Best Practice Guide
for the supervision of scientific staff at D-GESS

Conditions of Employment

*Goal: to create basic material conditions for productive work*

- **General:** despite the fact that every professorship has their own specific requirements, deviations from the general regulations at ETH should be avoided if possible to make sure that relatively uniform conditions apply in all groups;
- **Salary:** clear agreement on financing upon commencement of employment (PA-funds and/or third-party-funding) and on expectations regarding third-party-funding (starting date, amount);
- **Limitation:** clear agreement on length of project / intended length of employment and possibilities of extension upon commencement of employment. Annual confirmation / Update of agreement;
- **Infrastructure (work space, ICT);**
- **Promotion:** clear and transparent regulations (conditions) regarding conferences, summer schools, research trips etc. and funding thereof;
- **Further Education:** encouragement to participate in skill and particularly soft skill courses and if necessary / possible, financial support.

Specifications

- Type and scope of research and teaching duties to be performed for the professorship are described in the specifications as precisely as possible. The accuracy of these specifications is inspected annually in the context of the staff interview.

Career Planning and Development

- is a central leadership task;
  - at least one fixed meeting with the main supervisor is to be conducted every year in order to discuss personal concerns and questions regarding career planning and development. At any rate, the following issues should be discussed:
    - Quality of work and achievement of set work goals
    - Goals for the following year (regarding content, scope etc.)
    - Aspects of career development (possibilities, opportunities, future perspectives)
  - in order to discuss career development and perspectives, contact with former doctoral students of the group should be encouraged (individually or on a formalized basis)

Supervision and Coaching

*Standard term:*

- Supervision by the professor is focused on fundamental issues such as the development of innovative questions, an adequate research design, the feasibility and the presentation of results in consideration of the requirements in reputable journals or publishers;
- Coaching and practical support should also be provided by group members and research colleagues outside of the group;
- Researchers are also required to strive towards good supervision themselves;
Practical Execution:

- Particularly intensive supervision within the first year with fixed, monthly meetings and further, optional appointments if required;
- 1-2 group-internal workshops /retreats per year in which all doctoral students have to present their work and receive feedback from the entire group;
- Doctoral seminar / colloquium (at least every other semester);
- Further measures of support are possible upon request by the doctoral student or postdoc;
- 1 year before the doctoral exam, a formal, mandatory meeting with the main supervisor takes place;
- Depending on disciplinary conventions: if the doctoral student wishes, the main supervisor may function as co-author of the first paper. This ensures intensive supervision and the communication of paper writing skills;
- Doctoral students are encouraged to present their research results to the group at meetings or other occasions towards the end of their doctorate;
- Purposeful use of further opportunities of assistance through: additional assessors of the research plan, research periods abroad or participation in research / PhD colloquia at competence centers etc., external assessors of the exam committee for the doctoral thesis;
- Informal doctoral students meetings are organized by the Association of Scientific Staff (ASST) at D-GEES.

Approved by the Department Conference on 23. September 2014