



# IMPRS-ML Guidelines and Regulations

This document outlines the academic responsibilities and rules of good doctoral supervision implemented in the International Max Planck Research School for Molecules of Life (IMPRS-ML). **Please read it carefully and confirm in the form that you have read and accepted the Guidelines and Regulations.**

## 1. IMPRS-ML requirements and curricular guidelines:

The IMPRS curriculum is designed to provide theoretical and practical knowledge and to confer competence in biochemistry, structural biology, biophysics, cell biology, systems biology, and computational biology. In addition, **IMPRS-ML doctoral researchers (DRs)** shall be exposed to interdisciplinary science and shall acquire complementary skills necessary for a successful career in science and be supported in making informed career choices. To successfully pass the IMPRS-ML program, DRs have to complete coursework equivalent to 25 ECTS credits, consisting of mandatory elements worth of 16 ECTS and elective elements worth of 9 ECTS credits ([Figure 1](#)). The IMPRS office will keep a record of course activities/collected credits, but the final responsibility for completeness of this record resides with the DR.

Mandatory elements of the IMPRS curriculum comprise the following:

- a. Participation in 2/3 or more of the IMPRS lectures (36 of 56 over a three-year period).
- b. Contributions to two IMPRS Seminars, either through a poster or a talk. Attendance to all IMPRS Seminars (four is the minimum requirement) unless there is a conflict with field research or other work-related requirements.
- c. Completion of at least two method courses or mini lecture series.
- d. Completion of at least two transferable skill courses.
- e. Completion of Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings at 9, 21, 33 and 42 months to discuss and document progress ([Figure 2](#)). Prepare a TAC proposal and fill in the corresponding progress report form.
- f. Completion of the annual course on “Good Scientific Practice & Research Ethics” offered during Orientation Days.
- g. Participation in scientific conferences.

## 2. University admission and examination

It is the responsibility of the DR to apply for admission as a doctoral candidate at either faculty/department of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU) or the Technical University of Munich (TUM). Please note that enrolment requirements and deadlines vary greatly depending on the faculty/department and university. Thus, it is important that the DR and the supervisor discuss this topic within the first two months of starting work on the doctoral project. For the admission as well as the submission of the doctoral thesis and the dissertation defense the doctoral examination regulations of the respective faculties/departments apply.



### 3. IMPRS-ML guidelines and rules of good doctoral supervision:

#### IMPRS-ML Supervisor:

Ultimately responsible for the supervision of a DR is the group leader who has accepted the DR into his or her group. In particular, your duties as supervisor are:

- Active participation and cooperation in the recruitment process and the activities of the school (i.e., application assessments, panel interviews, IMPRS lectures and seminars, etc.).
- Support your DRs' participation in all activities stated in the curricular guidelines of the school.
- Allocation of adequate resources including funding, laboratory and office space, equipment, materials & supplies, access to methodical expertise and human resources until the DR's graduation (i.e., thesis submission).
- Provide good quality of supervision tailored to the needs of each DR in your group and set realistic expectations.
- Promote increasingly independent work and thinking by the DR through the doctoral period.
- Encourage scientific exchange and presentation of results in group meetings and scientific conferences.
- Interact cooperatively with your DR: you will meet with your DR on a regular basis for scientific discussions, support your DR in defining key questions and in establishing the theoretical and methodological cornerstones for the success of the project. Provide mentoring in the preparation of scientific publications and the writing of the doctoral thesis.
- Develop a contingency plan for supervising the DR in the event of retirement or a change of institutional affiliation (e.g. lab relocation). IMPRS-ML faculty members can recruit DRs up to four years before their planned retirement date.

Additional administrative support will be provided by the IMPRS Coordination Office.

#### IMPRS-ML Doctoral Researcher:

- You will follow the rules, regulations and curricular guidelines of the school. You will keep your deadlines regarding curricular activities. You will organise and plan your TAC meetings according to the TAC timeline and guidelines. You will fulfill the curriculum and all mandatory elements.
- You will work with enthusiasm at the best of your abilities on the doctoral project. You will consistently work on your scientific development and keep yourself updated with the literature.
- You will promote a collaborative working style and will be willing to discuss your work and results. You will accept critical comments and be ready to use them as a starting point for improvement.
- You will inform the supervisor immediately of any difficulties or problems - particularly if these could jeopardize the success of the doctoral project or delay its progress. You will keep your supervisor regularly informed about progress of the project and about expected or unexpected results.



- You will integrate into the research group. You will adhere to the rules of the research group; contribute to shared laboratory duties; share the use of equipment, measurement times, and the use of other resources.
- You will treat with the greatest care the research group's tangible or intangible valuables. You will make responsible and economical use of the resources provided to you.
- You will fulfill your assigned scientific tasks autonomously. You will play an active role in developing your research proposal, and in organising the planning and running of your research project. You will produce a comprehensive laboratory report that adheres to the Good Scientific Practice rules and guidelines.

#### Doctoral funding contracts at IMPRS-ML:

The doctoral contract is agreed between the supervisor and the DR. Thus, the doctoral contract will be issued by the Institution where the supervisor is affiliated with. Payment is based on the Collective Wage Agreement for the Civil Service (TVöD for Max Planck groups or TV-L for university groups). The minimum standard payment corresponds to 65% TVöD or TV-L E-13.

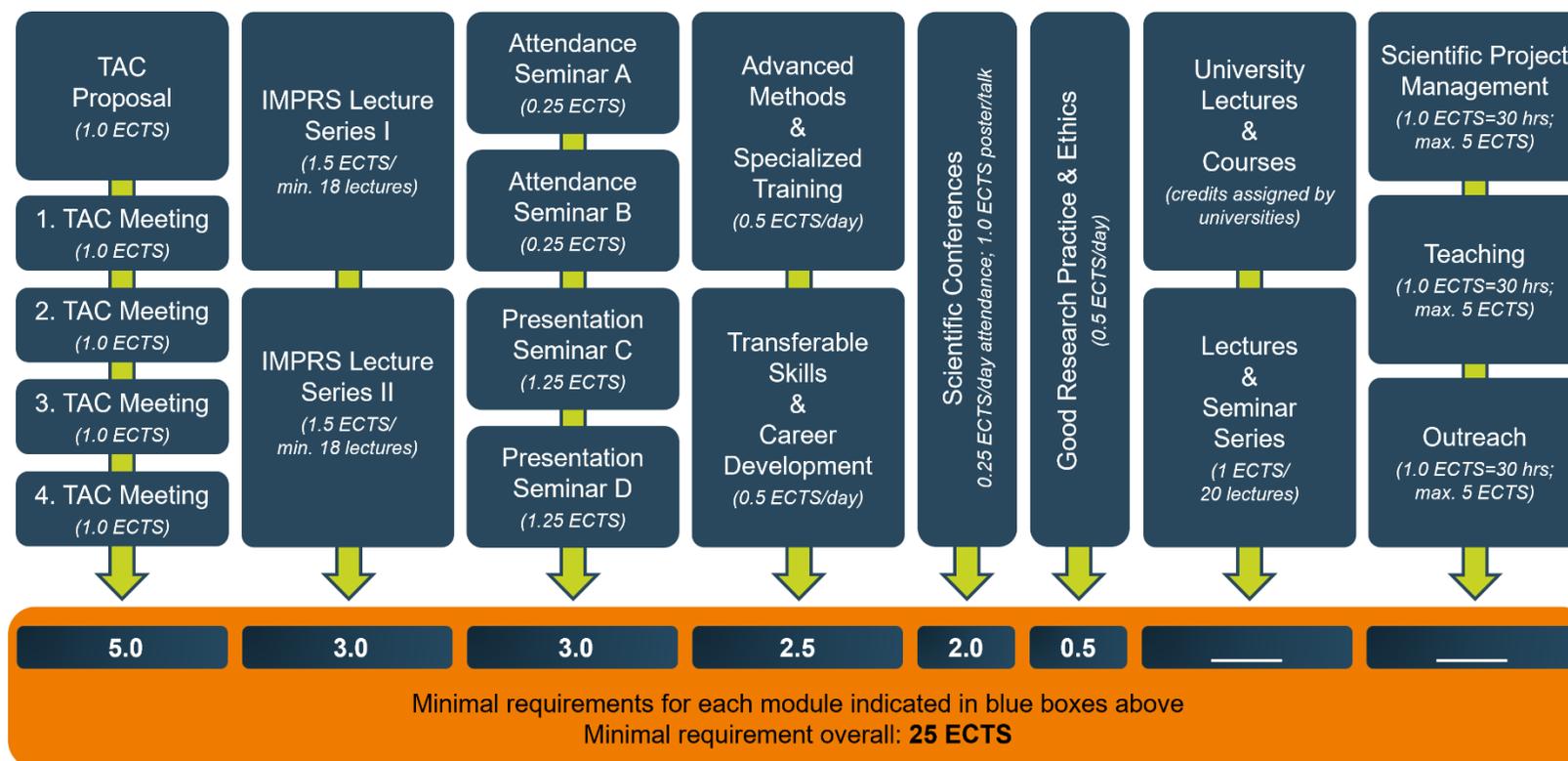
#### Thesis Advisory Committees (TACs):

- The TAC will be jointly assembled by the DR and the supervisor.
- The TAC will critically and supportively follow the doctoral process. Its members will offer advice in scientific matters, career planning and in cases of conflict with the direct supervisor. When thesis advisory committees are appointed, it is taken care that it includes committee members who are independent of the direct supervisor and of one another.
- The TAC will give DRs and supervisors constructive feedback at the regular TAC meetings. They will contribute their scientific knowledge, skills and experience to support the project.
- In the case of conflict between the DR and the direct supervisor, they will help to find a solution. In doing so, they will be obliged to remain neutral to all parties involved in the conflict. Where it is not possible, or where no solution can be reached, they will delegate the case to the speaker/coordinator of the doctoral program.

Furthermore, the doctoral researcher and the supervisor agree upon the following:

1. DR and supervisor commit themselves to the Rules of Good Scientific Practice.
2. DR and supervisor aim for the DR to produce a first author publication during their doctorate.
3. TAC meetings are held at 9, 21, 33 and 42 months into the doctoral project.
4. The DR has to be granted sufficient time to attend courses, etc. within the IMPRS-ML curriculum. Thesis submission can only take place after completion of the IMPRS-ML curriculum (25 ECTS).
5. In a conflict situation either or both parties should contact either another TAC member or the IMPRS coordinator who will assist in solving the conflict, or finding a neutral mediator, if necessary.
6. Supervisor and DR should discuss whether contingency planning for the completion of the doctorate is required due to the supervisor's retirement or change of institutional affiliation (e.g. lab relocation).

**Figure 1: IMPRS-ML Curriculum**



## Figure 2: IMPRS-ML TAC Timeline

