

Regulation concerning the Doctoral Program in Molecular Life Sciences (EDMS)

Please note that only the French version is legally binding.

Date of entry into force: August 1, 2017

The EDMS Doctoral Program Commission,

taking into account art. 3 al. 3 and 6 al. 2 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate conferred by the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne of January 26, 1998¹ and 2 al. 4 ch. 3 of the Directives concerning doctoral studies at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne of November 21, 2005,²

decrees:

1. Field of Application

The regulation concerning the EDMS doctoral program (hereinafter: EDMS program) sets forth the rules relating to the study plan of the EDMS program as well as the candidacy examination for the formal admission to start the doctoral thesis in the EDMS program of the EPFL. Furthermore it reiterates and details the application of certain essential rules concerning the doctorate at the EPFL.

2. Study Plan

- 2.1 The study plan of the EDMS program requires **12 ECTS credits** (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System).
- 2.2 At least **4 ECTS credits of these 12 credits** must be obtained during the first year of doctoral studies. These credits must be acquired by passing three of the courses named Practicals in the course book (Research Rotation Modules, 1 ECTS credit per course) offered by EDMS, plus any other 1-credit course also listed in the EDMS course book.

¹ RS 414.133.2

² EPFL LEX 2.4.1

- 2.3 Up to **4 ECTS credits, chosen freely** by the student, can be obtained by successfully passing other doctoral courses or transferable skills from the EPFL course book.
- 2.4 The remaining **4 credits** can be obtained by successfully passing other doctoral courses at EPFL, or at another Swiss or foreign university **with the approval of the EDMS program director** and in accordance with the terms established by the EDMS program. Any courses other than doctoral courses (e.g., Master's courses or Summer school) must also be approved by the EDMS program director. For doctoral courses at a foreign university, the credit equivalence is determined case-by-case. The maximal number of credits which may be obtained by successfully passing such a course is 4 ECTS credits.

3. Candidacy Exam

- 3.1 As of 2016, an annual report is also required on the occasion of the candidacy exam. To be formally admitted to start a doctoral thesis at the EPFL, the candidate must successfully pass the candidacy examination at the end of her/his 1st year of doctoral studies (art. 6 and 8 al. 1 let. of the Ordinance on the Doctorate and art. 8 al. 1 and 2 of the Directives concerning doctoral studies at the EPFL). The candidacy examination is an oral presentation of approximately thirty minutes by the candidate about her/his research proposal. It is followed by questions from the jury. The candidate must demonstrate the originality of her/his thesis subject, the objectives and methods envisaged, as well as the hypothesis and related scientific arguments, including the general context of the thesis subject, state of the art of research in the area, position of the doctoral candidate's work within the research area, plan and methodology for the research project as well as the time frame for its completion.
- 3.2 The jury of the candidacy exam is composed of a thesis director plus two experts, one external of the EPF/ETH domain and one internal (MER or other EPFL collaborator authorized to fulfil the function of thesis director at the EPFL and approved by the EDMS program director). A member of the EDMS program who is or has been a member of the program committee chairs the jury with the approval of the program director.
- 3.3 After jury deliberations, the chair of the jury verbally informs the candidate of the result of the candidacy exam. Possible jury recommendations are communicated in writing thereafter. The candidate then receives from the EPFL a decision to formally admit or refuse the start of a doctoral thesis at the EPFL (art. 8 al. 2 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate).

4. Annual Report

Throughout the doctoral thesis work and starting at the submission of the documents for the candidacy exam, the candidate is obliged to submit an annual report. After joint discussion and co-signing by the student and the thesis director, the latter handles the annual report to the EDMS program director no later than within one month (art. 10 al. 3 and al. 4 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate) and then to her/his mentor. The form of the annual report comprises a summary of the work progress and a point-by-point self-evaluation and an analogous parallel appraisal by the thesis director and his/her written input on the project.

5. Mentoring

An EDMS mentor is appointed for each doctoral student by the thesis director and the doctoral student, as soon as registered, with the approval of the EDMS program director. The student should regularly meet with the mentor, at least annually e.g. to discuss the annual report. The role of the mentor is to mediate between the doctoral student and the thesis director, other faculty or the administration. A doctoral student may directly contact her/his mentor, who will make suggestions to resolve possible issues.

6. Final Provisions

The present regulation shall take effect on August 1, 2017 and replaces any prior EDMS doctoral program regulation.

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