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Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) Guidelines for IRTG 1123 PhD students (PhD “Medical Research”, Munich Medical Research School, LMU)

What is TAC?

TAC stands for Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) and is mandatory for every student member of the Integrated Research Training Group 1123 (IRTG 1123). The purpose of the TAC is

- To supervise the scientific work of the student
- To set milestones and follow the course of the project (checkpoints)
- To advice the student in planning her/his career

Who can be the main supervisor?

LMU Medical Faculty Member (Professor, Privatdozent/Habilitand or Emmy-Noether awardee; see §13 Promotionsordnung of the MMRS) or a member of a different Faculty or Institute. He/she must be CRC 1123 member.

Who can be the other members?

The TAC is comprised of the main supervisor, a second reviewer and a third person, which are members of the CRC 1123. All areas of the research project should be appropriately covered. At least two members of the TAC must be members of the LMU's Medical Faculty (= Professor, Privatdozent/Habilitand or Emmy-Noether awardee). As an exception, non-SFB 1123 members can be additional TAC members.

Guidelines for the Target Agreement and TAC meetings:

1. Together with his/her TAC, the PhD candidate signs a target agreement, which not only reflects the supervision, but also gives information on the planned research project, milestones, curricular elements, etc. The target agreements is signed by all TAC members and the PhD candidate. It must be handed in by the end of the second semester the very latest, otherwise the PhD candidate will be exmatriculated from the program.
2. The **first TAC meeting**, which has to take place during the third Semester **at the latest**, will define the project and set the scientific goals (**milestones**) to be achieved on the basis of a written **research proposal** prepared by the student. Link to document: Target Agreement
3. **Follow-up meetings** of the thesis advisory committee have to be organized by the students and have to take place **at least once a year (1. TAC meeting latest at the end of the 3rd semester, 2. TAC meeting latest at the end of the 5th semester, a 3. TAC meeting is optional)**. During those follow-up meetings, the progress of the thesis work should be monitored and future goals be defined. A **report of these meetings**, written **by the student, commented by the supervisor** and approved by the other members of the TAC, should be sent to the IRTG coordinator's office within one week after the meeting. A template for the protocol is provided at the CRC 1123 website. Link to document: TAC Meeting Protocol
4. **TAC members should not be exchanged** and initially set **milestones should be followed** during the course of the PhD thesis. However, if necessary, the composition of the TAC and the set milestones can be altered (project-based or personal requirements; written documentation in the TAC protocol).
5. If a TAC member agrees to participate in a TAC, she/he also agrees **to follow the TAC guidelines**. Students or TAC members that do not adhere to the guidelines cannot participate in the Graduate Program or in other TACs, respectively.



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6. During the final year, or whenever the research project yields outstanding scientific results, the thesis project may also be scheduled as a formal presentation in the SFB1123 seminar series.

Detailed instructions for a TAC meeting:

Before the meeting:

The student arranges a convenient date and location for a TAC meeting with all members and informs the coordinator of the Graduate Program about the time.

The student defines a list of topics she/he wants to talk about. This list should be available for the TAC members at least three working days before the TAC meeting. Preparation of such a list is obligatory for all TAC meetings.

Usually not all achieved data can be presented during the progress report. Therefore, the PhD student brings along data that she/he would like to discuss (“labeled” blots, gels, pictures, graphs, protocols, etc.)

For the first meeting, the student sends a general project outline (research proposal) to all TAC members before the meeting. This should include a general introduction into the research topics, an overview about the techniques used and ideally a rough time schedule for the first year of the research. **The outline should be available for the TAC members at least three working days before the meeting.**

During the meeting:

All TAC members should attend.

After the PhD student’s presentation, the TAC members discuss all matters of the PhD project in a closed session. The supervising PI chairs the discussion according to the student’s “Topic List” to assure an efficient discussion and avoiding time-consuming discussions.

In general, the TAC session should focus on moving the PhD project in terms of problem solving, possible alternative strategies, time management, and probable output (publications).

At the end of the meeting, the PhD student as well as the supervising PI will have the opportunity to talk with the TAC members in the absence of the group leader or the student, respectively.

The results of the TAC meetings are summarized in a protocol written by the student, approved and commented by the supervisor. The protocol has to be signed by all attendees and sent to the coordinator’s office within one week after the TAC meeting.

After the meeting:

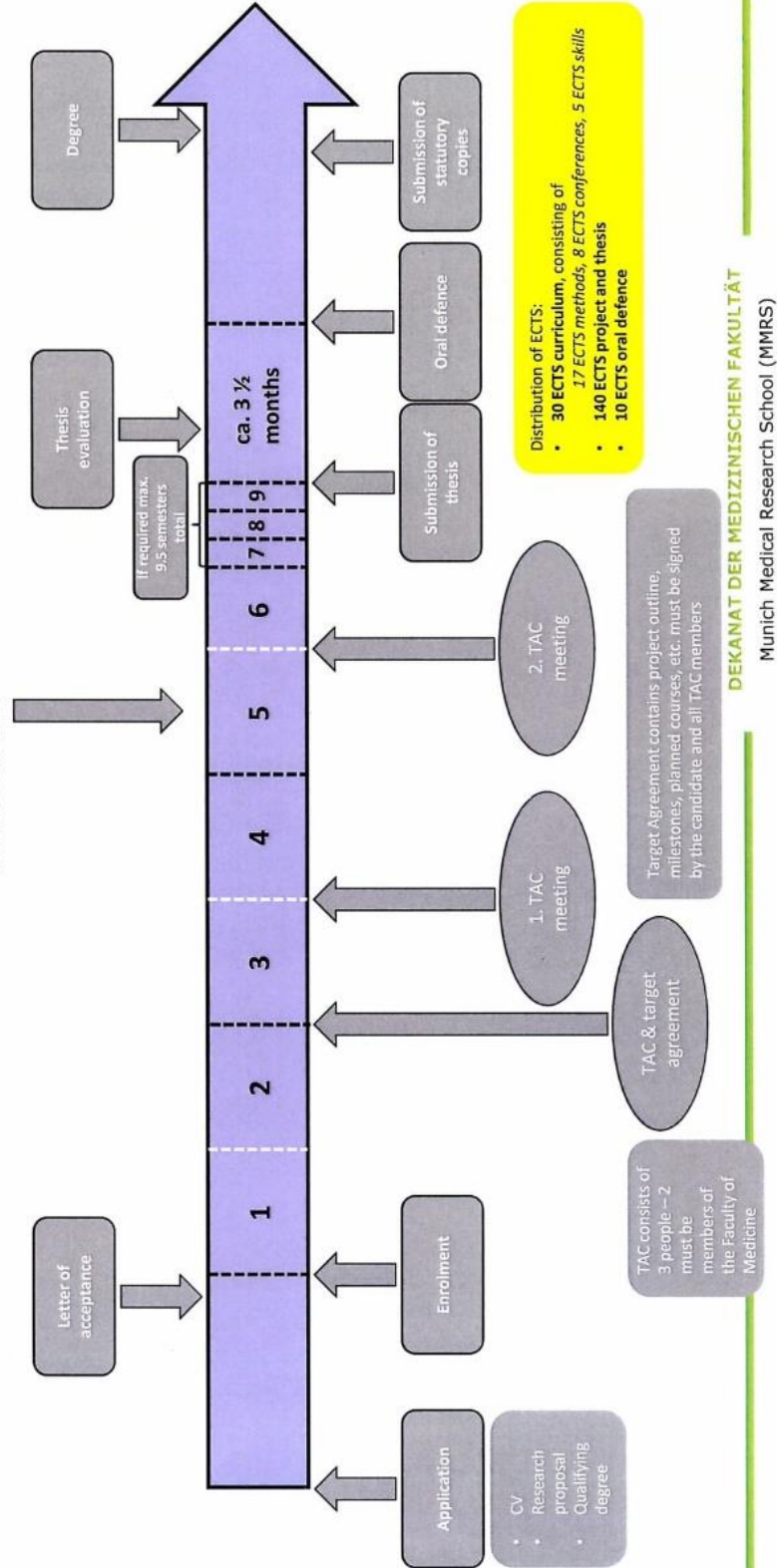
The Target Agreement and TAC meeting protocols must be send to the IRTG 1123 Coordinator for approval and uploaded to the MMRS Portal by the student him/herself.



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