

# TAC Meeting Guidelines

## 1. TAC Composition

- a) The **Thesis Advisory Committee** (from here on referred to as TAC) should consist of 2 to 3 experienced scientists (including the doctoral student's advisor). TACs usually are composed of the direct supervisor within the CRC, the second supervisor, and optional a PI of the research field (e.g. external member of the CRC). To ensure a balanced TAC, ideally the third TAC member should be external (i.e. come from an institute other than the direct supervisor's institute).
- b) TAC meetings should take place **around the 6th, 18th and 30th month** of the doctoral thesis (1 meeting/year; see 1<sup>st</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 3<sup>rd</sup> year TAC form [here](#)). We are aware that some of the PhD students are already in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Please chose the TAC form that is appropriate for your individual time frame. The last TAC meeting should take place at least half a year before the end of the CRC funding period, which will be in June 2024. So, the third TAC meeting should be around December 2023.
- c) A minimum of 2 TAC members (i.e. PhD student, first and second supervisor) should be present at each TAC meeting.

## 2. TAC Responsibilities

- a) The general purpose of the thesis advisory committees is to provide guidance for our students throughout their studies. Initially, the TAC should assess the scope of the proposed project (is it feasible to be accomplished within the anticipated time frame?), consider the risk that is associated with it and perhaps discuss possible exit strategies that could be employed in case the project develops poorly. In the following meetings the focus will then shift to monitor the progress of a student and to ensure that the student stays focused on the main aspects of their research topic. In other words, the TAC should take over some of the burden of responsibility that normally rests exclusively on the shoulders of the direct supervisor.
- b) With respect to the above-mentioned evaluations and assessments, this should include, at least once a year, evaluating 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. The TAC can (and is encouraged to) recommend changes to a student's proposal. The TAC can recommend a timeline for accomplishing defined goals necessary for completing the thesis research in time.
- c) Additionally, the TAC may advise students with regards to career planning and professional development.

## 3. TAC Procedure

- a) The **student** bears the responsibility for **planning each TAC meeting** and **submitting the TAC Meeting Progress Report** (see section 4) to the MGK office in a timely fashion. The student should notify the MGK office of the composition of the TAC committee and the scheduled date of the meeting once determined.
- b) Each student should have a TAC meeting each year during their doctoral thesis research.

- c) Before each TAC meeting, the student should prepare a 2 page (maximum) written **TAC Meeting Progress Report** (see section 4) and send it to each TAC member as well as the MGK office a week before the TAC meeting.

**Suggested TAC meeting format:**

20 min presentation by doctoral student  
20 min discussion of the presentation  
20 min discussion of agreements (thesis and project time frame, feedback by the supervisors and PhD student, possible problems)

Duration: Maximum of 1.5 hours

- d) The TAC should complete the **TAC Meeting Form** (available on the MGK website) at the conclusion of each TAC meeting. All TAC members must sign this form to confirm that the TAC meeting took place. It is the student's responsibility to submit it to the MGK office. A TAC meeting is considered concluded and officially counted towards a student's TAC requirements when the TAC Meeting form is successfully submitted.

## **4. TAC Meeting Progress Report (Proposal)**

The length should be **no more** than 2 pages (including figures). It should be concise yet informative and contain the following sections:

- 1.1 Abstract (max. 200 words)
- 1.2 State of the art/Introduction
- 1.3 Methods
- 1.4 Results (if applicable)
- 1.5 Outlook/Perspective (if applicable)
- 1.6 Timeline
- 1.7 References