



Regulation concerning the Doctoral Program in Computer and Communication Sciences (EDIC)

Please note that only the French version is legally binding.

September 26th, 2022 (date of entry into force)

The EDIC Doctoral Program Committee,

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

decrees:

1. Field of application

The regulation concerning the doctoral program in Computer and Communication Sciences (hereafter: EDIC program) sets forth the rules relating to the study plan of the EDIC program as well as the candidacy exam for the formal admission to start the doctoral thesis in the EDIC program of the EPFL. Furthermore, it reiterates and details the application of certain essential rules concerning the doctorate at the EPFL.

2. Organization

- 2.1 EDIC is the doctoral program in Computer and Communication Sciences at EPFL; its research domains are aligned with those of the School of Computer and Communication Sciences (hereafter IC). All regular IC faculty and all faculty with a courtesy appointment from IC are automatically members of EDIC. The EDIC program director sits as an ex officio member on the Dean's management committee of IC. The EDIC program director is appointed by the AVP-PGE following an election by EDIC faculty members.

¹ RS 414.133.2

² EPFL LEX 2.4.1

- 2.2 Admissions committee: EDIC program director appoints annually a distinct committee which includes faculty representatives of the different research domains, with a chair or co-chairs. The admission committee makes preliminary recommendations to the program director regarding (1) selection of EDIC Fellows (2) identification of admissible candidates without an EDIC fellowship, and (3) rejection of the other applicants.
- 2.3 EDIC Fellowships are the preferred mechanism for admission into EDIC and represent the majority of admissions into the program. EDIC Fellowships are funded directly by IC School. EDIC affiliated members hosting a fellow for the semester project are asked to refund the candidate salary to IC. During their fellowship year, the fellows perform one or several projects in laboratories before transitioning into the laboratory of their final thesis director. The final thesis director must be a regular member of the IC faculty or an EDIC affiliate.

3. Study plan

- 3.1 The study plan of the EDIC program requires **30 ECTS credits** (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). 12 of these ECTS credits come from projects (one project of 6 ECTS credits per semester during the first year).
- 3.2 Prior to their candidacy exam, EDIC doctoral candidates must demonstrate advanced proficiency in at least one core area of computer or communication sciences ("depth area") as defined by one of the listed depth courses of the program (or equivalent) and worth at least 4 ECTS credits. The list of depth courses is periodically reviewed by the EDIC program committee and is available on the EDIC website.
- 3.3 The remainder of the credits is taken in accordance with the following rules:
- Each course in the EDIC course book belongs to one area at least; the list of areas and courses is periodically reviewed by the EDIC program committee and is available on the EDIC website.
 - To obtain the doctorate, the EDIC candidate must have taken 2 breadth courses of at least 4 ECTS credits each, respectively in an area other than the depth course validated in the first year, for a total of 3 distinct areas.
 - The remainder of the credits have to be taken from the EDIC course book. Among the remaining credits, a maximum of 4 ECTS credits can be chosen by the doctoral candidate among all the EPFL Master- and doctoral program's course books, including the transferable skills course book, without the approval of neither the program committee nor the thesis director.
- In order for the corresponding credits to count, courses taken outside of EPFL have to be at the doctoral level and to include a progress monitoring procedure (exam or equivalent). They must be approved in advance by the thesis director and the EDIC program director.

4. Candidacy exam

- 4.1 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 the 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 is an oral exam during which the jury evaluates the candidate's aptitude to complete a thesis. The candidate must demonstrate a thorough understanding and critical evaluation of a list of articles chosen in

accordance with the thesis director and communicated to the jury ahead of the exam.

- 4.2 To attend the candidacy exam, the candidate must have found a thesis director and submitted a thesis plan (the content of which is not part of the exam). The jury of the candidacy exam is composed of the candidate's thesis director, a second examiner and an examination president. All must be professors or senior scientists (MER) at EPFL. The exam is not public.
- 4.3 After jury deliberations, the thesis director 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).

5. Annual report

- 5.1 Doctoral candidates having completed their 3rd semester have the obligation to submit an annual progress report each year (art. 10 al. 3 and al. 4 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate at the EPFL). The candidate submits a summary of the work progress, as well as a point-by-point self-evaluation. In parallel, the thesis director (and co-director when applicable) completes an analogous assessment of the work progress. After a joint discussion the report is cosigned by the candidate and the thesis director (and co-director when applicable). The candidate then also discusses the progress and wider context with the mentor and they confirm to have met in the annual report, without reporting the content of the discussion which is confidential. Finally, the program director will add his/her signature to the report. The candidate ensures that the above process is finalized within one month. The doctoral candidate submits his report according to a deadline fixed by the EDIC program director.
- 5.2 Approximately one year before the expected end of the dissertation, the thesis director may organize an optional "thesis proposal" at which they will provide robust feedback on the thesis plan. The high-level feedback on this proposal must be discussed in the following annual evaluation.

6. Teaching requirements

- 6.1 In accordance with the job description of the work contract (based on LEX 4.4.1, Directive on terms of employment of EPFL assistants), the doctoral candidate participates in the teaching activities of IC, including as teaching assistants (TAs).
- 6.2 EDIC doctoral candidates who are not employed by EPFL are still required to TA.
- 6.3 Doctoral candidates are assigned to courses each semester according to the agreement between EDIC program director and the IC Sections director (art. 11 al. 2 of the Directives concerning doctoral studies at the EPFL – LEX 2.4.1). The agreement is available on the EDIC website.
- 6.4 TA should not exceed the equivalent of 20% of the 100% working hours.

7. Mentoring

- 7.1 Within 3 months after enrolment, each doctoral candidate is invited to indicate their preferences from the EDIC mentor pool, and EDIC will take them into account when

assigning the mentor. For candidates that do not indicate any preference, EDIC assigns them one mentor out of the pool. The doctoral candidates may change mentor with the agreement of the program director.

- 7.2 The mentor remains anonymous with respect to the thesis director to ensure confidentiality (it is up to the candidate to keep this anonymity or not). The mentor offers guidance to doctoral candidates regarding academic or career choices, as well as the resolution of any difficulties met within the context of their training, in particular regarding the preparation of their thesis or cases of conflict.
- 7.3 The candidates can contact their mentor whenever they deem it necessary. The candidate and the mentor confer at least once a year as part of the annual report. Exchanges between candidates and their mentor should remain confidential unless both parties agree to disclose to the program director.
- 7.4 It is recommended that the candidate's mentor does not participate in nor presides over the jury for either the candidacy or the oral exam.

8. Final provisions

The present regulation shall take effect on September 26th, 2022, and replaces any prior EDIC doctoral program regulation. The previous regulation of September 1, 2014 remains in force for all EDIC candidates enrolled before September 1, 2022 regarding point 2, Study Plan.

For the EDIC Doctoral Program Committee:
Prof. Edouard Bugnion
Program Director
École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne



For the Doctoral School:
Prof. Luisa Lambertini
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In this document the masculine form is used to designate both male and female genders.

September 1st, 2014

The EDIC 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

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1. Field of application

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2. Study plan

- 2.1 The study plan of the EDIC program requires **30 ECTS credits** (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). 12 of these credits come from projects.
- 2.2 The following credits must at least be obtained during the first year of doctoral studies:
 - 4 course credits (specific knowledge area);
 - 12 project credits (one 6-credit project per semester).

¹ RS 414.133.2

² EPFL LEX 2.4.1

- 2.3 The remainder of the credits is taken in accordance with the following rules:
- Courses are divided in 3 areas: AI, Systems, and Theory;
 - One of these areas is selected and defined as specific knowledge area;
 - The other two areas are defined as general knowledge areas;
 - 10 credits at least come from the EDIC offering (at least 4 credits in each general knowledge area);
 - The remainder of the credits (a maximum of 4) can be taken from the whole EPFL master- and doctoral-level course offering.

In order for the corresponding credits to count, courses taken outside of EPFL have to be at the doctoral level and to include a progress monitoring procedure (exam or equivalent). They must be approved in advance by the EDIC program director.

3. Candidacy examination

- 3.1 To be formally admitted to start a doctoral thesis at the EPFL, the candidate must successfully pass the candidacy examination at the end of 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 examination is an oral examination during which the jury evaluates the candidate's aptitude to complete a thesis. The student must demonstrate a thorough understanding and critical evaluation of a list of articles chosen in accordance with the candidate and communicated by the jury 2 months ahead of the examination.

- 3.2 To attend the candidacy examination, the candidate must have found a thesis director and submitted a thesis plan (the content of which is not part of the examination). The jury of the candidacy examination is composed of the candidate's thesis director, a second examiner and an examination president. All of these have to be professors or senior scientists (MER) at EPFL.
- 3.3 After jury deliberations, the thesis director 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

During his doctoral thesis work, the doctoral candidate has the obligation to submit an annual report on the progress of his work to the thesis director, who in turn provides written input and reports to the EDIC program director within a deadline of one month (art. 10 al. 3 and al. 4 of the Ordinance on the Doctorate). The doctoral candidate submits his report according to a deadline fixed by the EDIC program director.

5. Teaching assistants

In accordance with the job description of his work contract (in principle defined according to the application rules of October 1, 2006 concerning the directives governing the employment and working relationships of assistants at the EPFL of October 1, 2005) the doctoral candidate hired as an assistant, is under the obligation to participate in EPFL teaching activities to the equivalent of 20% of his 100% working hours.

6. Mentoring

An EDIC mentor is appointed by the EDIC program director for each doctoral student, upon registration. The role of the mentor is to mediate between the doctoral student and his thesis director, other faculty, or the administration. A doctoral student may directly contact the EDIC mentor, who will make suggestions to resolve possible issues.

7. Final provisions

The present regulation shall take effect on September 1st, 2014, and replaces any prior EDIC doctoral program regulation.

For the EDIC doctoral program committee:
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For the Doctoral School:
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