The Direction of the École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, based on Art. 2 § 2 of the Ordonnance-cadre relative à la loisur le personnel de la Confédération of 20 December 2000 (RS 172.220.11) and based on Art. 3 of the Ordonnance sur le personnel du domaine des écoles polytechniques fédérales of 15 March 2001 (RS 172.220.113) hereby adopts the following:

Article 1 Scope
1 This directive governs the terms of employment of persons employed by EPFL, after ETH graduation or equivalent, to pursue a PhD.
2 Moreover, this directive also governs terms of employment of persons who, after graduation, are given short-term employment as an assistant in the framework of a teaching and research project.

Article 2 Subordination
1 Assistants are hired by their immediate superior in agreement with the school’s human resources manager.
2 Assistants report to an immediate superior. This may be a full, associate or tenure-track assistant professor or another person appointed by the dean of the relevant school or, alternatively, by a member of the EPFL Direction.

Article 3 Employment Contract
1 The employment contract is drawn up in accordance with Art. 16 of the Ordonnance sur la personnel du domaine des EPF (OPers-EPF). In addition to the employment contract, each employee is given a detailed job description outlining, amongst other things, their tasks and responsibilities. This description distinguishes between research, teaching and personal training activities. It is regularly updated to reflect progress in the assistant’s work and evolution of their academic status (admission to PhD studies). The EPFL Human Resources department keeps an up-to-date model employment contract in French and English. The employment contract and job description are available in English for employees who do not speak French.
2 The work rate may be adjusted as appropriate to specific situations (maternity, dependent child(ren), officer military service or any interruption due to force majeure). The school dean and HR manager have the authority to adjust the work rate.

Article 4 Employment Duration
1 Assistants are hired for a fixed term based on one-year contracts. The total employment duration as an assistant may not exceed six years (Art. 17b, § 2, letter b of the ETH Act’). However, the employment duration may on request be extended in the event of lengthy absence due to illness, accident, maternity, adoption or other good cause (Art. 17b, § 3 of the ETH Act); the school dean and HR manager have the authority to adjust the employment duration.
2 The annual assessment of thesis work according to the EPFL doctorate ordinance is a determining factor in whether to update or renew the contract.

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1 Federal Act on the Federal Institutes of Technology (ETH Act) of 4 October 1991 (RS 414.110)
3 Assistants who have completed their thesis within a period of about four years may remain employed, at their professor’s request, subject to the maximum period of six years. In this context, transfer to another laboratory or another school is possible, subject to justification. A new contract is drawn up to replace the previous one.

4 For assistants hired for a specific project after graduation, employment is limited to three years maximum.

5 If a PhD is undertaken in the course of the third year, any exceptional extension of the six-year period is the responsibility of the Associate Vice President for Postgraduate Education.

6 Art. 4 § 3 does not apply to assistants working for architecture studio professors, provided that they have their main activity outside EPFL.

**Article 5 Entry into Force**

This directive entered into force on 1 October 2005, and was amended on 25 January 2021 (version 1.3) and 30 May 2022 (version 1.4).

On behalf of the EPFL Direction:

Martin Vetterli  
President

Françoise Chardonnens  
Director of Legal Affairs