 Area of application

¹ These stipulations govern the application of the Regulations for Doctoral Studies at ETH Zurich of 1 July 2008 (RSETHZ 340.31) and the Rector's Implementation Provisions for the Doctorate Ordinance of 1 September 2008 (RSETHZ 340.311) for the Department of Materials. They extend and further define these provisions.

² The aim of the measures described below is to ensure the quality of doctoral theses at the Department of Materials. Decisive for the quality of said theses are the doctoral student, the project theme and the supervision of the thesis. Extended project planning in a doctoral thesis project committee, clear guidelines for recognition of credits in the context of doctoral studies, the procedure regarding cumulative dissertations and the composition of the doctoral examination committee further this intention. The inclusion of the Head of Department in this process fosters consistency in the Department of Materials.

Part 1 Research plan and project assessment

Art. 2 Project proposal and research plan

¹ Together with the supervisor the doctoral student prepares a project proposal which describes the prospective doctoral thesis in research project form. This project proposal corresponds to the research plan, and sets out

- a. the objectives of the thesis;
- b. an outline of the expectations of the thesis;
- c. a feasibility assessment;
- d. preliminary results;
- e. a timetable.

² The research plan must be submitted within twelve months of the provisional admission. Extensions to this deadline require the approval of the doctoral committee.

Art. 3 Project assessment

¹ A project assessment is conducted at the latest twelve months after provisional admission to the doctoral studies. In the assessment the project draft is presented to the project committee in a talk of at most 30 minutes and subsequently discussed. The details of project supervision must also be determined.

² If the committee's assessment of the project is positive, the project proposal is forwarded to the departmental doctoral committee.

³ The approval of both the project committee and the doctoral committee must be recorded on the doctoral student's respective form. This form is then submitted to the Study Administration Office together with a copy of the research plan.

Art. 4 Project committee

The project committee consists of three (M1-M3) or four members (M1-M4), in which at least three members have to be elected professors of the Department of Materials:

M1: the Head of the Department of Materials (or the deputy Head)

M2: a professor from among the elected members of the Department of Materials

M3: the thesis supervisor

M4: a designated co-examiner from among the members of the Department of Materials

Exceptions regarding the composition of the project committee may be approved by the Head of the Department of Materials.

Art. 5 Submission of the project proposal

The project proposal must be submitted to the project committee at least two weeks before the project assessment.

Art. 6 Repetition of the project assessment

If the project committee judges the project proposal to be unsatisfactory, it will propose changes to be incorporated into a new version. This new version must be submitted within three months. D-MATL's Head of Department decides whether the new version should also be presented to a project committee and discussed.

Art. 7 Rejection of the project proposal

If the project committee also judges the second project proposal to be unsatisfactory, the doctoral project in question cannot be carried out.

Part 2 Doctoral studies**Art. 8 Objective, form and requirements**

¹ Doctoral students have the right and the duty to pursue further studies.

² The objectives of doctoral studies are

a. the acquisition of knowledge and competences in the field of the doctoral thesis project, in neighbouring disciplines and in cross-disciplinary fields;

b. integration into the scientific community.

³ Doctoral programme studies are certified in the form of credits.

⁴ One credit corresponds to an academic workload of 25 to 30 hours. Credits are only given if independent work can be demonstrated.

⁵ At least 12 credits are required.

⁶ Doctoral students must acquire at least a third of the required credits outside the field of their own research.

Art. 9 Agreement of the thesis supervisor

The doctoral student's further studies must be approved by the thesis supervisor.

Art. 10 Recognition of courses attended and other academic achievements

¹ At least 8 of the required 12 credits must be acquired via courses which correspond to the terms of Para. 2a below.

² The Department of Materials recognises credits towards the doctoral programme, which have been acquired via the following courses/educational activities:

- a. Attendance of all courses at ETH Zurich, and – with the approval of the thesis supervisor – other courses in the ETH domain and at other universities and research institutions. The prerequisite for acquisition of credits is a performance assessment. The credits are considered according to the number of ECTS credits listed in the Course Catalogue and according to Art. 8, Para. 4 and 6.
- b. A talk or talks delivered to a general scientific audience at an international scientific conference (1 credit per talk).
- c. Active participation in working groups or organizations of ETH and/or the Department of Materials can be considered on an individual basis.

³ Credits explicitly not recognised:

- Qualifying examinations for the doctorate
- Courses attended prior to commencing the doctoral programme

Art. 11 Checking of credits

¹ Doctoral students must submit a list of the credits acquired, signed by the supervisor, to the Study Administration Office at least three weeks before the oral doctoral examination. The Study Administration Office checks them.

² The Study Administration Office issues a confirmation that the credits required for the doctoral degree have been acquired.

³ The doctoral candidate encloses this confirmation with the application for the doctoral examination.

Part 3 Doctoral thesis and doctoral examination

Art. 12 Doctoral thesis

¹ Scientific quality is the main factor in the evaluation of the doctoral thesis.

² D-MATL theses normally comprise subtopics organised into several chapters; these may be based upon publications. In the context of collaborative work the doctoral candidate's own work must be shown. A plain assembly of publications is not allowed. If a large portion of the dissertation is based upon publications, at least one of the co-examiner must not be a co-author of any (or at the most one) of the respective publications.

³ Theses must include a comprehensive introduction and summary/conclusion. Value is laid on good introductory paragraphs and summaries in the individual chapters. The most important factors by far, however, are formal presentation of content, linguistic acumen and clarity.

Art. 13 Designation of co-examiners

¹ The thesis supervisor should designate at least one co-examiner preferably after the successful completion of the project assessment, but at the latest 12 months after provisional admission to the doctoral programme. Normally this co-examiner is a full professor of the department who has been involved in the project assessment.

² If the thesis supervisor is not an elected professor at least one co-examiner must be an elected professor at ETH Zurich.

Art. 14 Examination committee

¹ The examination committee comprises

- a. a chairperson;
- b. the thesis supervisor as examiner;
- c. at least two co-examiners who are independent of the supervisor.

² The Head of Department is normally the chairperson of the examination committee. He/she may name a representative from among the former Heads of D-MATL. If any relationships of interdependency exist between the thesis supervisor and the examiners, further independent experts must be recruited (see Para. 1c). At least one co-examiner must not be a member of the Department of Materials.

³ The thesis supervisor submits the composition of the examination committee (including brief curricula vitae of any non-ETHZ co-examiners) to the departmental doctoral committee, which may request the naming of further members. At the request of the doctoral committee, the Departmental Conference approves the composition of the examination committee during the last conference before the oral doctoral examination.

Art. 15 Doctoral examination

¹ The doctoral examination comprises an oral examination of at least one hour which covers the subject area(s) of the doctoral thesis.

² The examination committee conducts the doctoral examination.

Approved by the D-MATL Departmental Conference on 24.05.2018

Approved by the Rector on 09.07.2019

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