The thesis advisory committee (TAC) is responsible for monitoring the progress and development of the PhD student and providing advice and support to both the student and the supervisor.

**The TAC Meeting agenda:**

* The student presents the thesis proposal in 20 min. The presentation should include an introduction explaining background and significance, main proof-of-principle experiments and results, timeline and resources. It should avoid technical details and focus on key points the committee needs to assess the project.
* The TAC members ask questions and discuss the project with the student. The presentation with discussion should last 45 min max.
* The thesis committee meets with the student only (supervisor leaves room) (10 min).
* The thesis committee meets with the supervisor only (student leaves room) (10 min).
* A summary is communicated to all participants (5 min).
* The form is completed by the chair (5 min) and signed by all members. The form is handed to the student who will submit it (see box below).

**The TAC report form:**

One of the TAC members other than the supervisor acts as a chair and fills out the report:

Part 1: Assessment of the project and student’s progress

Part 2: Assessment of the student/supervisor relationship

Part 3: Overall assessment and recommendations

**After the Annual TAC meeting, you need to upload the TAC report form to STREP and send the appropriate form to the university:**

1. If your home university is the University of Vienna, hand in to Gerlinde Aschauer the [Annual Report form](https://molekularebiologie.univie.ac.at/progress-reports/).
2. If your home university is the Medical University of Vienna, hand in the [Medical University form](https://www.meduniwien.ac.at/web/fileadmin/content/serviceeinrichtungen/studienabteilung/studierende/phd/pdf/Meeting_ThesisCommittee_10_2018_01.pdf) – signed by all TAC members – to the Studienabteilung   
   Dieter Breitenbaum and Vesna Domikovic: [phd@meduniwien.ac.at](mailto:phd@meduniwien.ac.at)

In both cases, you may use the VBC TAC reports as attachment and make a note in the corresponding fields of the form.

**PART 1 Assessment of the project and student’s progress**

*(The questions below serve as guidelines for your assessment. Please provide your assessment in the box below.)*

Project:

Is the project progressing? Are the goals realistic and clear? What are specific challenges? How could they be addressed? Is the student involved in an additional project?

Timeline:

Is there a clear timeline for project goals? Are there plans for publications?

**For 3rd/4th TAC** - assess timeline to thesis as well.

How do you rate the student’s background knowledge and communication skills?

Professional development:

Is the student developing into an independent scientist?

What are specific achievements, or needed improvements, regarding the student’s development?

**PART 2 Assessment of the student/supervisor relationship**

**Did the yearly mentoring meeting take place?**

Yes – please insert date for documentation here: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

No – please schedule a date here: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Yearly mentoring meetings are a mandatory requirement. They aim to establish a trust-based and productive student-mentor relationship, to clarify mutual expectations and working relationships, to guide the PhD students through their professional development, and to assess the overall status of the project. For 3rd and 4th year students the PhD program recommends to discuss future career plans. Please find the mentoring guide [here](https://biocenterat-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/chiara_ceriotti_vbc_ac_at/ESV2rBO-igFKqensQ1Dnvv4BHe_xCo9VK5VjgQcd7EXPdQ?e=hTamEK).

**PART 2.1 With the student only**

*(The questions below serve as guidelines for your assessment. Please provide your assessment in the box below.)*

Communication:

Meeting frequency? Productive communication? Clear mutual expectations? Improvements?

Mentoring:

Independence? Project ownership? Improvements regarding supervision (more independence or more guidance? Support? etc).

Professional development

Progress assessment? Motivation? Technical advances? Documentation?

Since you started your PhD – what worked well, what would you like to improve?

What’s your goal for next year?

**For 3rd/4th -year students**: Have you thought about your future career within or outside academia? Are there skills you may need for these next steps and are you able to acquire them?

Please insert your assessment here:

**PART 2.2 With the supervisor only**

*(The questions below mostly mirror the ones for the student. Please provide your assessment in the box below.)*

Communication:

Meeting frequency? Productive communication? Clear mutual expectations? Improvements?

Mentoring:

Independence? Project ownership? Improvements?

Professional development

Progress assessment? Motivation? Technical advances? Documentation? Development?

**For 3rd/4th -year students**: Have you talked with the student about a future career within or outside academia? Are you advising and supporting the student on this path?

Please insert your assessment here:

If there are confidential issues that require follow-up, please indicate here and contact the Head of Scientific Training Eva Schmid ([eva.schmid@vbc.ac.at](mailto:eva.schmid@vbc.ac.at)). \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PART 3 Overall assessment and recommendations**

Tentative date for next TAC meeting:

**For 3rd and 4th TAC meeting**:

Tentative date for defense (month/year):

Is the contract/funding situation in line with the tentative defense date?

Is a contract extension needed?

**How do you rate the overall progress?**

Excellent

Moderate

Unsatisfactory

**What should be the major goal for the next meeting?**

**What are the major recommendations?**

If there are confidential issues that require follow-up, please indicate here and contact the Head of Scientific Training Eva Schmid ([eva.schmid@vbc.ac.at](mailto:eva.schmid@vbc.ac.at)). \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Attendees:**

TAC member acting as Chair: ….……………………………………………………………………………………..

TAC member: ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Supervisor: ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Student: ………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Other (3rd TAC member, member of the Training Unit): ………………………………………………….

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