

Rector's Implementation Provisions for the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies 2008

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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.

The Rector of ETH Zurich

pursuant to Art. 38 of the ETH Zurich Ordinance on Doctoral Studies of 1 July 2008,¹

decrees the following implementation provisions:

1. General provisions (ODS Art. 1 to 3)

Doctoral studies guide students into the world of current research and represent the major part of scientific work at ETH Zurich. The doctoral degree is a verification of the ability to conduct high-quality scientific research and is conferred for an independent original thesis and an oral examination. The Ordinance on Doctoral Studies is to be interpreted as applying to scientific matters.²

2. Application, enrolment and matriculation (ODS Art. 5 to 13b)

a) Supervision of the doctoral thesis

The supervisor of the doctoral thesis declares him-/herself ready to take on the applicant as a doctoral student by signing the registration form. He/she determines the department which is to be responsible for the doctoral thesis. The completed application must be submitted to the Doctoral Administration Office before doctoral work commences. Enrolment at the beginning of every semester is compulsory up to the moment the decision to award the doctoral degree is made.

b) Application for doctoral programmes

Application for admission to the doctorate level is also possible via a doctoral programme if this is offered by a department. Application via a doctoral programme should take place earlier than the admissions procedures set out in the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies; the details are supplied in the provisions of the respective doctoral programme. A doctoral student may be enrolled in only one doctoral programme. Doctoral students active in multiple doctoral programmes should enrol in the programme where they conduct the major part of their doctoral studies.

c) Candidates with outstanding credentials (ODS Art. 5, Para. 2, Lit. f)

Candidates with outstanding credentials are accepted as doctoral students if they satisfy the following criteria:

1. outstanding scientific credentials (e.g. several publications in refereed journals as main author),
2. testimonials from two ETH professors³ and a testimonial from an external expert designated by the responsible department.

d) Fees

The fees for doctoral studies are specified in the Ordinance on Fees for the ETH Domain.⁴

¹ SR 414.133.1

² Supplementary provisions: Guidelines for Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practice at the ETH Zurich, RSETHZ 414

³ For the purposes of these implementation provisions the term "professor" refers to professors as defined in Art. 1, Para. 1 of the ETH Faculty Ordinance of 18 September 2003 (SR 172.220.113.40).

⁴ SR 414.131.7

3. Additional admissions requirements (ODS Art. 10)

a) Examinations

Any qualifying examinations in the context of additional admissions requirements must correspond to the Master's degree level. Qualifying examinations may not be administered by the doctoral supervisor alone.

b) Assessment of qualifying examinations

Qualifying examinations are graded from 6 (best grade) to 1 (worst grade). The qualifying examination is regarded as passed if a grade of at least a 4 is achieved in all of its parts. Doctoral candidates may re-take failed part-examinations once if the thesis supervisor agrees. If an examination is failed twice, provisional admission to doctoral studies is revoked and the student is dematriculated. Examination results and confirmation of further admissions requirements must be communicated to the Prorector for Doctoral Studies.

4. Research plan (ODS Art. 11)

The research plan must address the following points:

- a) research tasks
- b) content and time frame
- c) scope of research work
- d) anticipated publications
- e) teaching tasks
- f) further duties

Approval of the research plan by the doctoral committee must be communicated to the Doctoral Administration Office via the official form. Definitive admission to full candidacy will follow provided that all other admissions requirements have been met.

5. Re-entry to a doctoral programme (ODS Art. 13e)

Re-entry after forfeited admission is, pursuant to 3(b), only possible if new reasons justify reexamination of the applicant's qualifications (e.g. an additional degree or a change of discipline) according to Art. 5.

6. Supervision of the doctoral thesis, mentoring (ODS Art. 6 and 15)

a) Supervision of the doctoral thesis and mentoring by senior lecturers and honorary professors

Doctoral theses supervised by ETH Zurich senior lecturers or honorary professors are subject to the following conditions:

1. The supervisor must be employed full-time in teaching and research at ETH Zurich, a research institute of the ETH domain, or in a joint Chair with the University of Zurich.
2. A workplace must be available for the doctoral student.
3. Funding and technical resources for the doctoral student must be ensured.
4. The responsible department must provide its written approval.

Co-examiners who are not ETH Zurich professors must be approved by the responsible department. Information regarding approved co-examiners must be supplied to the Prorector for Doctoral Studies.

b) Remuneration of co-examiners from outside the ETH domain

Co-examining of doctoral theses, including presence at the doctoral examination, are remunerated by institutes on a lump-sum basis. Details are set out in the Rector's directive on remuneration for assisting with performance assessments.

c) Transfer of a doctoral supervisor to ETH Zurich

If a professor newly appointed to ETH Zurich brings doctoral candidates to the institution, their credentials will be appropriately recognized.

d) Supervising a doctoral thesis shortly before retiring from or leaving ETH Zurich

If professors, Titularprofessoren and Privatdozenten accept doctoral candidates less than three years before retiring, the following points must be addressed in consultation with the department and the results set out in writing and communicated to the Prorector for Doctoral Studies:

1. a potential successor for the supervisory role
2. the infrastructure required up to completion of the doctoral thesis
3. the funding of the respective doctoral candidate.

Responsibility for compliance with the associated arrangements lies with the department. The arrangements become effective if the doctoral thesis has not been completed by the time the supervisor leaves.

e) Co-examining after retiring from or leaving ETH Zurich

Thesis supervisors may be appointed as examiners of doctoral examinations for up to one year following retirement or departure from ETH Zurich. The department is responsible for approving the office. Here it must be ensured that at least one ETH Zurich professor is included as a co-examiner.

7. Conducting a doctoral thesis project outside the ETH domain (ODS Art. 16)

Conducting of doctoral thesis projects outside the ETH domain is only approved if the external institution sets no requirements which hinder either the supervision of the doctoral candidate by the ETH-internal thesis supervisor or the scheduled publication of research results. In the application for doctoral studies the candidate must enclose an outline of the proposed thesis work, including an explanation as to why it will be conducted outside the ETH domain. A confirmation from the external institution that it agrees to be bound by the provisions of ETH Zurich should be submitted with the application.

8. Disagreements (ODS Art. 17)

In cases of disagreement a written report of the arbitration process is expedient even at department level.

Doctoral candidates have the right to call in a representative of AVETH to arbitration discussions.

9. Doctoral studies (ODS Art. 22 bis 25a)

a) Detailed provisions

Each department issues detailed regulations regarding doctoral studies. The leading department issues separate regulations for each doctoral programme.

b) Components of doctoral studies

The core components of doctoral studies are

1. seminars/retreats
2. doctoral colloquia
3. courses designed for or suitable for doctoral students

Optional components of doctoral studies are

4. didactics courses
5. courses in management and personality development
6. mentoring events for doctoral students
7. other courses offered by ETH Zurich, the University of Zurich or other universities

c) Recognition of performance

Department regulations provide details on how performance is recognised.

d) Organisation of the doctoral programme

Every doctoral programme is attached to a department and managed by a programme committee composed of professors and a doctoral student representative.

10. Doctoral thesis and doctoral examination (ODS Art. 26 bis 29)

a) Assessment

The doctoral thesis is assessed not only for its scientific, but also for its linguistic quality. If the doctoral examination is failed or the doctoral thesis is accepted subject to revision, the examination committee chairperson notifies the candidate in writing regarding further steps and sets either a deadline for the revision of the thesis or a date to retake the doctoral examination. Either date must be within six months. The Doctoral Administration Office and the department concerned must be informed in writing of the arrangements made with the candidate.

b) Use of published work as part of the doctoral thesis

Manuscripts which have been published or submitted for publication may, if summarized in a suitable explanatory text which includes an introduction and an abstract, be incorporated into the doctoral thesis if this enables the examination committee to assess the doctoral candidate's independent scientific contribution, and if the doctoral thesis text is written in only one language. Appendices in other languages are allowed.

The Guidelines for Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practice at ETH Zurich of 14 November 2007⁵ also apply.

c) Registering for the doctoral examination

Candidates may register for the doctoral examination with the agreement of the examiner and after consultation with the co-examiners. A complete copy of the doctoral thesis (examination copy) must be submitted to the Doctoral Administration Office in the format prescribed in Appendix 1, "Doctoral thesis design", including a title page, an abstract in German, French or Italian, an abstract in English, and a curriculum vitae. Together with the examination copy the candidate must also submit a separate copy of the curriculum vitae, plus the official form containing the following points:

1. request to be awarded a doctoral degree
2. the doctoral candidate's declaration that the doctoral thesis is his/her own work and that it has not been submitted to any other university
3. departmental confirmation that the candidate has earned the required credits

The Doctoral Administration Office forwards the doctoral thesis to the head of the respective department or its Director of Studies. The examination copy must be submitted to the Doctoral Administration Office at least 12 working days before the examination. Tuition fees are invoiced as soon as the candidate is registered for the examination.

⁵ Version 25 October 2011, RSETHZ 414

d) Procedure if the doctoral examination is failed

If a doctoral candidate fails the doctoral examination, the chair of the examination committee informs him/her, and also informs the Doctoral Administration Office in writing via the respective Study Administration Office.

The latter asks the doctoral candidate whether he/she wishes to appeal. If so, the Doctoral Administration Office will provide an appealable decree after the Department Conference refuses to award the doctoral degree (ODS Art. 30). The examination may be retaken only after the latter decree, but within six months of the decree date.

If the doctoral candidate does not request the decree the examination can be retaken at the next opportunity, but within six months of the first attempt at the latest.

e) Maximum time allowed before undertaking the doctoral examination

Exceptions which justify an extension of the deadline are:

- pregnancy
- illness or other factors causing inability to work
- change of doctoral thesis supervisor

11. Awarding of the doctoral degree (ODS Art. 30)

The department forwards the Department Conference's request to award the doctoral degree to the Prorector for Doctoral Studies. Submission deadlines are the doctoral graduation deadlines published in the Academic Calendar. Signed originals of the reports must be enclosed with the request, which must also include:

- a) the full name of the doctoral candidate
- b) the approved title of the doctoral thesis
- c) the date of the doctoral examination
- d) the date of Department Conference approval

The title and content of the doctoral thesis may no longer be altered after approval by the Department Conference. If the candidate's name changes, the name official at the date of approval by the Department Conference applies.

The doctoral graduate is dematriculated on the date of the doctoral graduation deadline.

12. Deposit copies (ODS Art. 32)

After the decision to award the doctorate the doctoral student is asked to submit three bound copies (deposit copies) of the thesis to the Rectorate. On the first page of the deposit copy the thesis supervisor confirms via signature the acceptance of the version sent. The doctoral student must also provide the supervisor and the co-examiners with one copy each of the final version of the thesis.

The copies submitted to the Doctoral Administration Office are distributed as follows:

- a) two copies to the ETH Library
- b) one copy to the Swiss National Library in Berne.

In accordance with the Open Access Policy of ETH Zurich doctoral candidates are also required to upload a corresponding electronic version of the approved doctoral thesis to the document server of the ETH Library.

If electronic publication is forbidden for copyright, patent or other reasons, the doctoral student may on request be freed from the electronic publishing requirement.

An abstract must, however, be published electronically in all cases.

The deadline for delivery of the deposit copies is six months from the doctoral graduation deadline, when dematriculation occurred. To extend this deadline the doctoral student must submit a written request, signed by the supervisor, to the Prorector for Doctoral Studies. If the deadline is not respected, conferral of the doctoral title may be refused. The doctoral title may not be used until the deposit copies and the electronic version of the doctoral thesis have been delivered.

13. Final clauses

Transitional provision

These implementation provisions also apply to doctoral studies begun before 1 November 2013. Admissions decisions based on the previous implementation provisions remain valid.

Repeal of previous regulations

The implementation provisions of 1 September 2008 are hereby repealed.

Effective date

These implementation provisions are effective as of 1 November 2013.

Prof. Dr. Lino Guzzella, Rector of ETH Zurich

Zurich, 17 October 2013

Appendix 1 – Doctoral thesis design

Text

Strong, clear font which is easily legible and can be copied without problems

Images

Half-tones are difficult to copy

Binding

The deposit copies must be bound as books. Spiral or wedge binding are not allowed.

Cover

The front cover must contain the following details as a minimum:

- Doctoral thesis number (first on deposit copies)
- Full name of the author
- Title of the doctoral thesis
- (Otherwise, design optional)

Title page

See Appendix 2

Structure

- Front cover (optional)
- Title page according to Appendix 2
- Dedication, acknowledgements (optional, can also be placed at end)
- Table of contents
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Text of doctoral thesis with any appendices
- Bibliography
- Curriculum vitae

Abstract

1½ A4 pages each in (a) German, French or Italian and (b) in English

Electronic version

- If possible in PDF/A format, otherwise normal PDF format for text data
- No active links (supply complete URL)
- Embed font, images and other objects in the file
- Resolution of colour images max. 150dpi;
of black and white images max. 300dpi
- No password protection or other security measures
- Fill in properties as far as possible
- Web-optimised saving
- Curriculum vitae can be left out

Further recommendations on the design of the electronic version can be found on the E-Collection website⁶ under “About E-Collection”.

⁶ <http://e-collection.library.ethz.ch/>

Appendix 2 –Title page template

DISS. ETH NO.

(This number is mentioned on the invitation to your doctoral examination)

TITLE OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

(Can no longer be changed after it is approved by the Department Conference)

A thesis submitted to attain the degree of
DOCTOR OF SCIENCES of ETH Zurich

(Dr. sc. ETH Zurich)

presented by

FIRST NAME(S) & FAMILY NAME

abbreviated academic title, name of university
(according to Diploma or Master's degree certificate)

born on dd.mm.yyyy

citizen of

(Swiss citizens: place of origin, according to birth certificate / foreign citizens: nationality)

accepted on the recommendation of

name examiner

name(s) co-examiner(s)

20XX

(Year of acceptance of the doctoral thesis by the Department Conference)

Appendix 3 – Glossary

Admission (definitive)	Definitive acceptance as a doctoral student via a decree of the Prorector, after approval of the research plan and fulfilment of any additional requirements for admission
Admission (provisional)	Provisional acceptance as a doctoral student via a decree of the Prorector, after fulfilment of the basic requirements for admission
Admissions examination	Examination taken as an additional requirement for admission
Co-examiner	The expert selected according to academic criteria to co-examine the doctoral thesis (compulsory), to be present and participate at the oral examination (one must be present) and co-supervision of the doctoral thesis work (occasionally)
Dissertation	Synonym for doctoral thesis no longer used in official documents.
Doctoral examination	Oral examination in the discipline or the discipline of the doctoral thesis, after the latter has been delivered.
Doctoral graduation deadline	One deadline (all departments) by which to request the awarding of degrees.
Doctoral programme	Doctoral studies via courses organised by one or more departments, which may set further requirements.
Doctoral studies	Continuing education of the doctoral candidate, verified in the form of credits, while pursuing a doctorate.
Doctoral studies (individual)	Doctoral studies assembled in consultation with the thesis supervisor
Doctoral thesis	Piece of written work which entitles the author to carry the doctoral title; can be used as a synonym for the doctoral project.
Doctoral work	Process which entitles the author to carry the doctoral title.
Enrolment	Registration for the respective semester and confirmation of doctoral candidate status.
Examiner	Function of the thesis supervisor during the doctoral examination.
Matriculation	Inclusion in the list of doctoral candidates at ETH Zurich; compilation of personal details of the candidate and issuing of the student ID
Supervisor (of doctoral thesis)	Person with academic and administrative responsibility for the doctoral thesis