

Directives for Doctoral Students Employed at ETH Zurich

dated 28 September 2021

On the basis of Art. 11c of the ETH Zurich Organisational Ordinance dated 16 December 2003, the Vice President for Personnel Development and Leadership hereby enacts the following directives:

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

1. Employment and remuneration of doctoral students

¹ Doctoral students are employed and remunerated on a fixed-term basis in accordance with the Ordinance Governing Scientific Employees of ETH Zurich (OGSE) dated 16 September 2014¹ and the salary rates set out in Annex 2 of the OGSE.

² Doctoral students are employed on a full-time basis, i.e. 100%. Part-time employment is admissible in justifiable cases, particularly if the employee has parental duties or works for an additional employer².

³ The departments are responsible for ensuring transparent, fair application of salary rates. If doctoral students provide services in teaching or other additional services in excess of the normal minimum level of teaching in the department, they are entitled to a higher rate of payment in accordance with Annex 2 of the OGSE.

2. Duration of employment

¹ Employment of doctoral students generally lasts from matriculation to at least the end of the month of the doctoral examination. The financing of their employment is to be secured for the entire duration by the Budget Officer.

² The duration of employment of doctoral students at ETH cannot last more than six years from matriculation to deregistration (maximum permitted duration³).

³ Accepting a position with another employer before the doctoral examination takes place will reduce the level of employment or bring employment to a premature end by mutual agreement.

⁴ On termination of the doctorate or definitive non-admission to doctoral studies, the fixed-term position will be terminated prematurely or at the end of the contract by mutual agreement. Mutual termination of the employment contract requires the written agreement of ETH Zurich (represented by Human Resources), the doctoral supervisor and the doctoral student.

⁵ The employment contract cannot be extended if the performance or progress agreed upon is not achieved or maintained. At a minimum, expected performance and progress must be documented in the annual progress report and interim discussion as set out in Art. 29 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate at

¹ SR172.220.113.1; Art. 6, Para. 2(a) and Art. 8, Para. 1(a)

² Art. 7 of the OGSE

³ Art. 17b, Para. 2(b) of the ETH Law

ETH Zurich (DV). If the doctoral student fails to perform as agreed, a discussion between the doctoral supervisor and the doctoral student should be held promptly and a written agreement on targets drawn up. Failure to reach the objectives in the agreed time will generally result in non-extension of the employment contract. Here the reasons for non-extension must be discussed with the doctoral student and documented. The supervisor, in consultation with Human Resources, must inform the doctoral student in good time if the contract will not be extended, preferably at least six (6) months but certainly no later than three (3) months before the contract is to be terminated. Written justification of the decision is required (see Section 5).

3. Financing through scholarships ⁴

¹ If doctoral students are funded through scholarships which fail to pay them at the standard rate set out in Annex 2 of the OGSE, their employment will be topped up to provide at least the standard rate or, where possible, the usual rate for the department. Funding is provided by the professorship. The regulations governing Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships at ETH Zurich serve as orientation here.

² Excepted are scholarships which, for regulatory reasons on the part of the scholarship provider, may not be increased.

³ On expiry of the scholarship, the doctoral student is to be employed full-time (100%) at least the standard rate until at least the end of the month in which the doctoral examination takes place.

4. Duration of employment contracts

¹ Employment contracts for doctoral students may be issued for further fixed terms⁵. The first employment contract is generally issued for eighteen (18) months, subject to the definitive admission to doctoral studies (aptitude interview) pursuant as set out in Art. 17 of the DV.

² At the end of the first contract term, further contracts will be issued for terms of not less than twelve (12) months until the final year of doctoral studies.

³ An extension of less than a year and of reasonable length, generally at least three (3) months, is possible in the phase just preceding the doctoral examination. Extensions of less than a year must be justified in writing to Human Resources, and doctoral students must also be informed in writing.

5. Terms for extension and termination of employment contracts

¹ The Budget Officer must apply for an extension of the employment contract at least two (2) months before it expires. The supervisor must inform the doctoral student promptly, and certainly at least three (3) months before the employment contract expires, if the contract is to be extended.

² If the contract is not to be extended, the doctoral student must be informed promptly, preferably six (6) but certainly not later than three (3) months before it expires. A written justification is required (see Section 2, Para. 5).

⁴ Pursuant to the Executive Board Resolution of 10 December 2019, in effect since 1 July 2021

⁵ Art. 17b, Para. 2(b) of the ETH Law

6. Further employment following the doctoral examination

¹ Any additional work required after the doctoral examination must be appropriately remunerated, especially if it relates to the doctoral project, e.g. involves the preparation of agreed publications or teaching services.

² This does not include revisions of the doctoral thesis (corrections) or time needed to repeat doctoral examinations.

³ Part-time employment after the doctoral examination is generally possible within the statutory maximum employment period of six (6) years⁶.

7. Legal basis

- Ordinance Governing Scientific Employees of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich dated 16 September 2014 (version 1 January 2015)⁷
- Ordinance of the ETH Board on Personnel in the ETH Domain of the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology (PVO ETH), dated 15 March 2001⁸
- Ordinance on the Doctorate at ETH Zurich dated 23 November 2021 (DVO)⁹; Rector's Implementation Provisions for the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich dated 23 November 2021¹⁰

8. Entry into force

These regulations enter into force on 1 January 2022.

Vice President of Personnel Development and Leadership, Dr Julia Dannath-Schuh

Zurich, 28 September 2021

⁶ Art. 17b, Para. 2(b) of the ETH Law

⁷ SR 172.220.113.11

⁸ SR 172.220.113

⁹ SR 414.133.1

¹⁰ RSETHZ 340.311