



Guidelines

Introduction

For each doctoral candidate of the IMPRS-STNS a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) is set up at the beginning of the research project. The TAC approves the research project, reviews the progress of the doctoral candidate and advises her or him on further training, studies and research. When it can be foreseen that a research project will not be successfully finished, the TAC can recommend to discontinue the project; this has to be confirmed by the IMPRS spokesperson.

The aim of the TAC is to support the doctoral candidate in the successful completion of the research project, i.e. to provide advice and feedback on any aspect of the doctoral training. Furthermore, the TAC should provide feedback to the IMPRS Office.

Members of the Thesis Advisory Committee

The TAC consists of the doctoral candidate's supervisor as well as usually an external co-supervisor and an internal co-supervisor. The TAC is quorate if two of its members are present.

General guidelines for TAC meetings

It is the doctoral candidate's responsibility to organize the meetings.

- Coordinate with all TAC members to find a suitable date in accordance with the time frame outlined below.
- Reserve a room suitable for the meeting (size, technical equipment) or arrange for an online meeting.
- Complete the form "TAC meeting preparation" and prepare a written progress report covering the advances and challenges of the last year. Send it to all TAC members well in advance (at least 1 week before the meeting).
- Thoroughly prepare the presentation slides and practice delivering the presentation in advance.
- Inform the IMPRS Office in advance about time and agenda of the meeting.
- Request attendance of the IMPRS coordinator if needed, e.g., in case of a conflict.

The TAC meetings should occur based on the following schedule:

- *Start-up meeting* – no later than 3 months after the start of the project
- *Annual meetings* – months 12, 24, and 30¹ after the start of the project

As the doctoral training progresses, the TAC meetings may focus on slightly different aspects. These may include a general discussion of the goal of the research project, development of an individual training plan, assessing the doctoral candidate's progress in becoming an independent researcher, suggestions regarding the future development of the research project, and guidance for upcoming publications or writing up the doctoral thesis.

- *The TAC meetings are not intended to be a formal examination of the doctoral candidate. Rather, the style of the meeting should be informal as long as it serves the goals established by these guidelines and within the framework of IMPRS-STNS in general.*
- At the end of every meeting, the TAC members fill out the feedback form and submit it to the IMPRS Office.

¹If the doctoral candidate intends to start writing up his/her doctoral thesis earlier than that, the meeting should be scheduled to an earlier date.