

---

Entry into effect:	1 September 2009
Version:	18 February 2011
For further information:	Registrar's Office

[This is an English translation only. The German version is the legally binding version.]

## DIRECTIVE

### Orientation Semester, Bachelor's degree level

*The Rector,*

pursuant to Art. 9 Para. 2 of the ETH Zurich Organisation Ordinance of 16 December 2003<sup>1</sup>,  
*decrees the following:*

#### Preliminary note

Any person enrolled in a Bachelor's degree programme at ETH Zurich who can no longer complete the degree due to failure of the required performance assessments will be excluded from said Bachelor's degree programme. After exclusion the affected student has two possibilities: he/she may leave ETH (dematriculation), or he/she may change to another ETH degree programme, provided that this transfer is possible<sup>2</sup> and application is made by the official deadline.

After exclusion Bachelor's degree students are often undecided as to the next stage in their careers. ETH has made it possible for them to remain matriculated for a further semester. Here they gain extra time to orient themselves in a new direction without losing their student status. This semester is called the 'Orientation Semester'.

#### Art. 1 Subject and scope of this directive

<sup>1</sup> This directive covers the Orientation Semester at the Bachelor's level at ETH Zurich.

<sup>2</sup> It is not valid for the Master's degree level, the doctoral level or any university continuing education programme, including didactic programmes in university teaching.

---

<sup>1</sup> Changed on 31.01.2011 and in force from 18.02.2011. The revision reflects new stipulations set out in the revised Regulations Concerning Admission to ETH Zurich (RSETH 310.5).

<sup>2</sup> Vgl. the directive on this subject, '*Einschränkung der Studienwahl, Studiengangwechsel, Wiedereintritt in die ETH Zürich und Anrechnung von Studienleistungen*' (in German only), which may be accessed electronically at [www.rektorat.ethz/directives](http://www.rektorat.ethz/directives).

## **Art. 2 Objective**

Students who have been excluded from a Bachelor's degree programme because they have failed their performance assessments may enrol in an Orientation Semester following said exclusion, provided that they satisfy the corresponding prerequisites (see stipulations in Art. 4). The Orientation Semester gives these students extra time to orient themselves in a new direction without losing their student status.

## **Art. 3 Assignment to a Bachelor's degree programme and the responsible Study Administration Office**

<sup>1</sup> The Orientation Semester is not part of a Bachelor's degree programme, but for administrative purposes it falls under the responsibility of the Bachelor's degree programme from which the respective student was excluded.

<sup>2</sup> The Study Administration Office administering the Bachelor's degree programme from which a student was excluded is responsible for the administrative matters of said student during the Orientation Semester.

## **Art. 4 Restrictions**

<sup>1</sup> The Orientation Semester is only open to students who are unconditionally enrolled in a Bachelor's degree programme and who have been excluded from this programme because they have failed the required performance assessments. Exceptions are listed in Para. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Enrolment in the Orientation Semester is not possible for students

- a. who have exceeded the maximum duration of study allowed (i.e., the deadline for requesting the Bachelor's degree has passed)
- b. who have missed the deadline for registering for or sitting the first-year examinations
- c. who have been excluded from the Bachelor's degree programme because their unethical behaviour caused their performance assessments to be declared failed (pursuant to Art. 3 Para. 1 Cl. b of the ETH Zurich Disciplinary Code<sup>(3)</sup>)
- d. who have been excluded from ETH Zurich for disciplinary offenses (pursuant to Art. 3 Para. 1 Cl. e der ETH Zurich Disciplinary Code)

## **Art. 5 Timing and duration**

<sup>1</sup> The Orientation Semester is that semester which immediately follows the examinations the failure of which led to the student's exclusion from the Bachelor's degree programme. An exception is given in Para. 2.

<sup>2</sup> If an appeals procedure<sup>(4)</sup> or a final legal decision regarding the exclusion from the Bachelor's degree programme is still pending in a semester in which the student is enrolled, that semester will count as a regular semester and not as an Orientation Semester.

---

<sup>3</sup> SR 414.138.1, RSETHZ 361.1

<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this directive, appeals procedures are the legal appellate remedy 'Appeal' (redress) and the judicial remedies 'Request for reconsideration' and 'Request for cancellation'.

<sup>3</sup> If a legal decision is taken by the final deadline for enrolling in a semester, that semester will count as an Orientation Semester (provided that enrolment takes place).

<sup>4</sup> The Orientation Semester comprises one semester. A prolongation is not possible. This also applies if an appeals procedure regarding performance assessments undertaken during an Orientation Semester is pending.

## **Art. 6 Semester enrolment, tuition and semester fees**

<sup>1</sup> Enrolment in the Orientation Semester is subject to general ETH regulations regarding semester enrolment (dates, deadlines etc.).

<sup>2</sup> With regard to tuition and semester fees the same regulations apply to the Orientation Semester as to other semesters.

## **Art. 7 Registration for course units, undertaking performance assessments/examinations and communication of study achievements**

<sup>1</sup> During the Orientation Semester students may attend those courses and undertake those performance assessments/examinations to which they would be admitted as a regular students of the respective degree programme. This also applies to the number of attempts allowable to repeat failed assessments. Exceptions are listed in Para 2.

<sup>2</sup> Students in the Orientation Semester are subject to the following specific restrictions:

- a. They may not author Bachelor's theses.
- b. They may be refused participation in courses which require particularly intensive mentoring (eg., which require semester papers).
- c. If they undertake a performance assessment for the first time during the Orientation Semester and fail it, they may not repeat it if dematriculation takes place following the Orientation Semester.
- d. If for any reason (including illness or accident) they cannot undertake a performance assessment, they may not repeat it if dematriculation takes place following the Orientation Semester.
- e. The head of Student Administration (Rectorate) may on justified grounds annul registration for performance assessments.

<sup>3</sup> Achievements during the Orientation Semester will be communicated to students via the usual ETH Zurich channels. If an internal change of degree programme is made the credits earned in the Orientation Semester may be counted towards the new programme by application to the respective department.

## **Art. 8 Transcript of records**

It is not permissible to include academic achievements from the Orientation Semester in the 'Leistungsausweis ohne Abschluss' ['Certificate of achievement without graduation']. The responsible Study Administration Office will on application from the student provide the relevant list of study achievements.

**Art. 9    Entry into force**

This directive enters into force on 1 September 2009.

The Rector: Prof. Dr. Heidi Wunderli-Allenspach