

The purpose of the doctoral supervision agreement is to ensure the continued support and guidance of the doctoral candidate and that the requirements of all parties are mutually agreed. The supervision agreement does not create any enforceable legal position.

1 Declaration

, doctoral candidate at the

[institute],

, advisor and first TAC member,

, mentor and second TAC member and

, mentor and third TAC member (optional)

agree to form a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC)¹, which will be in place for as long as the doctoral candidate is a member of the Graduate School of Geosciences, University of Cologne (UoC). The TAC will accompany the candidate throughout his/her/their independent research phase. Doctoral candidate and advisor jointly choose the second (and third) committee members. The doctoral candidate submits the signed supervision agreement to the GSGS office as instructed² within the first 3 months of the research project.

Within this agreement 'doctoral' and 'doctoral programme' refer to the programmes to obtain a doctoral degree in natural sciences 'Dr. rer. nat.' or PhD at the UoC. The candidate has applied to be accepted as a doctoral candidate in _____ at the Doctoral Office of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNF) and will be enrolled at the UoC for the duration of his/her/their doctoral studies. (If 'other discipline', specify: _____.)

The doctoral regulations (*Promotionsordnung*) should be adhered to at all times. This document does not replace any agreement between the doctoral candidate and the MNF or the UoC.

2 Thesis subject and preliminary schedule

a. The working title of the thesis is:

b. Research project schedule

Start:

Planned end [month/year]:

Milestones are currently planned as follows:

Milestone (e.g., start/end of experiments, field campaigns, steps in model development, etc.)	Date/period

A comprehensive time schedule is due along with a detailed research plan within 6 months after the project start².

¹ Instructions on the TAC composition: <https://geosciences.uni-koeln.de/gsgs/about/rules-and-guidelines/structured-guidance>

² see <https://geosciences.uni-koeln.de/gsgs/about/rules-and-guidelines/reporting-and-tac-meetings>

3 Working conditions, funding and duration

a. The doctoral candidate

☐ is employed at/in [institute/working group] on a %
[level] position funded by , from [date] to [date].

☐ receives a grant/scholarship from [funding agency],
from [date] to [date].

☐

b. The research is carried out within the research group

c. The advisor ensures the doctoral candidate appropriate working conditions with the following facilities:

d. We agree to have a meeting to discuss funding options and strategies about one year before the current funding ends, which is around [date].

Any conditions connected to a grant or to contractual obligations with a funding agency are not affected by this agreement.

4 Duties of advisor, thesis advisory committee (TAC) and doctoral candidate

a. **Meetings.** The TAC meets for the first time at the latest 6 months after the project start; subsequent meetings are due every 9 months, i.e. after 15, 24, 33, etc. months (see Annex 2 for a time line). The aim of TAC meetings is described on the 'Structured Guidance' website¹. TAC meetings are convened by the candidate. In the first meeting, a chairperson is appointed. The chairperson moderates the meetings and makes sure that they are documented (see 4b).

b. **Reporting.** Generally, TAC meetings are documented using the candidate's personal TAC Status Report². It contains reporting sections for the candidate as well as the other TAC members, and has to be signed by all TAC members.

In preparation for the first TAC meeting, the doctoral candidate submits a detailed research plan, a time schedule, and the pre-completed TAC Status Report to all TAC members within 5.5 months after the project start.

In each TAC meeting, the TAC prescribes which documents the candidate will have to supply for the next TAC meeting, apart from the compulsory updated time schedule and the pre-completed TAC Status Report (e.g., progress report, meeting minutes). In the following meeting, the TAC confirms the receipt of the prescribed documents.

Details of how to submit the TAC Status Report and any other documents to the GSGS office are given on the website².

In preparation of subsequent TAC meetings, the doctoral candidate submits an updated time schedule, the pre-completed TAC Status Report, and any prescribed documentation to all TAC members at the latest two weeks before the TAC meeting.

About 43 months after the project start date, the GSGS will monitor if the fifth TAC meeting was planned to be the last TAC meeting before thesis submission. If so, GSGS monitors the submission; if not, GSGS will contact both candidate and advisor (and possibly other TAC member(s)) for consultation.

c. **The advisor** supports and advises the candidate in his/her/their independent research activities, especially by:

- introducing him/her/them in the research subject and the relevant scientific environment;
- providing references to scientific literature and research material, where appropriate;
- providing recommendations for the definition and formulation of the research theme;
- discussing and assessing hypotheses and methods;
- discussing results and their interpretation;
- facilitating his/her/their participation in scientific conferences as far as allowed by financial constraints;
- meeting him/her/them on a monthly basis, and
- supporting him/her/them in the planning and presentation (structure, language) of the doctoral thesis.

d. **A mentor** is an academic with a doctorate or PhD degree who joins the TAC alongside the advisor. At least one mentor is not part of the advisor's working group and thus provides an external view of the project and an independent opinion. If necessary, this independent mentor can moderate the communication between the doctoral candidate and the advisor.

e. The doctoral candidate shall enable and take advantage of the support provided by advisor and other TAC members through concentrated work on his/her/their project and by keeping the TAC informed of progress and potentially emerging problems as and when appropriate.

f. The following arrangements were made regarding presence at the workplace (optional):

g. All GSGS members are expected to attend and contribute to working group, institute and department meetings, and official GSGS events in an appropriate manner.

h. All doctoral candidates have to attend the full GSGS induction module. Moreover, they must present their research project at a GSGS Research Conference at least once, usually in the form of a poster presentation and preferably during the first project year.

i. To facilitate efficient administration of the GSGS, all parties agree to cooperate with the GSGS office by supplying information and documents on time. If candidates' reporting is much overdue, the GSGS coordinator cannot confirm their completion of the full compulsory programme when they hand in their application for admission to the doctoral examinations ('*Gesuch*'). This may have consequences for their GSGS membership.

5 Training

Any training organised by the GSGS is in principle open to all GSGS members. Any selective admission needed, e.g. due to a limited number of spaces or financial constraints, will be conducted transparently.

Active participation in the induction module, provided several times per year, is compulsory. All other training activities are on a voluntary basis.

6 Arrangements in case of conflict

Should factual or personal differences of opinion occur that would hamper a future trusting, constructive and purposeful cooperation, any of those involved in this agreement can, individually or jointly, seek the help of a member of the GSGS Steering Committee³. When necessary, they can refer cases for arbitration by an ombudsperson at the UoC or an independent mediator. All information provided will be treated confidentially.

7 Revision of this agreement

This agreement can be changed at any time by mutual agreement of all signatories. The GSGS Office needs to be informed of any changes made to this document.

8 Further arrangements

After acceptance of the doctoral thesis by the UoC, the doctoral candidate will be granted a certificate of the GSGS, listing all relevant activities.

By signing this agreement, all involved confirm that they recognise

- the current doctoral regulations of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of the UoC;
- the GSGS statutes (*Ordnung*);
- and the current rules of the University of Cologne on good scientific practice

as a part of this agreement and act in accordance with the regulations laid down therein.

Cologne,

Doctoral candidate ⁴

Advisor and first TAC member ⁴

Second TAC member (mentor) ⁴

Third TAC member (mentor) ⁴

N.B.: A digital version of this document (including annex 1) with all signatures (digitally signed or print, sign & scan) must be uploaded to the doctoral candidate's Graduate Programme Membership Record ('G-Record') in Docfile. He/she/they should give all signatories a copy within two weeks after the signing.

In addition, send an e-mail to announce the upload to <gradschool-geosci@uni-koeln.de>

³ Further options for support can be found through <https://mathnat.uni-koeln.de/en/support-in-case-of-problems>

⁴ With my signature, I declare that my personal data provided here may be kept on the GSGS database for communication, administrative and statistical purposes.

GSGS Supervision Agreement

Annex 1: Personal details

Doctoral candidate

First name, Surname: _____

Date of birth*: _____

Gender*: _____

Nationality*: _____

Degree(s) held:

Type of degree / discipline: _____ Date: _____

Issuing institution: _____ (name, location)

Type of degree / discipline: _____ Date: _____

Issuing institution: _____ (name, location)

Contact details

For regular communication:

Institution/Group: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Alternative contact details:*

Address: _____

Postcode & city/town _____

Telephone: _____ ; Mobile phone: _____

Advisor

Title: _____ First name, Last name: _____

Institution/Group: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Second TAC member

Title: _____ First name, Last name: _____

Institution/Group: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

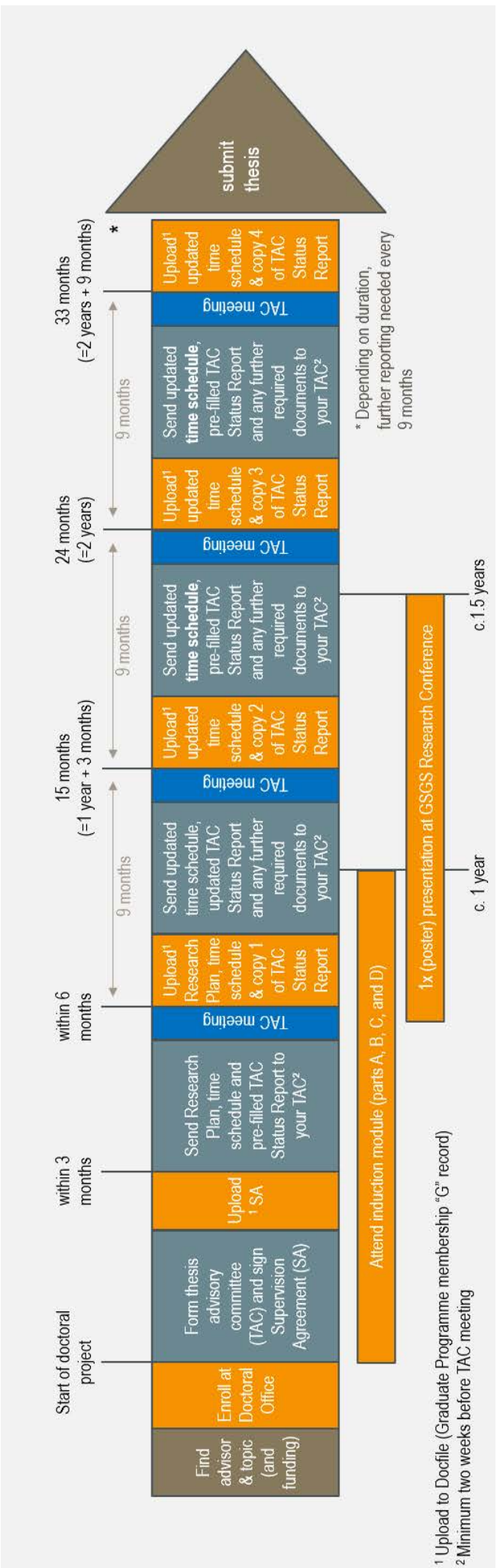
Third TAC member

Title: _____ First name, Last name: _____

Institution/Group: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

* not compulsory



¹ Upload to Docfile (Graduate Programme membership "G" record)

² Minimum two weeks before TAC meeting

Annex 2 Time line of a typical doctoral project