

**Department of Earth Sciences (D-ERDW)**  
**Detailed stipulations regarding the doctorate**

of 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 Executive Board of ETH Zurich,*

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

**Section 1:                   General provisions****Art. 1       Subject and purpose**

<sup>1</sup> These detailed stipulations set out the department-specific details governing the doctorate at the ETH Zurich Department of Earth Sciences (D-ERDW). They are based on the fundamental provisions of the ETH Zurich Ordinance on the Doctorate 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 D-ERDW. Doctoral students, their supervision and the project topic are decisive for the quality of doctoral theses.

**Art. 2       Doctoral committee**

The D-ERDW doctoral committee 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; this is extended by one year by tacit re-election. They may be re-elected.

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution of the D-ERDW Department Conference of 30 November 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

## **Section 2: Doctoral plan and aptitude colloquium**

### **Art. 3 Doctoral plan**

<sup>1</sup> 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 be discussed with the doctoral thesis supervisor.

<sup>2</sup> After the aptitude colloquium has been passed, the final version of the doctoral plan is prepared and countersigned by the doctoral thesis supervisor.

<sup>3</sup> All of the documents (doctoral plan and corresponding forms) must be submitted to the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration no later than four weeks after the aptitude colloquium.

### **Art. 4 Aptitude colloquium**

<sup>1</sup> 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. Its result is communicated to the doctoral student by the chairperson of the aptitude committee immediately after the colloquium.

<sup>2</sup> The aptitude colloquium is structured as follows:

- a. A public presentation of 30 minutes maximum
- b. A public discussion
- c. Questions posed to the doctoral student by the members of the aptitude committee in a non-public session of at least 30 minutes

<sup>3</sup> Other lecturers from D-ERDW and doctoral thesis supervisors are admitted and may question the candidate after the examiners.

### **Art. 5 Aptitude committee**

One member of the aptitude committee, while academically suitable, may not be involved in doctoral studies and must come from another research group. If other academic advisors 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 of adjunct professors or *PrivatdozentInnen* as doctoral thesis supervisors**

Adjunct professors are generally authorised to act as doctoral thesis supervisors. *PrivatdozentInnen* require approval.

**Art. 7** Special points of contact

The D-ERDW Academic Association of Scientific Staff offers an extracurricular point of contact for doctoral students.

**Art. 8** Second advisor

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

**Section 4: Regular doctoral studies**

**Art. 9**

<sup>1</sup> At the time of the aptitude colloquium, an individual curriculum must be prepared which lists the ECTS credits to be acquired.

<sup>2</sup> The range of courses offered for D-ERDW doctoral studies include all the compulsory and elective courses for Master's degree studies in Earth Sciences and for the Teaching Diploma in Geography.

<sup>3</sup> In continuing education in neighbouring fields during doctoral studies, attention is paid to consolidating existing knowledge and acquiring the new knowledge required to complete the doctoral thesis.

<sup>4</sup> At the recommendation of the doctoral thesis supervisor, the doctoral committee decides on the recognition of study achievements earned in courses other than those offered by ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich.

<sup>5</sup> The credits acquired by completing courses for 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

At the request of the doctoral thesis supervisor and after reviewing the framework conditions for its realisation, the doctoral committee decides whether a doctoral thesis project may be conducted outside the ETH domain.

**Art. 11** Notification and approval of co-examiners

<sup>1</sup> The request for approval of co-examiners goes to the Department Conference for approval. It must be submitted to the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration no later than two weeks before the date of the Conference.

<sup>2</sup> The external specialist co-examiner may not be involved in the research activity of the doctoral thesis.

<sup>3</sup> The second advisor is usually a co-examiner.

<sup>4</sup> 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 experts' reports

<sup>1</sup> No later than three months before the planned doctoral examination, the doctoral student should contact the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration to make initial clarifications regarding the organisation of the examination. The procedure is described in detail on the D-ERDW website.

<sup>2</sup> No later than 30 working days prior to the doctoral examination, the doctoral student must submit the documents confirming their credits to the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration.

<sup>3</sup> 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 before the planned examination. A printed version is delivered at the wish of the members of the examination committee.

<sup>4</sup> A printed examination copy of the doctoral thesis must be submitted to the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration no later than the date of official registration for the doctoral examination with Academic Services.

<sup>5</sup> The doctoral thesis supervisor and the co-examiners must submit their signed experts' reports to the chairperson of the examination committee and the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration no later than 18 working days before the doctoral examination. If the reports are not available on time, the date of the examination must be rescheduled with the 18-day deadline in mind.

### **Art. 13** Doctoral examination

<sup>1</sup> The official invitation to the doctoral examination is issued following the written approval of the examination committee chairperson. It must be sent out no later than 10 days prior to the doctoral examination.

<sup>2</sup> Doctoral examinations at D-ERDW are public. The chairperson may require that only doctorate holders be allowed to attend. The examination lasts at least 90 minutes and consists of the following:

- a. A presentation on the research topic of the doctoral thesis by the candidate, lasting a maximum of 30 minutes
- b. An oral examination, lasting at least 60 minutes. After consultation with the members of the examination committee, the chairperson establishes 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. The chairperson may limit questions to doctorate holders. The chairperson may choose to reject questions outright, and to allow any answers to questions to be disregarded in the assessment.

<sup>3</sup> The doctoral examination may be conducted in German or English.

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

<sup>1</sup> At the end of the doctoral examination, all D-ERDW lecturers present will be invited by the examination committee to discuss the examination. The examination committee then decides on its own whether the examination has been passed and whether a distinction should be proposed. The possible outcomes of the examination and the respective procedures are as follows:

- a. **Passed with no corrections:** The final version of the thesis must be submitted to the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration within six months of the examination.
- b. **Passed with corrections - Option 1:** Corrections are reviewed by the doctoral thesis supervisor and the final version of the thesis is delivered to the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration within six months of the examination.
- c. **Passed with corrections - Option 2:** Corrections are verified by several members of the examination committee and the final version of the thesis is delivered to the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration within six months of the examination.
- d. **Failed:** The doctoral examination must be repeated within six months of the original examination date.

<sup>2</sup> The chairperson of the examination committee informs the D-ERDW Doctoral Administration of the examination result.

## **Section 6: Final provisions**

### **Art. 15** Transitional provisions regarding the doctoral plan and the research plan

The provisions set out in 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

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

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

- a. 2 credits per paper are awarded for presentation of papers at colloquia or seminars of the department or institute.
- b. 2 credits are awarded for a paper or poster presented at a national or international symposium.

### **Art. 18** Entry into force

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

## **Application of salary rates**

Salary rates for doctoral students are governed by the stipulations set out in Art. 8, Para. 3 of the Ordinance Governing Scientific Employees of ETH Zurich<sup>5</sup>, in association with Section 1 (3) of the Directives for Doctoral Students Employed at ETH Zurich<sup>6</sup>.

At D-ERDW the same salary rate should be applied within each professorship. The professors and institutes must ensure the fair distribution of work in the areas of teaching and research support. If workloads become greater than average, professors are required to compensate this through performance bonuses.

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<sup>5</sup> SR 172.220.113.11

<sup>6</sup> 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**

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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

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

<sup>5</sup> 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.

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

<sup>7</sup> 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.