

20th May 2025

The Direction of EPFL,
based on Art. 3, para. 1, letter a of the [Ordonnance sur l'EPFL et l'EPFZ of 13th November 2003](#) (RS 414.110.37),
based on the [Ordinance on Bachelor and Master studies at EPFL of 14th June 2004](#) (RS 414.132.3),
hereby adopts the following:

Article 1 Scope of application and competencies

¹ The present Directive lays out the framework applicable for:

- a. the creation and closure of EPFL Master programmes;
- b. collaborative Master programmes by EPFL with one or several academic institutions;
- c. the creation and closure of Minors and specialisations within Master programmes.

² The Direction of EPFL and the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs take their decisions upon proposal from or in consultation with the school and section concerned, the Conference of Section Directions, the Associate Vice Presidency for Education and the Academic Strategic Committee.

Section 1 Master programmes

Article 2 Creation of Master programmes

In reaching a decision on the creation of a new Master programme, the EPFL Direction's bases its action particularly on the following criteria:

The new Master programme:

- a. responds to the needs of society and the economy (relevance);
- b. responds to the requisite criteria of excellence;
- c. has proven scientific relevance;
- d. is of interest to the EPFL student community;
- e. is supported by one or more sections/faculties, whose respective roles are identified;
- f. is in line with available resources;
- g. is optimised in terms of its cost/benefit ratio;
- h. has a long-term vision;
- i. includes specific features that justify EPF-level training;
- j. is positioned differently from existing programmes at EPFL.

Article 3 Collaborative Master programmes

¹ For a Master programme in collaboration with one or several academic institutions, the Direction of EPFL signs a collaboration agreement.

² The criteria laid out in Art. 2 and the criteria laid out in Art. 4 para. 1 remain applicable, with the addition of the quality of the partner institutions and the added value to be gained from a collaboration.

³ The Direction of EPFL defines the conditions necessary to be awarded an EPFL Master degree.

Article 4 Closure of a Master programme

¹ In reaching a decision on the closure of a new Master programme, the Direction of EPFL bases its action particularly on the following criteria:

The Master programme:

- a. has lost its relevance;
- b. has lost the requisite level of excellence;
- c. has lost its appeal, this criterion being differentiated according to how long it has been in existence:
 1. has been in existence for more than three years but has not reached a threshold number of students enrolled on average over the last four years (calculated in November of the fourth year);
 2. has existed for less than three years but has not reached a threshold number of students enrolled in November of the fourth year of its existence;
- d. regardless of how long it has been in existence, has less than one-third of its students coming from an EPFL Bachelor's programme;
- e. has operating costs that are too high in relation to the actual benefits.

² The Direction of EPFL sets the threshold number¹ referred to in paragraph 1(c).

³ The closure of a programme means that new enrolments are no longer possible.

Section 2 Minors and specialisations

Article 5 Definitions of a Minor and a specialisation

¹ A *disciplinary Minor* is a collection of courses from a Master programme intended for students enrolled in other EPFL Master programmes.

² An *interdisciplinary Minor* is a collection of courses from multiple Master programmes.

³ A *specialisation* is a collection of courses forming a specialised area of study within the Master programme, intended for students enrolled in that Master programme.

Article 6 Creation of a Minor or a specialisation

¹ Every consecutive Master programme offers a Minor in a specific discipline.

² Based in particular on the criteria defined in Art. 2, the Vice-President for Academic Affairs decides on the creation of an interdisciplinary Minor or a new specialisation and decides, where appropriate, to which section this interdisciplinary Minor will be attached.

³ Every interdisciplinary Minor represents a collection of courses for approximately 50 ECTS credits, allowing students the free choice of 30 additional credits which will be compatible with the programme of their Master timetable.

⁴ The 30 credits from a Minor or a specialisation will be added to the 90 credit Master programme, so that they form part of a 120 credit Master programme.

Article 7 Conditions for the successful completion of a Minor or a specialisation

¹ Each section indicates the Minor programmes available for their students within their own rules and regulations applicable for the evaluation of studies.

¹ The threshold number set by EPFL management is 20 (version 1.4 of the directive).

² Each section will also publish a study plan for their interdisciplinary Minors and specialisations.

³ Students must acquire 30 ECTS credits from the Minor programme before beginning the Master project, in accordance with Art. 11, para. 2 of the Ordinance on Bachelor and Master studies at the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne.

⁴ The Diploma Supplement will mention the Minor programme or the specialisation successfully completed during the course of the Master studies.

Article 8 Closure of an interdisciplinary Minor or a specialisation

¹ In reaching a decision on closure of an interdisciplinary Minor or a specialisation, the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs bases its action particularly on the following criteria:

The interdisciplinary Minor or the specialisation:

- a. has lost its relevance;
- b. has lost the required level of excellence;
- c. has lost its appeal, this criterion being differentiated according to how long it has been in existence:
 1. has been in existence for more than three years but has not reached a threshold number of students enrolled on average over the last four years (calculated in November of the fourth year);
 2. has existed for less than three years but has not reached a threshold number of students enrolled in November of the fourth year of its existence;
- d. has operating costs that are too high in relation to the actual benefits.

² The EPFL Direction sets the threshold number² referred to in paragraph 1(c).

³ The closure of an interdisciplinary Minor or a specialisation means that new enrolments are no longer possible.

Article 9 Entry into force and miscellaneous

¹ The present directive enters into force on 1st July 2025 (version 1.0).

² The Directive on Master programmes and minors of 17 October 2005 is repealed.

³ The Associate Vice President for Education ensures the respect of the present Directive.

On behalf of the EPFL Direction:

The President:
Anna Fontcuberta i Morral

The Director of Legal Affairs:
Simon Brunschwig

² The threshold number set by EPFL management is 10 (version 1.4 of the directive).