

IMPRS Thesis Committee

Idea & goal:

Each IMPRS student's research work and curriculum is supervised by his/her personal **standing thesis committee (TC)** consisting of 3 independent colleagues with scientific expertise in the field.

The TC provides **supervision of the scientific development** of the doctoral student in general by surveying the progress of the research work as well as the education of the student.

With the TC the IMPRS-HD hopes that potential problems will be detected early and, thus, could be averted before evolving into real problems.

The existence of a TC for each student has been defined as indispensable condition by the Max Planck Society for all their IMPRS research schools.

IMPRS students should have their first thesis committee meeting within 2 month after arrival.

Method of operation:

The TC is expected to convene **at least once a year** to meet the student for discussion and review. An IMPRS-HD representative may take part in the meeting.

It is the **responsibility** of the main supervisor to organize at least the first TC meeting and introduce the student to the committee – within the first two months after arrival.

We require new students to fill out and sign a standardized form for the first meeting stating the names of their committee members and their preliminary curriculum.

The TC **meeting** should be **informal** - it is up to the committee how to evaluate the progress of the thesis work. Traditionally, most of the TCs expect a brief presentation by the student.

A short **informal report** about the outcome of the committee meetings must be written for reference for the committee members and the student and a copy needs to be sent to the IMPRS-HD coordination office (imprs-hd@mpia.de).

It is the **responsibility of the thesis supervisor** that the report is written and sent. Committee members and student are encouraged to express their personal opinions in the report.

The TC meeting is not intended as an examination of the student. Also, the close interrelation between student and supervisor should not be interfered unnecessarily.

The TC defines the **curriculum** of the doctoral student by examining his/her educational background and by considering the needs for the project. This is particularly important if the student has arrived already with some astronomy background or in case of a time conflict between the lectures and research work. Thus, the first meeting should be within 2 months after arrival.

In order to underline the importance of the TC for the success of the PhD project, the IMPRS board has decided that **financial support** for a student by the IMPRS critically depends on whether the TC meetings have taken place regularly and a copy of the TC reports has been forwarded to the IMPRS office.

Assignment of the committee:

The principal thesis supervisor suggests **another two independent scientists** with expertise in the research topic as TC members - one of them must come from a **different institute**.

The committee may consist also of more than 3 persons.

Note that for registration of the student at the Department for Physics and Astronomy (now transferred to HGSFP, the Graduate School for Fundamental Physics) the three committee members have to sign the form.