



## **TAC Meeting Guidelines**

### **1.1 TAC Committee Composition:**

a. The Thesis Advisory Committee (hereafter referred to as TAC) should consist of 3 to 4 experienced scientists, including the doctoral student's advisor, who will act as the first thesis reviewer (TAC 1), and another member who will act as the second thesis reviewer (TAC 2). Except for the supervisor, two TAC members must come from outside the student's research group to foster interdisciplinarity.

At least two members must be affiliated with the Faculty of Biology\*.

b. It is not required that all TAC members hold the position of professor. However, please note that the first and second thesis reviewers should hold a habilitation.

c. TAC members should be willing to remain on the committee for the duration of the student's studies, when possible.

d. All TAC members must be present at each TAC meeting.

e. The first and second TAC members serve as the primary thesis reviewers/examiners on the evaluation board for the thesis defense.

*\*If the student's primary LSM supervisor is affiliated with the Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy, or the Faculty of Medicine or Veterinary Medicine, then the second thesis reviewer (TAC 2) and either TAC 3 or TAC 4 must be members of the Faculty of Biology.*

### **1.2 TAC Responsibilities:**

a. The TAC exists to assist doctoral students by monitoring the pace and progress of their work and advising them on the development of their research project, thereby complementing the role of the student's direct supervisor. This process should occur annually and include an evaluation of whether and to what extent the scientific approach, the scope of the proposal, and the research topic(s) are sufficient and suitable for a doctoral thesis project.

b. In relation to the above-mentioned evaluations and assessments, the TAC can (and is encouraged to) recommend changes to the student's proposal and may also suggest a timeline for achieving the defined goals necessary to complete the thesis research on time.

c. Additionally, the TAC may advise students on career planning and professional development.

d. Members of the TAC may also mediate discussions between students and supervisors, if needed.



### 1.3 TAC Procedures

- a. The student should notify the LSM coordinator of the composition of the TAC once it has been determined. The student is solely responsible for planning each TAC meeting.
  - b. In preparation for the meeting, the student must provide the TAC members with a 1–2-page summary of results and current plans (Pre-TAC Report/Progress report) (see Section 1.5).
  - c. Post-TAC report (see section 1.6) and TAC form (see section 1.7): Together with his/her TAC, the doctoral candidate signs the TAC form, which not only reflects the supervision, but also gives information on the planned research project, milestones, curricular elements, etc. The TAC form is signed by all TAC members and the PhD candidate. The post-TAC report is signed by the doctoral candidate and direct supervisor.
  - d. Each student must have a TAC meeting every year throughout their doctoral thesis research, including the final thesis defense. Therefore, students who complete their doctoral research within the recommended three years must have attended at least four TAC meetings to officially complete the LSM Graduate School program (this includes the final thesis defense).
- d. TAC meeting format:
- 20-minute presentation by the doctoral student
  - 20-minute discussion with all participants present
  - 10–15-minute discussion with the supervisor (without the student)
  - 10–15-minute discussion with the student (without the supervisor)
  - The entire meeting should generally not exceed one hour.

#### 1.3.1 First TAC meeting

- a. The first TAC meeting should take place within the first six months and no later than nine months into the doctoral studies.
- b. In this meeting, the TAC should critically assess the feasibility and the scope of the project. The TAC may propose modifications and specify target objectives to reach before the next TAC meeting.

#### 1.3.2 Second TAC Meeting

- a. The second TAC meeting should take place no later than 1 year after the first TAC or 1,5 years after the commencement of the doctoral project (whichever is sooner).
- b. The TAC should critically reappraise the project and the progress made by the student. The TAC may propose modifications and specify target objectives to reach before the next TAC meeting.



### **1.3.3 Third TAC Meeting**

- a. The third TAC meeting should take place no later than 2.5 years after the commencement of the doctoral studies.
- b. The TAC should discuss the progress made and, together with the student, establish a detailed plan and timeline for the completing the last phase of the doctoral thesis research, including a target date for the completion of the thesis.

### **1.3.4 Thesis Defense**

- a. The thesis defense constitutes the fourth and final TAC meeting.
- b. The defense or disputation (Paragraph 19 Exam and Study Regulations of the LSM) is an examination in which the student is expected to show an adequate mastering of the subject and related areas.

### **1.4 Exceptions**

Exceptions to any of the aforementioned regulations can be discussed with the LSM coordinator. If necessary, issues may also be brought to the LSM board members for discussion.

### **1.5 TAC Meeting Progress Report/Pre-TAC (Proposal for 1<sup>st</sup> TAC Meeting)**

The length should be no more than 5 pages (including figures). It should be concise yet informative and contain the following sections:

- Abstract (max. 200 words)
- State of the art/Introduction
- Results
- Outlook/Perspective
- Timeline
- References



### **1.6 Post-TAC Meeting Report:**

Students should write a two-page report summarizing the discussion, suggestions made, and steps required to complete the project. If any adjustments to the research timeline are necessary, they should be documented in the report.

This report must be completed within a few days following the TAC meeting and sent to all TAC members for review. Once approved by the TAC members, it should be signed by both the student and the supervisor and submitted to the LSM coordinator's office.

The TAC report serves as a reference for both the student and the TAC in the next TAC meeting to better track the student's progress. Therefore, please ensure that you bring the previous Post-TAC Report to each TAC meeting.

### **1.7 TAC Meeting Form**

a. All TAC members must sign this form to confirm that the TAC meeting took place and that the Post-TAC Meeting Report has been approved.

b. The student must submit this form, along with the post-TAC report, to the LSM coordinator.