

Directive concerning the academic titles conferred on EPFL scientists

LEX 4.4.3

of 1st March 2004, status as at 15th February 2023

The Direction de l'Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne,
based on Article 6 of the [Ordonnance du Conseil des EPF sur le personnel du domaine des écoles polytechniques fédérales](#)
hereby adopts the following:

Article 1 Aim

¹ EPFL defines academic titles corresponding to different academic levels and has established a procedure for conferring these titles with the aim of qualifying academic level and promoting the career and professional mobility of its scientific staff.

² This directive only concerns academic titles. It does not concern the role or the employment conditions of scientific staff.

Article 2 Academic titles

The academic titles are as follows:

French	English
Professeure ou Professeur titulaire	Adjunct Professor
Maître d'enseignement et de recherche	Senior Scientist
Collaboratrice ou Collaborateur scientifique senior	Research and Teaching Associate

Article 3 Principles

¹ The granting of an academic title is dependent on an evaluation of the candidate's services in accordance with the criteria and procedures common to all EPFL.

² Academic promotion to gain a title is justified through academic performance.

³ Each scientific staff member may request an academic evaluation. It is the candidate's responsibility to prepare the portfolio necessary for the evaluation of her or his services.

⁴ A staff member's candidature may only be resubmitted after a period of two years from the date of the initial decision.

⁵ For the selection of an external Adjunct Professor or Senior Scientist, the evaluation criteria and procedure as laid out in the present directive apply.

Article 4 Evaluation criteria

¹ The following evaluation criteria are considered for the purpose of awarding an academic title:

1. Teaching and training:
 - a. Quality and importance of teaching activity, evaluation by students, in particular regarding the quality of communication and charisma in teaching;
 - b. Quality of teaching content and quality of teaching supports;
 - c. Creativity in terms of education and teaching methods;
 - d. Management of semester projects, degree projects and PhD theses;
 - e. Participation in activities of general interest specific to the training.

2. Research

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- a. Quality and extent of research activities; scientific creativity, activity in terms of publications and bibliometric impact; conferences given. Participation in interdisciplinary activities. Aspects such as creativity, originality and artistic expression are particularly important in certain subject areas (architecture, human sciences, etc.).
 - b. Technological innovations, valorisation and technology transfer, as well as advisory activity.
 - c. Capacity for obtaining third party resources.
3. General
- a. Candidate's basic training and qualifications.
 - b. Professional experience and work placements carried out, international professional experience, professional mobility.
 - c. Participation in activities of general interest within the context of EPFL and the scientific community.
 - d. Organisational and management qualities.

² The School Committee of Academic Evaluation is authorised to weight the evaluation criteria and to introduce complementary criteria depending on the specificities of each sector of activity.

Article 5 Authority for conferring scientific titles

¹ The title of Research and Teaching Associate may be conferred by the School Dean¹ upon notification from the School Committee of Academic Evaluation. The allocation of the title is subject to prior approval from the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

² The title of Senior Scientist (internal or external) may be conferred by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, upon successive notification from the School Committee of Academic Evaluation and the School Dean.

³ Upon the proposal of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, based on successive notification from the School Committee of Academic Evaluation and the School Dean, the EPFL President will decide whether or not he or she wishes to propose to the ETH Board that the title of Adjunct Professor (internal or external) be awarded.

⁴ The competent authority for conferring a title will freely evaluate whether or not to award or refuse the academic title.

Article 6 School Committee of Academic Evaluation (CEA)

¹ Before giving a notification regarding the granting of an academic title (Adjunct Professor or Senior Scientist) or the awarding of a title (Research and Training Associate), the School Dean will request the opinion of the School Committee of Academic Evaluation².

Article 7 Research and Teaching Associate: requirements for title holders

A Research and Teaching Associate is an advanced researcher, holding a doctorate degree or experience judged equivalent. She or he successfully develops his or her activities personally³ and demonstrates his or her excellence with regards to several of the criteria noted in the list in this directive. She or he has an international reputation and assumes key responsibilities within the laboratory. Broadly speaking, she or he provides a quality contribution to training.

¹ The term "School Dean" refers to both School Deans and Directors of Colleges.

² The School Committee of Academic Evaluation is defined in the Rules and Regulations Concerning the Organisation of EPFL Schools (LEX 1.2.9).

³ That is, in an original and independent manner on an intellectual level.

Article 8 Senior Scientist

¹ Requirements for awarding the title: the holder of a doctorate degree, she or he is known on both a national and an international level through her or his publications, her or his regular participation in scientific events and her or his commitment to professional organisations. The candidate successfully develops her or his activities personally⁴ and demonstrates her or his excellence with regards to many of the criteria noted in the list in Art. 4 ('Evaluation criteria') under the headings of 'Research' and 'Teaching and Training'. The specific criteria identified as excellent shall be aligned with the activity profile envisaged for the candidate.

² Powers and responsibilities linked to the title: the title of Senior Scientist is linked to four activity profiles. In each activity profile, the activities and responsibilities of a Senior Scientist are performed in agreement with the head professor of the laboratory or group, the School Dean, the Section Director, or the Vice Presidency to which she or he is affiliated. Any change in the activity profile is subject to the approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs upon notice to the School Dean.

- a. Research focus: the Senior Scientist directs the work of a group of researchers (scientists, assistants, as well as PhD candidates) and manages scientific projects by and large independently. She or he is authorised to sign funding requests acting as applicant or principal applicant. She or he may be authorised to direct doctoral theses and to participate in PhD juries. She or he assumes regular teaching duties.
- b. Education focus: the Senior Scientist assumes, as a matter of priority, responsibility for education, which includes teaching, development, and the coordination of the teaching, as well as directing teaching teams. She or he independently assumes a number of research responsibilities and is authorised to sign funding requests as applicant or principal applicant. She or he may be authorised to direct doctoral theses and to participate in PhD juries.
- c. Technology focus: the Senior Scientist assumes, as a matter of priority, responsibility for the management and development of a laboratory, a technology, or a complex research platform. She or he may assume a number of regular teaching responsibilities and a number of research tasks independently. In this regard, she or he may be authorised to sign funding requests as applicant or principal applicant. She or he may be authorised to direct doctoral theses and to participate in PhD juries.
- d. Research coordination focus: the Senior Scientist assumes, as a matter of priority, responsibility for the coordination of complex research projects. This involves launching and coordinating research projects in a variety of fields, including with an emphasis on education and on technology transfer. She or he may assume a number of research responsibilities which are defined on an ad-hoc basis by the direction of the unit. She or he may be authorised to direct doctoral theses and to participate in PhD juries.

Article 9 Adjunct Professor

¹ Requirements for awarding the title: the title of Adjunct Professor may be attributed to a scientist who holds a doctorate degree and who has an important international reputation. The candidate successfully develops her or his activities personally⁵ and demonstrates her or his excellence with regards to the majority of the criteria noted in the list in this directive. She or he regularly carries out teaching duties with success.

⁴ That is, in an original and independent manner on an intellectual level.

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² Activities and responsibilities linked to the title: the Adjunct Professor assumes the same activities as the Senior Scientist and has her or his own field of research. The Adjunct Professor is authorised to direct doctoral theses and to participate in PhD juries. She or he regularly assumes teaching duties. These activities are performed in agreement with the head professor of the laboratory or group. She or he is authorised to present herself or himself as an “EPFL Adjunct Professor”. The powers and responsibilities of an external Adjunct Professor are defined on an ad-hoc basis by the professor to whom she or he is affiliated and in agreement with the School Dean.

Article 10 Procedure

¹ Following an interview with the hierarchical superior, the candidate portfolio (including all of the items listed in Annexe 1) for the conferral of a title is prepared by the candidate who transmits it to the School Dean, with a copy to the hierarchical superior. The teaching file is an item to be included in the portfolio.

² The School Committee of Academic Evaluation requests the opinion of the hierarchical superior. The Committee may refuse to discuss the matter or may request additional information. External applications are also by examined by the School Committee of Academic Evaluation.

³ In addition to the candidate portfolio (see Annexe), the School Committee of Academic Evaluation may request information it considers necessary and may also hear the candidate. The Committee will transmit a written and reasoned notification of acceptance or refusal to the School Dean.

⁴ For a candidate for the title of Senior Scientist or Adjunct Professor, the Committee invites the candidate to give a presentation. External, well-reputed, independent experts will be invited to draft evaluative reports.

⁵ The School Dean, or her or his designated representative, will inform the candidate of the result of her or his application in an interview and in writing. The information will be transferred in such a way as to inform the candidate of the strengths and weaknesses of her or his application. Neither the candidate nor her or his representative may access the recommendation letters.

Article 11 Conferring titles to newly employed staff members

Newly employed staff members who wish to obtain an academic title as described in this directive may submit a request a minimum of one year after taking up duties at EPFL.

Article 12 Validity of academic titles

An academic title remains valid for the duration of the period in which the title-holder maintains a working relationship with EPFL, or an academic relationship for external title-holders.

Article 13 Privatdozent

The terms concerning the awarding authorisation and the title of Privatdozent are set out in special directives.

Article 14 Course instructor

The conditions and procedures for the allocation of teaching duties are laid out in [LEX 4.3.1 Directive concerning the allocation of teaching duties at EPFL](#).

Article 15 Former academic titles

¹ Scientific staff members of EPFL holding the title of First Assistant, Scientific Assistant, Privatdozent, Senior Scientist or Adjunct Professor prior to the entry into force of the present directive will retain these titles.

² Each member of the EPFL Scientific Staff who began their duties prior to the entry into force of this directive may apply for one of the new academic titles. Article 11 (“Conferring titles to newly employed staff members”) applies.

Article 16 Entry into force

The present directive entered into force on 1st March 2004, version 1.5, status as at 15th February 2023.

On behalf of the EPFL Direction:

President:
Martin Vetterli

Director of Legal Affairs:
Françoise Chardonnens

Annexe: Note concerning the candidate portfolio

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1. To be prepared by the candidate:
 - a. Curriculum vitae.
 - b. List of publications with the three most important publications highlighted. List of conferences delivered. List of patents.
 - c. Use of candidate's teaching supports, books and software by other professors or institutes.
 - d. List of courses taught and indication of the number of students.
 - e. Description of teaching activities and course content.
 - f. Results of teaching evaluations by students and self-evaluation.
 - g. Teaching file.
 - h. List of PhD candidates and Master's students.
 - i. Description of research with a list of projects from the 3 past years, professional achievements, resources obtained from third parties, prizes.
 - j. Vision and detailed plan of future activities in research and teaching.
 - k. Participation in international editorial boards, conference organisation, PhD thesis juries.
 - l. List of activities of general interest completed in the Faculty, EPFL, scientific community.
 - m. Brief report on activity management.
 - n. Names of suggested referees.
2. Issued by the School Committee of Academic Evaluation:
 - a. The composition of the School Committee.
 - b. A description of the "standards" used by the School Committee to evaluate the candidate.
 - c. A detailed line of argument justifying the Committee's recommendation.
 - d. A complete candidate portfolio.
 - e. ** A complete list of reporting persons (approximately 6) used by the Committee, indicating the reasons for their selection. Amongst the portfolio recommendation letters, 4 to 5 should be written by leaders in the field who remain independent of the candidate.
 - f. ** A copy of the letters sent to the rapporteurs.
 - g. ** The reports from the rapporteurs.
 - h. ** A list of 6 – 8 additional rapporteurs with a brief profile summary.

**Not applicable for the title of Research and Teaching Associate