

Regulation concerning the Doctoral Program in Civil and Environmental Engineering (EDCE)

Please note that only the French version is legally binding.

Date of entry into force November 1 2019

The EDCE Doctoral Program Committee,

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, 2005²,

decrees:

1. Field of application

The regulation concerning the Doctoral Program in Civil and Environmental Engineering (hereinafter: “EDCE program”) sets forth the rules relating to the study plan of the EDCE program as well as the candidacy exam for the formal admission to start the doctoral thesis in the EDCE 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 for the EDCE Program requires **12 ECTS credits** (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System).
- 2.2 At least **4 ECTS credits of these 12 ECTS credits** must be obtained during the first year of doctoral studies. They shall be acquired through successful completion of at least one course delivered in the “First year mandatory courses” stream, as set out in the list of available EDCE courses.
- 2.3 Up to **4 ECTS credits** – but not those required for the first year – can be chosen by the doctoral candidate from all EPFL doctoral program’s course lists (including transferable skills) without the approval of neither the Program Committee nor the thesis Director (Doctoral commission decision, Cdoct 107, May 2015).
- 2.4 The **4 remaining ECTS credits** may be obtained through successful completion of other doctoral courses provided by EPFL or a Swiss or foreign university, as approved by the Director of the EDCE program and the thesis Director according to the terms set by the EDCE program.
Credit equivalence is determined on a case-by-case basis. Courses other than PhD (e.g. Master or summer school) shall also be approved by the Program Director.

¹ RS 414.133.2

² EPFL LEX 2.4.1

3. Candidacy Exam

3.1 To be formally admitted to start a doctoral thesis at the EPFL, the doctoral candidate must successfully pass the candidacy exam at the end of her/his 1st year of doctoral studies (art. 6 and 8 al. 1 let. a of the Ordinance on the Doctorate and art. 8 al. 1 and 2 of the Directives concerning doctoral studies at the EPFL). The candidacy exam consists in an oral presentation of approximately thirty minutes by the candidate, about her/his research proposal, 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 related scientific hypotheses and 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, and the timeframe for its completion.

3.2 The jury includes:

- the thesis Director
- the thesis co-Director where applicable
- a President – a Professor or senior scientist (MER) affiliated to EDCE,
- an expert in the research field, not necessarily from EPFL, but holder of a PhD.

The jury President may not be a member of the same research unit (chair or laboratory) as the thesis Director.

The jury composition is confirmed by the Program Director.

The presence of additional experts at the invitation of the thesis Director is encouraged, in order to give advice and suggestions to the candidate. However, these experts are not part of the jury and do not participate in the decision-making process.

3.3 After jury deliberations, the President verbally informs the candidate of the result of the candidacy exam. Possible jury recommendations are communicated in writing thereafter. The candidate subsequently receives from EPFL a decision to formally admit or refuse the start of a doctoral thesis at EPFL. (art. 8 al. 2 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate at EPFL).

3.4 Possibility of retaking the exam: The composition of the exam jury is in principle the same as for the first attempt; however, the jury President must be a member of the Program Committee. If this was not the case during the first attempt, a member of the Program Committee shall be appointed President while the former President becomes Vice-President.

4. Annual Report

During his/her doctoral thesis work, the doctoral candidate has the obligation to submit an annual report, the first time one year after his/her candidacy exam, on the progress of his/her work to the Thesis Director, who in turn provides written input and reports to the EDCE Program Director within a deadline of one month (art. 10 al. 3 and al. 4 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate).

5. Mentoring

A mentor (Professor or senior scientist) is appointed by the Program Director for each doctoral candidate from his/her enrolment date. The role of the mentor is to mediate between the doctoral candidate, his/her thesis Director and other faculty members or the administration. A doctoral candidate may directly contact his/her mentor, who will make suggestions to resolve

possible issues.

6. Final Provisions

The present regulation shall take effect on November 1 2019 and replaces any prior EDCE doctoral program regulation.

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