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| Entry into effect:       | 1 November 2010<br><i>(Applies to students who enter the Master's degree programme in Autumn Semester 2011 or Spring Semester 2012)</i> |
| Version:                 | 1 November 2011   |
| For further information: | Admissions Office   |

[This English translation is for information purposes only. The German version is the legally binding document.]

## DIRECTIVE

### Admission to Master's degree programmes

*The Rector,*

Pursuant to Art. 9, Para. 2 and 4 of the ETH Zurich Organisational Ordinance (*Organisationsverordnung ETH Zürich, RSETHZ 201.021*) of 16 December 2003 and with regard to Art. 30 of the General Rules on Performance Assessments at ETH Zurich (*Allgemeine Verordnung über Leistungskontrollen [AVL ETHZ], SR 414.135.1*) of 10 September 2002, *decrees the following:*

#### Overview

1. General regulations
  2. Specific prerequisites for admission
  3. Particular stipulations for candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from certain universities
  4. Particular stipulations for candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences
  5. Restrictions on admission due to lack of capacity
  6. Admission with additional requirements
  7. Particular stipulations for performance assessments in the context of additional requirements
  8. Admissions procedure
  9. Entry into effect
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## 1. General regulations

### Art. 1 Objective

This directive determines:

- a. the policies and framework according to which the departments must define the specific prerequisites for admission to their Master's degree programmes;
- b. the particular stipulations for admission with additional requirements and for performance assessments in the context of additional requirements;
- c. the administrative admissions procedure.

### Art. 2 Programme regulations

The prerequisites for admission are set out in the Appendix to the Programme Regulations of the corresponding Master's degree programme. They require the approval of the Rector.

## 2. Specific prerequisites for admission

### Art. 3 Academic prerequisites

<sup>1</sup> Every department defines a discipline requirements profile for each of the Master's degree programmes for which it is responsible. This profile comprises the knowledge and competences required to complete the Master's degree programme in the respective discipline.

<sup>2</sup> Here the department orients itself according to the content, scope and quality of the corresponding ETH Zurich Bachelor's degree programme (equivalency principle).

<sup>3</sup> The discipline requirements profile is structured as follows:

- a. *fundamental knowledge and competences* essential for completion of the Master's degree programme: typically a basis in mathematics and the natural or engineering sciences
- b. *subject-specific knowledge and competences*: core elements of the selected discipline
- c. *supplementary knowledge*: any further knowledge and competences which are not absolutely necessary to complete the respective Master's degree programme but are expected of all holders of an ETH Zurich Master's degree

### Art. 4 Language prerequisites

<sup>1</sup> The languages of instruction at the Master's degree level are English, German, or a combination of English and German. The required language level is measured according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (EFR)<sup>1</sup> scale. Every year the Rectorate publishes a list of the language certificates accepted.

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<sup>1</sup> The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, p. 23f.  
[www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf)

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<sup>2</sup> Candidates must possess the language skills necessary for the chosen Master's degree programme, and supply the corresponding proof. In detail:

- a. A level of at least C1 in the language of instruction indicated is required.
- b. Holders of a Bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences who apply for admission to a Master's degree programme must, according to the pertaining additional requirements, also supply proof of sufficient knowledge of German (also level C1), if they have not already done so in the context of Subpara. a.

<sup>3</sup> The language certification required must be submitted by the time of entry to the Master's degree programme at the latest. This also applies to candidates with a degree from a Swiss university or university of applied sciences.

<sup>4</sup> No language certification is required:

- a. from candidates who hold the Swiss *Matura* (applies to both German and English);
- b. from candidates who hold a Bachelor's degree from ETH Zurich and progress to a consecutive Master's degree programme without application (vgl. Art. 20, Para. 3, Subpara. a);
- c. from candidates whose declared mother tongue is the language in question;
- d. for the language in which the Bachelor's degree programme was mainly completed;
- e. for the language in which the last three years of higher secondary school / *Gymnasium* were completed.

#### **Art. 5** Performance prerequisites

<sup>1</sup> Departments may require a minimum level of academic performance in the preceding degree programme for admission to

- a. specialised Master's degree programmes;
- b. consecutive Master's degree programmes, if the candidate has a background in a different discipline.

<sup>2</sup> These requirements apply equally to all candidates, including those holding a degree from ETH Zurich.

#### **Art. 6** Further admissions prerequisite for candidates from countries which are not signatories to the Bologna Declaration

Candidates from countries which have not signed the Bologna Declaration must also submit the results of a GRE examination. This provides a further criterion for determining a candidate's suitability for the desired degree programme.

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**Art. 7** Further prerequisites for admission to specialised Master's degree programmes

<sup>1</sup> Departments may impose further stipulations regarding admission to specialised Master's degree programmes, for example in connection with the availability of places on the programme or the consent of a tutor to supervise the respective student.

<sup>2</sup> These requirements apply equally to all candidates, including those holding a degree from ETH Zurich.

**3. Particular stipulations for candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from certain universities**

**Art. 8** Swiss universities

<sup>1</sup> Candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from a Swiss university (not including ETH Zurich and EPF Lausanne) are admitted to consecutive Master's degree programmes in the corresponding discipline without subject-specific conditions. Admission may, however, be subject to additional requirements. Exceptions are set out in Art. 12.

<sup>2</sup> The standard for determining a corresponding discipline is the Conference of Swiss University Rectors (CRUS) 'Regulations determining disciplines and the classification of Bachelor's degree programmes' (*Regelung der CRUS zur Festlegung der Studienrichtungen sowie für die Zuordnung der Bachelor-Studiengänge*) of 11 November 2005.

**Art. 9** EPF Lausanne

Candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from EPF Lausanne are admitted to the consecutive Master's degree programme in the corresponding discipline at ETH Zurich without additional requirements.

**Art. 10** Partner universities

<sup>1</sup> Departments may identify which Bachelor's degrees from other universities guarantee admission to a Master's degree programme, with or without additional requirements. Exceptions are set out in Art. 12.

<sup>2</sup> The admissions prerequisites for candidates from partner universities, in particular IDEA-League universities, are agreed in consultation with these partners.

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#### **4. Particular stipulations for candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences**

##### **Art. 11**

<sup>1</sup> The admission of candidates with a Bachelor's degree from a Swiss university of applied sciences is governed by the agreement of the Conference of Swiss University Rectors (CRUS), the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (KFH) and the Swiss Conference of Rectors of Universities of Teacher Education (COHEP) of 5 November 2007 concerning mobility between the different types of university. The concordance list attached to this agreement identifies which Bachelor's degrees from universities of applied sciences guarantee admission, with additional requirements, to an ETH Zurich Master's degree programme in the corresponding discipline. The stipulations set out in Para. 3 and Art. 12 also apply in every case.

<sup>2</sup> Graduates of universities of applied sciences whose degree programme is not found on the concordance list have no guarantee of admission. They may be admitted, however, if the additional requirements necessary to satisfy academic prerequisites lie within the framework set out in Art. 14, and if the prerequisites given in Para. 3 are satisfied.

<sup>3</sup> Admission to a Master's degree programme for holders of a Bachelor's degree from a Swiss university of applied sciences is in all cases only possible if the overall grade in the Bachelor's degree programme was at least a 5 (Swiss grading system using grades 1 to 6: 6 is the best, 4 is sufficient and 1 is the worst). The overall grade is always calculated by ETH Zurich; the method employed is set out in the appendix.

<sup>4</sup> Bachelor's degrees from German or Austrian universities of applied sciences are regarded as equivalent to those of Swiss universities of applied sciences. Admission to a Master's degree programme is in all cases only possible if the final degree result was 'very good'.

<sup>5</sup> A Diploma from a Swiss university of applied sciences is regarded as equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in the same discipline.

#### **5. Restrictions on admission due to lack of capacity**

##### **Art. 12**

<sup>1</sup> Master's degree programmes in which the number of students threatens to exceed the number of available places may limit the number of admissions of candidates holding a Bachelor's degree not acquired from ETH Zurich or EPF Lausanne.

<sup>2</sup> The Rector determines the number of possible admissions in an annual agreement with the responsible department. This number requires the consent of the Executive Board.

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<sup>3</sup> If the number of applications exceeds the number of possible admissions, the respective admissions committee will make a selection according to the following criteria:

- a. equivalence of the Bachelor's degree, assessed according to the respective discipline requirements profile (vgl. Art. 3)
- b. the level of mastery of the knowledge and competences acquired in the Bachelor's degree programme

## 6. Admission with additional requirements

### Art. 13 General regulations

<sup>1</sup> If the academic prerequisites have not been completely satisfied admission may proceed subject to the acquisition of missing knowledge and competences (additional requirements).

<sup>2</sup> Additional requirements are defined by subject matter, but are linked in content, cognisance and performance assessments to a course unit in the Course Catalogue.

<sup>3</sup> Course units may be published in the Course Catalogue which are specifically intended for students who require the respective subject matter in the context of additional requirements.

<sup>4</sup> It is up to the candidate to master the subject matter either through self-study or by attending courses. However, the respective performance assessment is subject to the stipulations pertaining to the designated course unit.

<sup>5</sup> Candidates who attend a course unit in the context of additional requirements should not be required to deliver a Course Attendance Confirmation (*Testat*).

<sup>6</sup> Departments may refuse permission to enter the performance assessments of certain course units of the Master's degree programme to candidates who have not yet fulfilled their additional requirements.

### Art. 14 Extent of additional requirements

<sup>1</sup> Admission to the Master's degree programme is not possible if there are too many gaps in a candidate's academic background, particularly in the area of fundamental knowledge and competences. If the scope of additional requirements to be fulfilled, expressed in credits, exceeds an upper limit, admission will be refused. These upper limits are:

- a. for candidates holding a university Bachelor's degree:
  - 1) consecutive Master's degree programmes: 30 credits
  - 2) specialised Master's degree programmes: the number of credits determined by the respective department, but at the most 30 credits
  - 3) additionally: credits in the area of fundamental knowledge and competences (discipline requirements profile; vgl. Art. 3, Para. 3, Subpara. a): the number of credits determined by the respective department
- b. for candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences: 60 credits

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<sup>2</sup> The differing educational background of candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences is taken into account in that admission is always subject to additional requirements comprising 40 – 60 credits.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Para. 2 also applies to candidates holding a Master's degree from a university of applied sciences if the preceding Bachelor's degree was not acquired at a university.

## **7. Particular stipulations for performance assessments in the context of additional requirements**

**Art. 15** Reference: AVL ETHZ

This paragraph contains additional stipulations based on Art. 30 of the General Rules on Performance Assessments at ETH Zurich (AVL ETHZ).<sup>3</sup>

**Art. 16** Performance assessments in the context of additional requirements

<sup>1</sup> Additional requirements are regarded as fulfilled if the candidate passes the corresponding performance assessments by the set deadlines and according to all other stipulations of Art. 17 or 18.

<sup>2</sup> If the candidate fails said performance assessments or does not respect the respective deadlines the Master's degree programme in question will be regarded as failed and the candidate will be excluded from it.

<sup>3</sup> If a request is well-grounded the Rector may in exceptional cases extend the deadlines according to Art. 17 or 18.

**Art. 17** Rules for candidates holding a university Bachelor's degree

Candidates holding a university Bachelor's degree:

- a. A pass grade is necessary in each individual course unit designated as an additional requirement.
- b. The performance assessments pertaining to all course units attended in the context of additional requirements must be undertaken within two semesters of the start of the programme.
- c. Any repetition of failed performance assessments must take place within three semesters of the start of the programme.

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<sup>2</sup> See also the agreement of CRUS, KFH and COHEP of 5 November 2007 concerning mobility between the different types of university.

<sup>3</sup> SR 414.135.1, RSETHZ 322.021

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**Art. 18** Rules for candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences

Candidates holding a Bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences:

- a. Fulfillment of additional requirements is not subject to pass grades in each required course unit. The following possibilities apply:
  - 1) the combining of performance assessments in examination blocks
  - 2) the establishment of groups of course units, where pass grades are required not in every course unit in each group but only in a certain number of course units
- b. The performance assessments pertaining to all course units attended in the context of additional requirements must be undertaken within two semesters of the start of the programme.
- c. Repetition of failed performance assessments or examination blocks must be undertaken within four semesters of the start of the programme.
- d. If groups of course units (see a.2) are indicated, any credits acquired through surplus subjects cannot be counted towards the Master's degree.

**Art. 19** Academic record

Course units completed in the context of additional requirements are listed in the academic record on a separate page (details: title(s) of course unit(s), grade(s), number of credits). Both passed and failed courses are listed (and always the result of the latest attempt).

## **8. Admissions procedure**

**Art. 20** General regulations

<sup>1</sup> The ETH Rectorate determines the admissions procedures.

<sup>2</sup> Regulations specific to degree programmes are determined by agreement between the Rectorate and the responsible department / degree programme.

<sup>3</sup> The appendix to the respective Master's degree Programme Regulations stipulates

- a. those persons who may enrol directly in a consecutive Master's degree programme without registration or application procedures (impossible in the context of specialised Master's degree programmes);
- b. those persons who must apply to the Rectorate for admission to a Master's degree programme;
- c. further degree-programme-specific rules which must be anchored in the respective Programme Regulations concerning admissions procedures.

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**Art. 21** Direct admission to and enrolment in a consecutive Master's degree programme

<sup>1</sup> Bachelor's degree students who are already matriculated at ETH Zurich and who are admitted to a consecutive Master's degree programme without registration or application procedures should enrol in the Master's degree programme directly via 'myStudies'.

<sup>2</sup> The appendix to the Programme Regulations of the respective Master's degree programme sets out the conditions according to which students may enter the Master's degree programme before the Bachelor's degree is issued.

<sup>3</sup> Admission is provisional until the Bachelor's degree is issued. It will be revoked if the Bachelor's degree is not or cannot be issued.

**Art. 22** Application

<sup>1</sup> All candidates not entitled to enrol directly in the desired Master's degree programme via 'myStudies' must submit an online application for admission to the respective programme.

<sup>2</sup> The requirements for application, in particular the documents to be submitted and the application dates and deadlines, are published on the website of the ETH Zurich Admissions Office.

<sup>3</sup> Only one application per Master's degree programme may be submitted for entry in a particular semester.

<sup>4</sup> Application is possible even if the required Bachelor's degree has not yet been issued.

<sup>5</sup> In agreement with the departments the Rectorate stipulates

- a. which admissions documents must be submitted by all candidates;
- b. which admissions documents are specific to the degree programme.

**Art 23** Assessment of applications and admissions decision

<sup>1</sup> The Rectorate formally assesses all applications and registrations.

<sup>2</sup> Each department or degree programme appoints an admissions committee which comprises at least three persons, at least one of whom is an appointed professor.

<sup>3</sup> The admissions committee assesses how far candidates' backgrounds correspond to the respective discipline requirements profile. It sets any additional requirements and formulates the requests for admission/rejection to be submitted to the Rector via the Director of Studies.

<sup>4</sup> The Rector makes the final decision regarding admission without additional requirements, admission with additional requirements, or rejection.

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**Art. 24** Communication of the admissions decision

<sup>1</sup> Candidates are informed by email and in writing of the admissions decision. The written document also contains information pertaining to any additional requirements (vgl. Art. 13).

<sup>2</sup> The respective department is responsible for answering candidates' questions regarding the academic evaluation of the application. The department appoints a person or office for this purpose and informs the Rectorate accordingly in advance.

<sup>3</sup> At the request of the candidate the Rectorate will issue the admissions decision in the form of an appealable decree. The Rectorate bases the decision on the respective department's academic evaluation (vgl. Art. 23, Para. 3).

<sup>4</sup> In the context of additional requirements, any requests for reconsideration which are submitted more than 30 days into the entry semester will no longer be considered.

**Art. 25** Entering the Master's degree programme

<sup>1</sup> Already-matriculated students of an ETH Zurich Bachelor's degree programme who have been granted admission may enrol in a Master's degree programme as soon as only that number of credits are pending which would enable enrolment in the consecutive Master's degree programme in the original discipline (vgl. Art. 21, Para. 2).

<sup>2</sup> Admission is provisional until the Bachelor's degree is issued. It will be revoked if the Bachelor's degree is not or cannot be issued.

<sup>3</sup> All other candidates granted admission may enter the Master's degree programme when they have completed the preceding (Bachelor's) degree programme.

<sup>4</sup> Postponement of the entry date of studies is not possible. Anyone unable to enter the Master's degree programme on the date designated in the admissions decision must re-apply.

**9. Entry into effect****Art. 26**

<sup>1</sup> <sup>(4)</sup> This directive enters into effect on 1 November 2010. It applies to students who commence a Master's degree programme in Autumn Semester 2011 or Spring Semester 2012.

<sup>2</sup> For students who entered a Master's degree programme before Autumn Semester 2011 the previous stipulations apply.

The Rector: Prof. Dr. Heidi Wunderli-Allenspach

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<sup>4</sup> Version according to the ruling of the Rector, in effect since 01.11.2011

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## Appendix

Calculation of the overall grade of a Bachelor's degree from a Swiss university of applied sciences for the purpose of admission to a Master's degree programme at ETH Zurich (Reference: Art. 11, Para. 3 of this directive)

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1. The overall grade is computed as the unweighted arithmetical average of all the individual grades listed in the transcript of records from the university of applied sciences. This arithmetical average is rounded to two decimal points.
2. If study performance at the university of applied sciences was evaluated in the form of ECTS grades the following conversion table<sup>5</sup> is used to compute the individual grades which determine the overall grade mentioned in (1.).

|          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| <b>A</b> | <b>5.75</b> |
| <b>B</b> | <b>5.25</b> |
| <b>C</b> | <b>4.75</b> |
| <b>D</b> | <b>4.25</b> |
| <b>E</b> | <b>4</b>    |

3. Performance assessments graded on a pass/fail basis are not taken into account in the calculation of the overall grade.

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<sup>5</sup> ETH Zurich class average (individual grades), calculated in September 2010.