

Doctoral Program Supervision Agreement

Purpose of the Agreement

This agreement defines the fundamental rights and obligations of the persons involved in the MCQST Doctoral Program. It is intended to provide a clear framework for supervision and planning throughout the doctoral phase. It does not replace applicable university regulations or employment contracts.

Thesis Advisory Board (TAB)

The doctoral research project is conducted under the guidance of a Thesis Advisory Board (TAB), consisting of a main supervisor and at least one co-supervisor. The supervisor provides direct scientific guidance, while the co-supervisor, preferably from a different research group or institution, offers complementary scientific and strategic advice.

The composition of the TAB should ensure high-quality supervision. If a co-supervisor is not able to provide adequate support (e.g. due to time constraints or mismatch in expertise), they can be changed upon agreement with the supervisor and the doctoral student.

Persons Involved

This supervision agreement is concluded between:

- Doctoral student
- Supervisor
- Co-supervisor

Doctoral Project and Funding

The doctoral student will work on a dissertation with the (provisional) title:

at the (Faculty / Institute)

The project is planned to start on:

The expected end date of the doctorate is:

As long as the doctoral student achieves the expected level of scientific performance, funding is expected to be provided for the full duration of the project:

MCQST funding from _____ to _____

Supervisor funding from _____ to _____

Other funding from _____ to _____

A minimum of four months of paid employment time is reserved for the purpose of writing the doctoral thesis.

Responsibilities of the TAB Members and the Doctoral Student

a) Supervisor

The supervisor agrees to support the doctoral student in the independent pursuit of their research project and to facilitate efficient progress. This includes:

- Jointly developing a structured work and time plan, which is reviewed and adapted regularly
- Holding regular meetings to discuss progress and provide constructive scientific feedback
- Participating in the mandatory annual meeting in connection with the submission of the progress report, which serves to review progress and, if necessary, adjust the working and time plan
- Supporting access to national and international scientific networks
- Encouraging participation in conferences, workshops, and schools
- Supporting publication activities and the thesis writing process
- Advising on career development and future perspectives
- Suggesting additional TAB meetings if difficulties or conflicts arise

b) Co-Supervisor

- The co-supervisor commits to providing independent advice and feedback, including:
- Participating in the mandatory annual meeting in connection with the submission of the progress report
- Contributing to the assessment of scientific progress and the review of the working and time plan
- Reviewing project planning, milestones, and publication strategies
- Offering support on non-scientific issues such as supervision quality, working environment, and career planning
- Suggesting additional TAB meetings if difficulties or conflicts arise

c) Doctoral Student

- The doctoral student takes primary responsibility for the planning and execution of the research project, with the goal of developing into an independent scientist. This includes:
- Developing and maintaining a detailed work and time plan in agreement with the supervisor
- Actively conducting research and maintaining an overview of completed work and open questions, as a basis for informed discussion of project progress
- Preparing for and participating in meetings with the TAB members, including the presentation of research progress, questions and proposed updates to the work plan
- Submitting required progress reports on time
- Participating in MCQST scientific activities and fulfilling curriculum requirements

End-of-PhD Planning Meeting

At least one year before the end of the employment contract, a mandatory planning meeting between the doctoral student and the TAB members must take place. This planning can be conducted within the mandatory annual TAB meeting associated with the progress report.

This discussion should explicitly cover:

- The planned start date of the thesis writing phase
- Allocation of the guaranteed thesis writing time
- Completion and prioritization of remaining projects and publications
- Handover or transition of project, lab, or machine responsibilities

The goal of this meeting is to align expectations and prevent conflicts during the final phase of the doctorate.

Good Scientific Practice and Conflict Resolution

All parties commit to the principles of good scientific practice as defined by their respective institutions. In case of conflicts, all parties agree to seek an amicable solution. If necessary, the doctoral student or any TAB member may contact the MCQST program coordination or designated ombudsperson.

Reconciling Family Responsibilities and Research

Supervisors are encouraged to take family and care responsibilities of the doctoral student into account when planning work schedules, milestones, and timelines.

Place, date _____,

Signature Doctoral Student

Signature Supervisor

Signature Co-Supervisor