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Contact:	Head Education Legislation

[This English translation is for information purposes only. The German version is the legally binding version.]

DIRECTIVE

Direct doctorate programme

The Rector,

Pursuant to Art. 9, Para. 2 of the ETH Zurich Organisational Ordinance of 16 December 2003¹, in association with Art. 38 of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich of 1 July 2008²,

has issued the following directive:

Art. 1 Objective

The ETH Zurich direct doctorate programme enables candidates with an outstanding Bachelor's degree to commence doctoral studies directly.

Art. 2 Components and detailed provisions

¹ The direct doctorate programme is composed of two parts. The first comprises a complete Master's degree programme, and the second actual doctoral studies.

² The direct doctorate programme is always associated with a Master's degree programme from the discipline in question.

³ Detailed provisions regarding the direct doctorate programme are set out in the appendix to the programme regulations of the respective Master's degree programme. They are subject to the Rector's approval.

Art. 3 Application

¹ Holders of a Bachelor's degree from ETH Zurich or another university or a degree recognised by ETH Zurich as equivalent which demonstrates outstanding academic performance may apply for admission to the direct doctorate programme.

¹ RSETHZ 201.021

² RSETHZ 340.31en (SR 414.133.1)

² Application for the direct doctorate programme is always associated with the connected Master's degree programme. Application proceeds online via the application portal for Master's degree studies.

³ Application for the direct doctorate programme is also subject to the following:

- a. The same binding stipulations which govern application for Master's degree studies also apply to the direct doctorate programme, particularly those regarding dates, deadlines and documents to be submitted.
- b. Application may proceed even if the required Bachelor's degree has not yet been issued. Entry to the direct doctorate programme may not proceed, however, until Bachelor's degree studies have been completed.

Art. 4 Admission

¹ Admission to the direct doctorate programme is only possible if all of the following conditions are met:

- a. Official proof of qualifications as per Art. 5, Para. 2 (f) of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich³ have been supplied, with the proviso that the direct doctorate programme includes a full Master's degree programme.
- b. All of the admission prerequisites of the associated Master's degree programme have been met and allow admission to the Master's degree programme with no additional requirements. The appraisal of applications is conducted according to the normal procedure through the Academic Services Admissions Office and the admissions committee of the respective Master's degree programme.
- c. The doctoral committee of the responsible department endorses any admissions to the direct doctorate programme.
- d. The responsible department agrees in writing to designate a doctoral thesis supervisor, at the latest before the candidate begins the Master's thesis. The department is free at that early point to designate the doctoral supervisor.

² If the admission requirements of (1) are fulfilled, the responsible department submits a request for admission to the direct doctorate programme to the Rector (represented by the Vice-Rector for Doctoral Studies).

³ Admission to the direct doctorate programme comprises:

- a. Admission to the associated Master's degree programme with no additional requirements
- b. Provisional admission to doctoral studies as per Art. 7 (a) of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich⁴

³ RSETHZ 340.31en (SR 414.133.1)

⁴ RSETHZ 340.31en (SR 414.133.1)

⁴ Completion of the associated Master's degree programme according to the provisions of Art. 6 of this directive replaces the additional admission requirements described in Art. 10 of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich⁵.

Art. 5 Matriculation

Students pursuing the direct doctorate programme have two matriculations at ETH Zurich: they are matriculated as both Master's degree and doctoral students. The Master's degree matriculation ends when the Master's degree programme is completed.

Art. 6 Master's degree programme

¹ Students in the direct doctorate programme complete the Master's degree programme according to the provisions of the respective programme regulations. As soon as they have fulfilled all the academic requirements for the Master's degree they may submit the degree request, and the Master's degree will be issued.

² If a department stipulates additional Master's degree programme requirements for students in the direct doctorate programme these must, pursuant to Art. 2, Para. 3 of this directive, be published in the appendix to the programme regulations. Examples of additional requirements include:

- a. A deadline by which all academic requirements of the Master's degree programme – with the exception of the Master's thesis – must be completed. If no extra deadline is set the normal maximum duration of Master's degree studies set out in the respective programme regulations applies.
- b. Achievement of specified grades in single Master's degree subjects or of a specified grade point average
- c. Additional study achievements involving up to 30 credits from project work, in addition to the credits already required for the normal Master's degree

³ Instead of the Master's thesis the department may allow the student to write a research paper of equivalent scope, to be published in a scientific journal. The department sets out the details in the appendix to the programme regulations.

⁴ Completion of the Master's degree programme is verified with the usual documents (academic record, degree certificate and Diploma Supplement). Any additional study achievements as per Para. 2 (c) of this directive are included on a separate sheet of the academic record.

⁵ RSETHZ 340.31en (SR 414.133.1)

Art. 7 Definitive admission to doctoral studies

Definitive admission to doctoral studies proceeds when all of the following apply:

- a. Master's degree studies have been completed.
- b. Any additional requirements according to Art. 6, Para. 2 of this directive have been fulfilled.
- c. All further admission requirements as per Art. 12 of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich⁶ have been fulfilled.

Art. 8 Maximum permitted duration of doctoral studies

¹ The doctoral examination must be undertaken six years after admission to the direct doctorate programme or provisional admission to doctoral studies at the latest. Students in the direct doctorate programme may, pursuant to Art. 27, Para. 4 of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich⁷, extend this deadline by one year.

² Despite the right to this one-off extension it is not automatic, but requires a request.

Art. 9 Exclusion from the direct doctorate programme

¹ Exclusion from the direct doctorate programme proceeds in the following cases:

- a. The requirements for obtaining the Master's degree (required number of credits, any other requirements) are not fulfilled due to failure of examinations, or can no longer be fulfilled due to exceedance of the maximum permitted duration of studies.
- b. Any additional requirements as per Art. 6, Para. 2 of this directive can no longer be fulfilled, primarily if
 - 1) deadlines have not been respected (Art. 6, Para. 2 (a));
 - 2) the required grades have not been achieved (Art. 6, Para. 2 (b));
 - 3) any additional study achievements can no longer be realised due to failure (Art. 6, Para. 2 (c)).

² Exclusion as mentioned in Para. 1 (a) constitutes simultaneous exclusion from the respective Master's degree programme, because the latter counts as definitively failed.

³ The Master's degree programme may be continued after exclusion according to Para. 1 (b). The additional requirements are then no longer relevant to acquiring the Master's degree. Renewed application for doctoral studies is possible after successful completion of Master's degree studies.

⁴ The provisions of Art. 13b, 13c and 13d of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich⁸ also apply.

⁶ RSETHZ 340.31en (SR 414.133.1)

⁷ RSETHZ 340.31en (SR 414.133.1)

⁸ RSETHZ 340.31en (SR 414.133.1)

Art. 10 Withdrawal of agreement to supervise the doctoral thesis

If the professor withdraws his/her agreement to supervise the doctoral thesis or the department rescinds its agreement to designate a supervisor, the provisions of Art. 17 – 20 of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich⁹ apply.

Art. 11 Funding, tuition fees waiver and doctoral studies fees

¹ Students in the direct doctorate programme receive a merit-based scholarship for the duration of the Master's degree programme. The respective amount is set to cover tuition and living costs.¹⁰

² Students in the direct doctorate programme are not subject to tuition fees for the duration of the Master's degree programme.

³ Students may work as Teaching Assistants (*Hilfsassistent/in*) while drawing the merit-based scholarship.

⁴ Exclusion from the direct doctorate programme means loss of the merit-based scholarship and cessation of the tuition fees waiver.

⁵ After Master's studies are completed the student is employed as a doctoral student according to the conditions usual in the respective department.

⁶ Doctoral fees as per Art. 33 of the Ordinance on Doctoral Studies ETH Zurich¹¹ cannot be waived.

⁷ The merit-based scholarship of Para. 1 is funded by the department. It is paid out each semester by the respective department.

⁸ Any deviations from the stipulations in Para. 1 and 7 are subject to the Rector's approval.

Art. 12 Entry into effect

This directive enters into effect on 1 November 2016.

Zurich, 26 September 2016

Rector, ETH Zurich

Prof. Dr. Sarah M. Springman

⁹ RSETHZ 340.31en (SR 414.133.1)

¹⁰ As per year of study 2022/2023: CHF 12,000.00 per semester (previous years: CHF 10,500.00 per semester).

¹¹ RSETHZ 340.31en (SR 414.133.1)