



Checklist of suggested topics to address during the TAC

Please note that the timings in this checklist are ideal. Of course, there may be circumstances that lead to the suggested timeline being deviated from. However, please try to stick to the timeline as closely as possible.

- 1st TAC meeting + draft project proposal.** This should be completed *within the first six months* of the doctoral project. This avoids doctoral students delaying their first TAC because their project proposal is incomplete.
- 2nd TAC + project proposal.** Ideally, this should be completed within six months of the first TAC meeting (or one year after the start of the project). The project proposal should not be considered set in stone, so do not hesitate to bring an improved draft of your project to the second TAC meeting. It is more important to hold the second TAC meeting *within the first 12 months* after the start of the project to gain new insights into the 'actual project' than to be overly concerned about the written proposal at this stage. Your proposal will likely continue to evolve until you complete your degree.
- 3rd TAC meeting.** No later than *one year after the second TAC meeting*. From this point onwards, each doctoral student should attend at least one TAC meeting per year of their project. Has the revised research plan been implemented successfully so far, and is the doctoral student on track? If not, what steps are necessary to realign the project?
- 4th and following TAC meetings.** Finishing up! What needs to be achieved to complete the thesis project? Is it realistic to reach these goals within the remaining time for the project until the thesis is submitted? If not, which steps could be improved?
- Unexpected new developments:** Have there been any unexpected new developments or complications that affect the project's impact/risk ratio or outcome? Do we need to redefine the milestones or focus on Plan B?
- Doctoral student training:** Does the doctoral student have the necessary training, background and knowledge to handle the project, or would they benefit from specific advanced training? Would additional training help the student to develop as a scientist?
- Publication strategy:** Please consider possible publication strategies. What might a potential story entail? Which journal would be most appropriate for the anticipated publication? If publication has been deemed unlikely to succeed thus far, consider the option of writing a monograph instead.
- Conference attendances:** Has the doctoral student participated in any scientific meetings or conferences? If not, please find out what their plans are in this regard. Which conferences would be suitable for them to attend?
- IMPRS curriculum:** What progress has the doctoral student made in relation to the other requirements of the IMPRS curriculum?
- Career plans:** The TAC is encouraged to mentor the doctoral student regarding possible career decisions based on their aptitudes and skills portfolio.
- Conflict prevention:** If either the doctoral student or their direct supervisor feels that a moderator should be present at the TAC meeting(s), this can be arranged by the IMPRS coordinator.
- Funding.** Please be transparent about your funding options. If funding is only available for three years, aim to finish within this timeframe or help secure additional funding.