



Graduate School
of Geosciences

Information meeting for advisors and TAC members

Monday, 23/10/2023, 13:00 – 14:00 CEST, online via Zoom

Prof Boris Braun, GSGS spokesperson

Dr Karin Boessenkool & Dr Hannah Hartung, GSGS coordinators

Today's meeting

13:00 Welcome and Introduction

13:05 Aspects of admission and immatriculation

New reporting procedures

TAC Status Report

GSGS membership

Plans

13:45 Questions and answers

feel free to type questions into the chat during the meeting

14:00 End of official meeting

14:00 – 14:30 Time for further questions



Today's meeting goals

(potential) advisors and (potential) TAC* members know about:

1. the different roles of doctoral office (*Promotionsbüro*), *Studierendensekretariat*, International Office and GSGS
2. that GSGS can help navigate the admission process
3. structured guidance within the GSGS
 - a) General design (TAC, Reporting, Meetings)
 - b) Reporting and the role of the TAC
 - c) new Tool: TAC Status Report

* *TAC = Thesis Advisory Committee*



Background (I)

- Since the introduction of the current Doctoral regulations (*Promotionsordnung*) by the Faculty (MNF) in March 2020, the department graduate schools (such as GSGS) play an official part in the doctoral procedures.
- The GSGS statutes, introduced in February, 2021 implement these regulations for the Geosciences.
- To put these regulations into action, the GSGS has its own forms and procedures.

Background (II)

As previously reported, we are re-focussing on GSGS's essential role in the quality assurance of structured guidance during doctoral research. This means:

- We help ensure that problems in our members' progress are identified as early as possible
- We want to reduce everyone's time spent on admin, especially if things are running smoothly

Who are we?



GSGS Steering Committee as from 12 May 2023

Subject representatives (professors)

Geography



Prof Dr Boris Braun
Spokesperson



Prof Dr Tony Reimann
(deputy)

Geophysics, Meteorology



Prof Dr Roel Neggers



Prof Dr Joachim Saur
(deputy)

Geology & Mineralogy, Crystallography



Prof Dr Bernd Wagner



Prof Dr Patrick Grunert
(deputy)

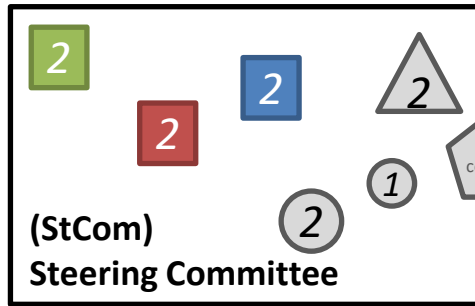
Academic staff representative



Dr Kerstin Ebell



Dr Steven Binnie
(deputy)



Dr Karin Boessenkool & Dr Hannah Hartung
(GSGS coordinators)



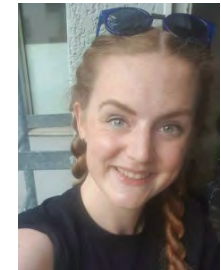
Stefan Schöttle
(acad. staff)



Camila Riffo Contreras
(doctoral student)



Mirijam Zickel
(deputy)



Linda Maßon
(deputy)

Doctoral Representatives

Who does what in the doctoral admin jungle?

- The **doctoral office** (*Promotionsbüro*): [registration and admission](#) of doctoral candidates, and administration of [doctoral examinations](#) (See [Doctoral Degree Regulations](#))
- **Student Application and Registration Office** (*Studierendensekretariat, StudSek*): enrolment (*Immatrikulation*) as a doctoral student for candidates with a German Master's degree
- **International Office**: enrolment (*Immatrikulation*) as a doctoral student for candidates with an foreign Master's degree
- **GSGS** administers Thesis Advisory Committees (TACs), Supervision Agreements, regular reporting, and attendance of the GSGS core programme in accordance with the [GSGS Statutes](#) (*Ordnung*)

Application for Admission as a doctoral candidate

(with doctoral office / *Promotionsbüro*)

Noteworthy:

1. Doctoral candidates need to apply for admission as a doctoral student ([Antrag auf Zulassung](#) - AaZ) and register in “Docfile” **as early as possible**
2. Especially with foreign and ,non-matching‘ Master’s studies, admission can take several weeks > keep this in mind for visa issues
3. Candidates’ grades count: no admission if Master’s degree was graded <2,5 (in German system equivalent)
4. Consider making application for admission a part of your selection process, when you hire research associates who are expected to pursue a doctorate
5. Interruptions of doctoral research (illness, parental leave) need to be registered with the doctoral office
6. Find more information on <https://mathnat.uni-koeln.de/en/doctoral-candidates/how-to-apply>



About enrolment for doctoral studies

(as opposed to being admitted as a doctoral candidate or registered as GSGS member)

- All doctoral candidates must be enrolled for doctoral studies for the duration of their doctoral research (KLIPS 2.0).
- Doctoral candidates are enrolled only after receiving Admission (or conditional admission) from the Doctoral Office.
- The enrolment for doctoral studies is generally limited to 12 semesters. To remain enrolled thereafter: candidate and advisor apply for an extension permit from the Doctoral Office and send to *Studierendensekretariat* or International Office.
- Information on application for refund of the contribution for the semester ticket and the NRW-Ticket: <https://www.asta.uni-koeln.de/?tab=angebote-tt-haertefallausschuss#angebote>

Who does what in the doctoral admin jungle?

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The **GSGS** supports the registration and admission process of doctoral candidates > **feel free to get in touch** with us **yourself** or **refer your candidates** to us as soon as their names are known.

We are working on an onboarding tool.

Structured guidance??!!

1. Forming a **thesis advisory committee** (TAC);
2. Signing a **supervision agreement**;
3. **Reporting** regularly to **TAC** and **GSGS**;
4. Regular **TAC meetings**

See new version 2.2 of our Supervision Agreement in the [GSGS downloads section](#)
[published 20/10/2023]

TAC composition

- The TAC consists of the advisor (*Betreuer:in*) and, if applicable the official advisor (*formale/r Betreuer:in*), at least one mentor and the doctoral candidate.
- At least one mentor must come from outside of the research group(s) of both the advisor and the official advisor to promote independence. Mentors may come from outside the University of Cologne.
- In their first meeting, the TAC appoint a TAC chairperson, who moderates the meetings and ensures the documentation of the TAC meetings.

Find rules for TAC composition and a glossary on <https://geosciences.uni-koeln.de/gsgs/about/rules-and-guidelines/structured-guidance>

All TAC members sign a **Supervision Agreement**

TAC meetings

1. The first TAC meeting is after 6 months
2. Thereafter, PhDs must meet with all of their TAC members at least once every 9 months and document it using the TAC Status Report. This is normally a joint meeting, but in some cases, separate meetings are more helpful.
3. In addition, you can have as many meetings as you like in different constellations.
4. Guests can be invited to attend TAC meetings.
5. Any participant can ask a GSGS Steering Committee member or the GSGS coordinator to attend a TAC meeting.



What is new?

- 1) More flexibility in reporting
- 2) TAC Status Report
- 3) Compulsory meeting without advisor
- 4) Fourth-year consultation

New reporting rules

What is compulsory?

Before the first TAC meeting, candidates submit **to their TAC:**

- Research Plan
- Time Schedule
- Pre-filled TAC Status Report

After the meeting, candidates upload these updated documents to ‘Docfile’, the online university-wide tool for doctoral admin, where GSGS can see them.

Before all further TAC meetings, candidates submit **to their TAC:**

- updated Time Schedule
- updated TAC Status Report
- Any further documentation prescribed by you as TAC > see section 2.5 TAC Status Report

After the meeting, candidates upload only the updated Time Schedule and TAC Status Report to ‘Docfile’. You confirm the receipt of all other documents > see section 2.1 TAC Status Report

New reporting rules

This is a screenshot from the 'TAC Status Report'

EXAMPLE

2.5 DOCUMENTS FOR NEXT MEETING (COMPULSORY)
*Write 'none' for no entry in compulsory fields.
If you need more space, use 3.3 Other comments and refer to section 2.5*

Documents required by TAC for the next meeting

TAC meeting date	Minutes of the present meeting	Update time schedule (compulsory)	Progress Report	<u>Draft</u> of an academic paper (not submitted)	Any other documents (specify)
04/07/2022	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fieldwork schedule

New reporting rules

EXAMPLE

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New reporting rules

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03/04/2023	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> oral <input type="checkbox"/> written	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
01/01/2024	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral <input type="checkbox"/> written	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

During the **next meeting**, you confirm if you received the documents you required after the previous meeting.

2. ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS AND PROGRESS OF THE DOCTORAL RESEARCH

2.1 FEEDBACK FROM TAC (COMPULSORY)

Write 'none' for no entry in compulsory fields.

If you need more space, use 3.3 Other comments and refer to section 2.1

TAC meeting date

Status, progress and next steps of the doctoral research

(major direction of the study; specific research questions; time schedule; mile stones reached; expected 'deliverables'; adequate knowledge of literature and methods; and mitigation strategy in cases of considerable delay/setbacks)

04/07/2022

Rate the research plan and the proposed time schedule, and give feedback accordingly

- Very good
- Needs some adjustments
- Needs major changes
- [Redacted]

[Redacted]

03/04/2023

Documents required after last meeting (see 2.5) received:

yes

no

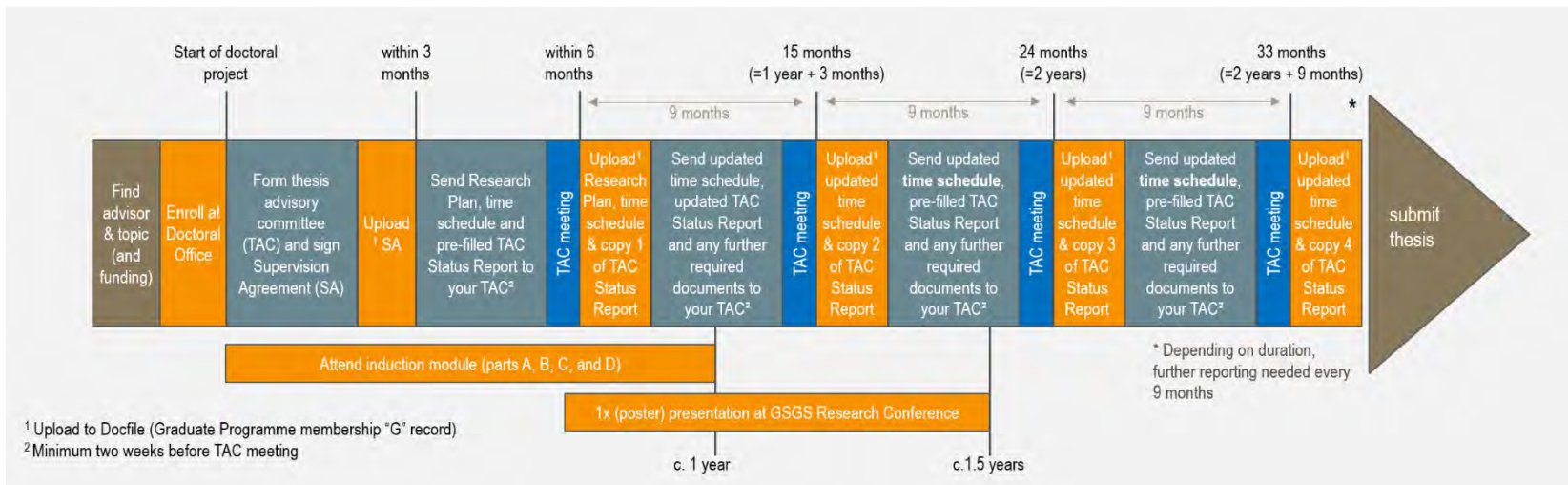
Rate progress and the proposed time schedule, and give feedback accordingly

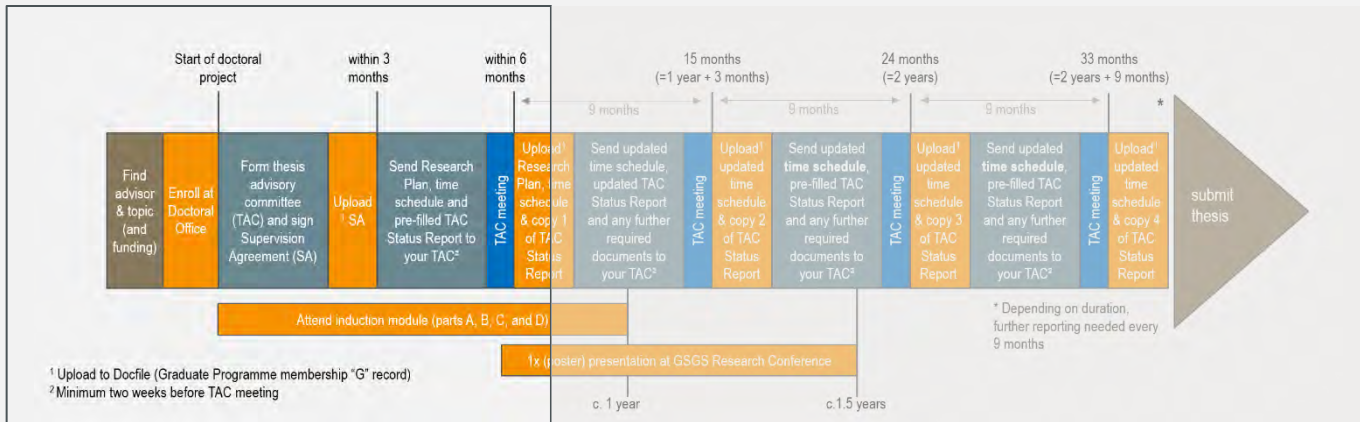
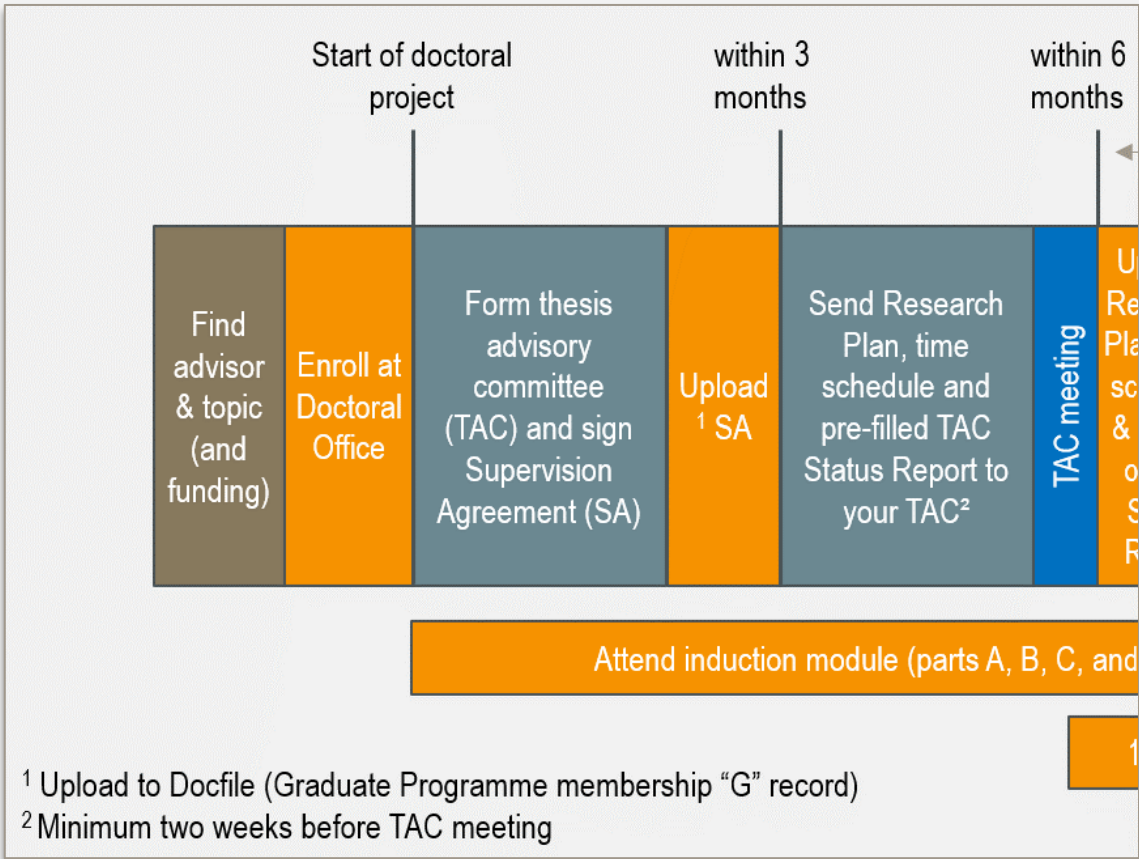
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[Redacted]

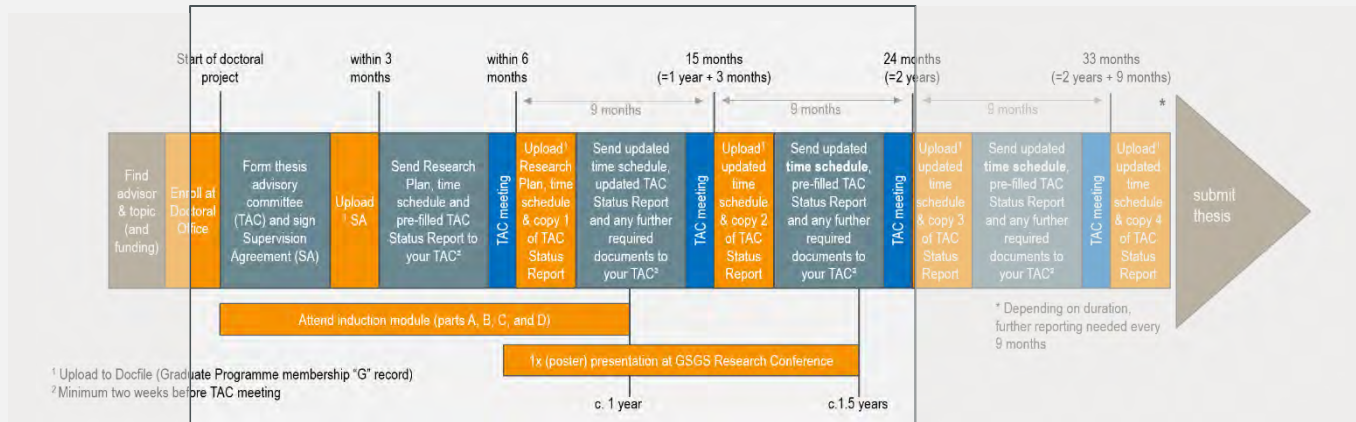
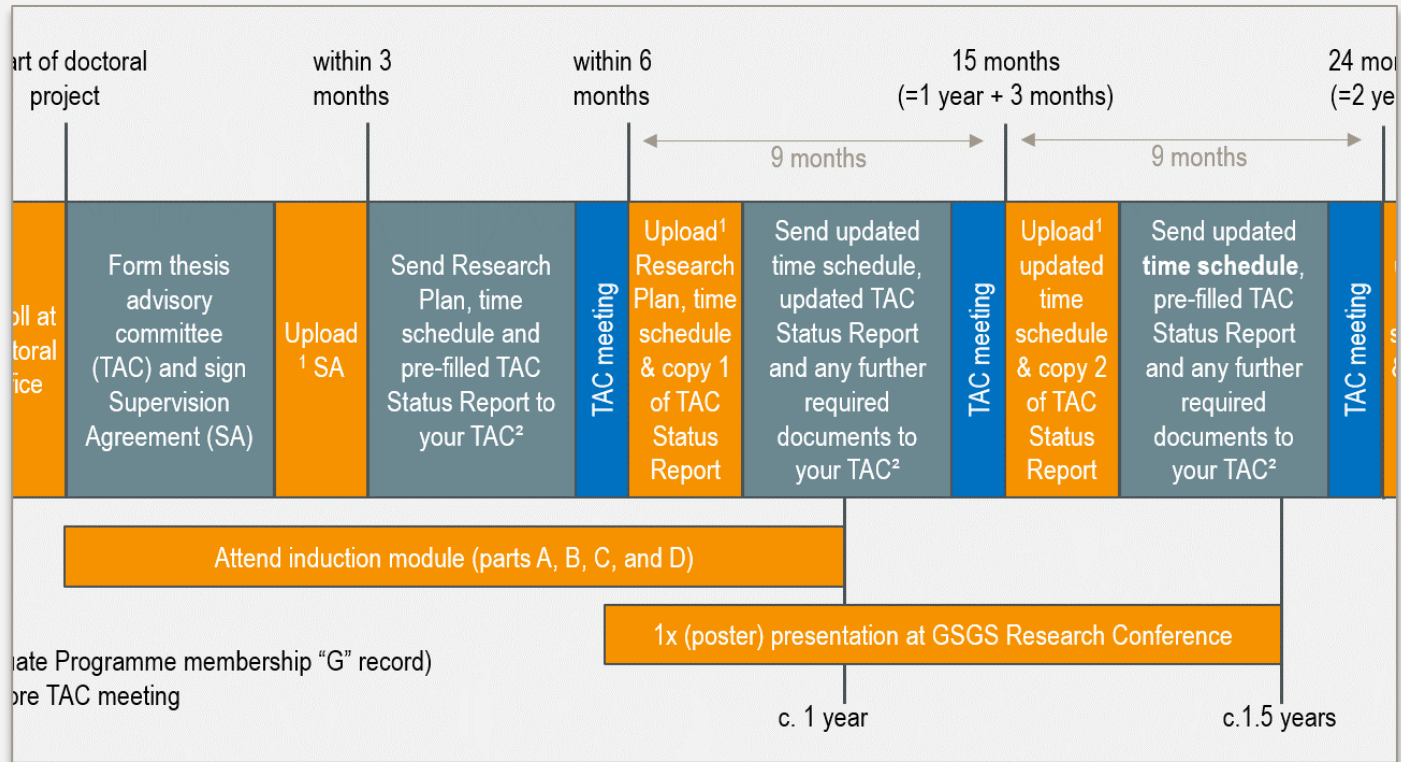
Reporting and meetings on a timeline

Reporting regularly to TAC and GSGS;
Regular TAC meetings

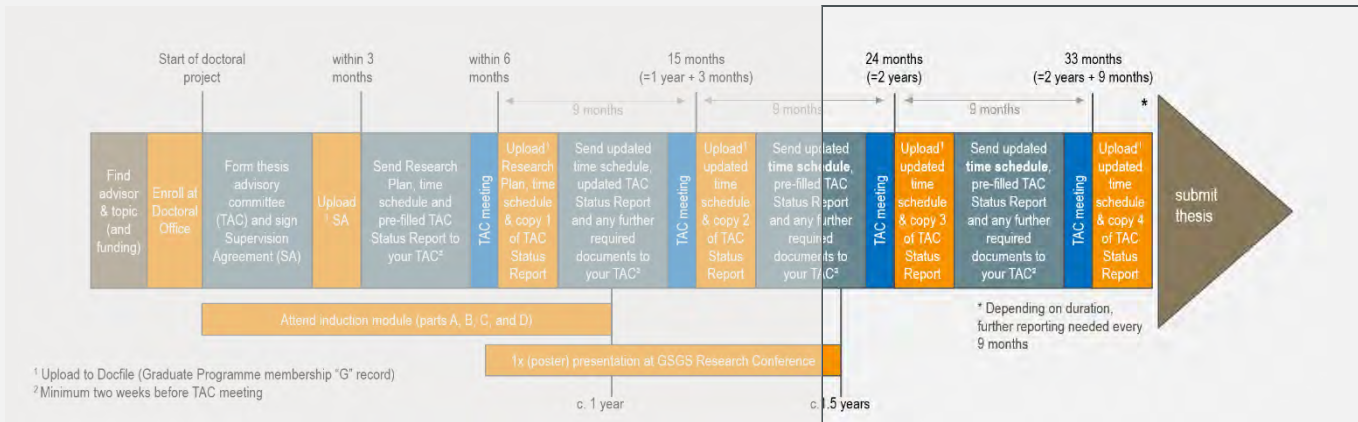
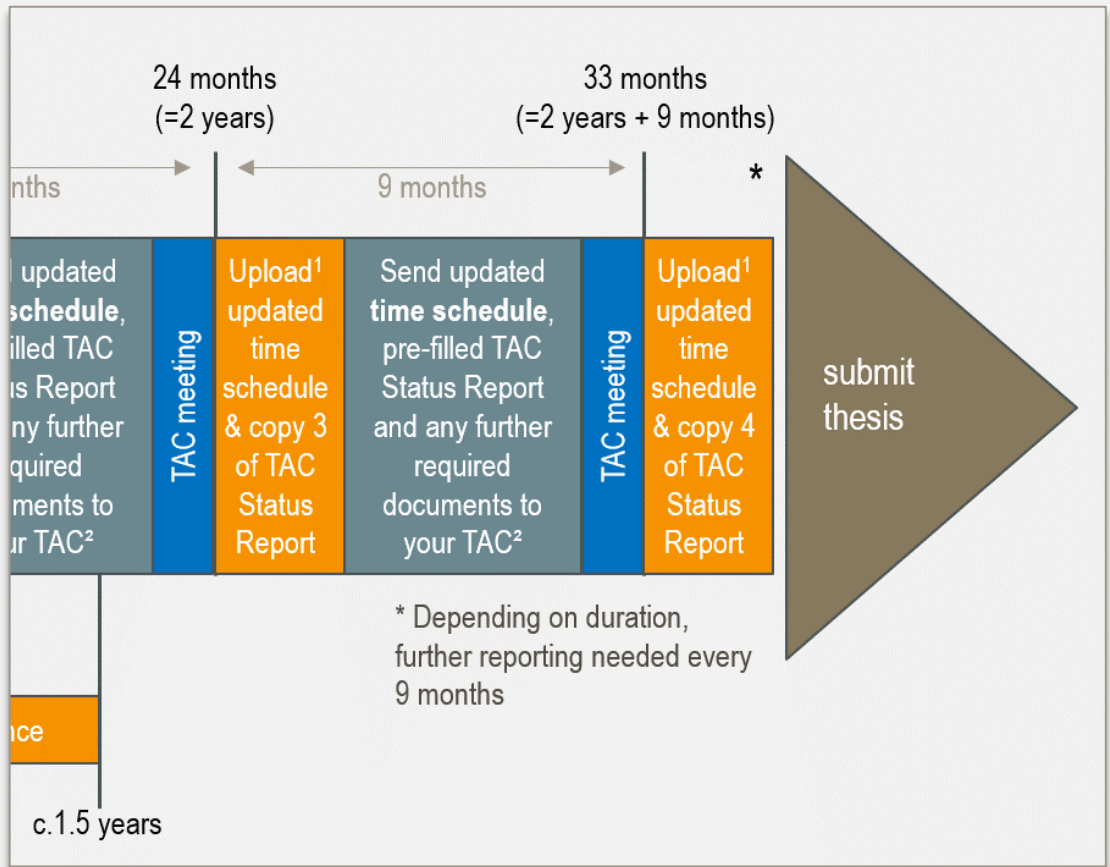




At the discretion of the TAC, the interval can be 9 +/-2 months



¹ Upload to Docfile (Graduate Programme membership "G" record)
² Minimum two weeks before TAC meeting



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- 2) TAC Status Report (replacing multiple Feedback Forms)
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TAC Status Report

Let's have a look at [an example...](#)

TAC Status Report - features

A cumulative record of all TAC meetings in **one “living” PDF document**

Signed **copies** give “snapshots” of status at fixed points in time –
!!!! please never sign the “living” document!!!!

If you cannot all sign the same copy, feel free to sign one each (the candidate can upload multiple copies – we need the signatures of all TAC members in the end.)

Digital signatures or “print, sign and scan” as you see fit.

Better overview when meetings are due: **target dates are pre-filled**

1.3 TARGET AND ACTUAL TAC MEETING DATES (COMPULSORY)				
<i>Write 'none' for no entry in compulsory fields.</i>				
Which is the current TAC meeting? (Doctoral candidate to select during preparation)		Target meeting date	Actual meeting date (TAC to fill out in meeting)	Is this (likely) the final TAC meeting before thesis submission?
First	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	01/07/2023		
Second	<input type="checkbox"/>	01/04/2024		
Third	<input type="checkbox"/>	01/01/2025		
Fourth	<input type="checkbox"/>	01/10/2025		
Fifth	<input type="checkbox"/>	01/07/2026		
Sixth	<input type="checkbox"/>	01/04/2027		

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Better overview when meetings are due: **target dates are pre-filled**

Direct comparison of progress and feedback during different stages of a doctoral project

The form shows which parts the doctoral candidate fills out before the meeting, or the TAC in the meeting.

A check button at the end to see if all compulsory fields were completed.

Make sure to use *Adobe Acrobat Pro* or *Acrobat Reader DC* to complete (available for all OS)

Available to all UoC staff through RRZK!!!

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Has no dissertation been submitted after 48 months?

- GSGS initiates separate consultations with candidate and advisor; further TAC members can be consulted.
- The consultations are conducted by GSGS Steering Committee members

Doctoral candidates and any TAC members can request a consultation with a Steering Committee member or GSGS coordinator at any time.

Today's meeting

13:00 Welcome and Introduction

13:05 Aspects of admission and immatriculation

New reporting procedures

TAC Status Report

GSGS membership

Plans

13:45 Questions and answers

feel free to type questions into the chat during the meeting

14:00 End of official meeting

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GSGS membership for advisors and (potential) TAC members

Automatic membership for everyone with '*Promotionsrecht*' (the right to supervise doctoral candidates) in one or more of the doctoral disciplines (*Promotionsfächer*) in our Department. Please contact us if we fail to notice new professors or Habilitations.

Membership is open to all academic staff members in the department with a doctorate or PhD degree

➤ <https://geosciences.uni-koeln.de/gsgs/membership/application-form>

See <https://geosciences.uni-koeln.de/gsgs/membership>

Plans

- “Expectations” questionnaire
- Onboarding tool

Today's meeting goals

(potential) advisors and (potential) TAC members know about:

1. the different roles of doctoral office (*Promotionsbüro*), *Studierendensekretariat*, International Office and GSGS
2. that GSGS can help navigate the admission process
3. structured guidance within the GSGS
 - a) General design (TAC, Reporting, Meetings)
 - b) Reporting and the role of the TAC
 - c) new Tool: TAC Status Report



GSGS contact and further information for advisors and TAC members

Geography, Geophysics, and Meteorology

Karin Boessenkool: Phone +49 (0)221 - 470 5925 (except on Wednesdays), preferred time window 13:00-14:00 h | English / German, gradschool-geosci@uni-koeln.de or kboessen@uni-koeln.de

Crystallography and Geology & Mineralogy

Hannah Hartung: Phone +49 (0)221 - 470 6101 (best Monday, Tuesday & Thursday), preferred time window 10:00-11:00 h | English / German, gradschool-geosci@uni-koeln.de or h.hartung@uni-koeln.de

Mailing lists: gsgs-profs@uni-koeln.de (for advisors and Cologne-based (potential) TAC members),
OR gsgs-newsletter@uni-koeln.de (newsletter an most important announcements only),
OR gsgs-tac@uni-koeln.de (for external TAC members, c. 5x per year)

Website: www.geosciences.uni-koeln.de/gsgs

FAQ: <https://geosciences.uni-koeln.de/gsgs/about/faqs>

Wiki pages: <https://wiki.uni-koeln.de/!gsgs>

GSGS student assistant Eileen Becker: gsgs-admin@uni-koeln.de (if you lost your wiki login credentials)

Thank you for attending!!

Questions?

FAQ: <https://geosciences.uni-koeln.de/gsgs/about/faqs>

