

Section B: Research progress

List the current overall goals and specific aims of thesis (avoid words like “study” or “understand” – those are not concretely achievable goals, instead use “determine the effects of XX on XX...”)

Have these changed from the original proposal (at the end of year 1), and if so how and why?

Write a few sentences describing which of your specific aims are completed, which are not, and whether there are new challenges that were unforeseen.

List Publications (Title/Authors; in preparation /submitted /accepted/published; short description of student’s contribution if not first author)

Conference Proceedings (Title/Authors; submitted/accepted/published; indicate if poster or oral presentation)

If no publications or conference proceedings have been submitted yet, write a short (2-4 page) report on your progress to date, and what still needs to be achieved towards the completion of your thesis.

Are there any problems that may hinder the success of the PhD project? If yes, explain.

Yes, the Annual follow-up meeting has taken place.

Thesis advisor: Fill out Appendix A, Sign App. A and C

Mentor: fill out and sign Appendix B

Student: fill out Appendix C, sign App. A, B, and C

Signatures

PhD candidate

Thesis director

Co-director

Mentor

.....

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.....

Location & Date (mandatory).....

EDBB Program Director (Georg Fantner): _____

Section C: Additional page to be filled out by students in their final year of PhD

N.B. THESIS REQUIREMENTS

PhD theses may contain submitted or accepted publications plus **1)** an introduction that gives the background of the research, summarizes, and links these publications, **2)** a general discussion and conclusions section that highlights the main contributions of the candidate, the originality of the thesis work and its relationship to other research in the field.

To be eligible to submit a thesis in this "compiled" format, the student must have contributed substantially to at least 3 publications.

In all other cases, the candidate should write a stand-alone thesis, in which her/his work is presented in detail. To ensure the appropriate attribution of authorship, the contribution of the student must be stated clearly for each piece of work.

(1) Projected date of thesis: _____

(2) Proposed thesis committee: (if not yet determined, please fill in potential thesis jury members' names)

(i) President of the jury – The EDBB director or designated EDBB commission member who does not need to be in the domain of the candidate's research:

(ii) 2 external experts (*note that ETHZ professors can be counted as either internal or external*):

(iii) 1 internal expert (*EPFL or ETHZ-affiliated only*):

Note that the experts cannot be affiliated members of the candidate's lab!

(3) Have you taken 12 credits of courses? Please VERIFY that all non-EPFL courses are approved. If you do not yet have 12 credits, write here your plans to finish them:

(4) Verification that you have completed your teaching assistant requirements is your responsibility! Confirm that your TA hours are completed (according to <http://ssv-ta.epfl.ch> website for those PhD students affiliated to the SSV teaching pool) or as verified within your own teaching sections for the others:

NOTE:

YOU CANNOT DEFEND YOUR THESIS WITHOUT HAVING COMPLETED YOUR TEACHING REQUIREMENT.

Appendix A: to be filled out by the advisor before meeting the student, then discussed with the student, and signed by both.

Note: the rationale for this is to ensure that the student knows how he/she is performing overall, what you think his/her strengths and weaknesses are towards completing a PhD, and what needs to be improved. It is also to ensure that career issues are discussed at least once per year between the student and mentor.

Please rank the student's levels in the following areas (add areas if needed):

	Outstanding (O) or very good (VG)	Could use improvement; in progress	Needs serious effort to improve	comments
motivation				
work ethic / hardworking				
Initiative				
experimental skills				
knows the literature				
analytical abilities				
experimental design				
critical thinking				
organization / lab notebook				
Timeliness : is the research and progress for the thesis moving along as it should?				
responsibility				
Participation in lab meetings				
Presentation skills				
Scientific writing skills				
Ability to work in a team				
Courtesy to labmates/ respect of others				
Other:				

Advisor: I have discussed these with the student, and explained my expectations for improvement. I have also discussed a plan for timely publication of the results, as well as discussed action plans for improving any areas that are listed as "needs serious improvement", including mechanisms for intermediate assessments.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

To the Student:

You advisor, as your "coach" in many ways, is responsible for guiding you through your thesis research work and also helping you reach the mature scientific level of a PhD. The critical feedback of your advisor is invaluable not only to improve your progress towards a PhD, but also your continued success beyond this. Sign below when you have discussed these with your advisor, indicating that you understand the expectations for improvement in the areas identified in the list above, and have agreed on an action plan and milestones/assessment mechanisms.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: to be filled out by the mentor and student, together.

The job of the mentor is to provide the student with at least yearly contact with a professor who is unaffiliated to the thesis work of the student, and unaffiliated with the host laboratory. This is not to provide scientific advice, but instead to have an external ‘check’ on the student to ensure proper stages of development are being met and to help resolve any potential conflicts that may arise between the student and his/her advisor.

We expect the mentor and student to meet at least once per year, and discuss briefly the overall well-being of the student. **It is imperative that confidentiality is respected**, and only if / until the student specifically asks the mentor to discuss any potential problems with a third party (e.g., dean of the graduate program, EDBB director, dean of the school, department chair, etc.) in case of any serious concerns.

It is also important to differentiate between serious problems and minor complaints. While it’s almost human nature to complain about one’s boss, the point of the mentor-student relationship is not necessarily that of a friend – instead it is a professional relationship where advice and guidance can be given, and also serves as a checkpoint for when serious issues do arise. Furthermore, minor conflicts are common in any workplace and often arise from differences in personality, work habits, work hours, inherent messiness/organization, priorities, etc. Therefore the student should not hash out things they don’t like about their advisor to the mentor, but **instead only discuss issues that have to do with hindering the progress of the PhD, or affecting the future career of the student.**

Potential questions for the annual mentor discussion could include:

- *Are you getting enough advice and help from your advisor and lab mates for your research to progress at a reasonable pace?*
- *Do you feel that you are progressing well in your PhD? If not, why not? Have you discussed with your advisor?*
- *Are there any professional conflicts between you and your advisor, or you and your co-workers? (these might include authorship issues, or doing too many side-projects that are tangential to the thesis, etc etc)*
- *How often do you meet with your advisor? Do you feel this is too little, too much, or just right?*
- *Do you have lab meetings and if so how often do you present your research?*
- *Does your advisor encourage you to attend scientific conferences on occasion?*
- *Do you feel that you can freely discuss problems with your advisor?*

Mentor: I have discussed with the student aspects of his/her well-being in the PhD project, and when relevant, suggested ways to resolve issues before they become serious. In the case of any serious problems, I have or will transfer the problem to the relevant person (e.g., EDOC Dean, EDBB director, etc.), with the consent of the student.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

To the Student:

You advisor, as your “coach” in many ways, is responsible for guiding you through your thesis research work and also helping you reach the mature scientific level of a PhD. The critical feedback of your advisor is invaluable not only to improve your progress towards a PhD, but also your continued success beyond this. Sign below when you have discussed these with your advisor, indicating that you understand the expectations for improvement in the areas identified in the list above, and have agreed on an action plan and milestones/assessment mechanisms.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: to be filled out by the student before meeting the advisor, then discussed and signed by both.

Rationale:

- *to identify differences in how student vs. advisor considers the student's progress, skills, & weaknesses,
- *to identify areas where the student needs more input from the advisor
- *to allow the student to communicate to the advisor where he/she may need more attention or help

	Very high level	Need improvement, and need advice on how to do so	Need improvement, but I am working on it (comment)	comments
I am very motivated for my PhD research				
I work hard, both in terms of quantity and quality of hours spent on research				
I take initiative and frequently generate ideas				
Experimentally, I plan carefully, record everything, execute carefully and precisely, and always back up data				
I read the literature frequently and attend meetings and seminars whenever possible				
When analyzing data, I think about what they mean and identify their limitations				
I pose experimental questions very precisely and design definitive, clever experiments				
I always critically evaluate data and conclusions				
I keep a well-organized and thorough lab notebook; another person could easily find any information they might need				
Timeliness: is the research and progress for the thesis moving along as it should?				
I have a strong sense of responsibility for the lab and for the data I produce				
I participate in lab meetings and seminars				
I give good oral presentations				
My scientific writing skills are strong				
I work well in teams and can both contribute to others' research while focusing appropriately on my own main projects				
I show respect and courtesy to my advisor and colleagues as well as the shared resources				
I ask for help when needed, but only after putting in some effort first myself				
I get the help I need from my advisor and lab mates when I ask				
I get enough exposure to both my field and a broader scientific field through conferences, seminars, and courses				
I enjoy every single aspect of research				
I know what I want to do after the PhD and I am taking appropriate actions to nurture and enhance opportunities for the future				

Student: I have discussed these with my advisor and compared my self-evaluation with his/hers, and discussed how to improve where needed.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Advisor: I have discussed these issues with the student and pointed out where differences exist in my perspective, and also discussed the items in blue as well as action plans for improvement.

Signed: _____ Date: _____