



This is a translation from the original German version of 'Leitfaden für das Doktoratsstudium an der Phil.-Nat. Fakultät'. It is provided for information purposes only and has no legal validity.

The following information applies to doctoral candidates enrolled at the Faculty of Science later than August 1, 2016.

Doctoral Studies – administrative steps (version November 2021)

The most important administrative steps during your doctoral studies at the Faculty of Science are listed below. For further details, please refer to the *Promotionsordnung* (doctoral degree regulations – in German only).

For submission deadlines, please consult the [schedule overview](#).

Submission deadlines for the doctoral application must be met in order to be considered at the Faculty Assembly.

1	Completion and submission of Doctoral Agreement	within the first semester of doctoral studies
2	Appointment of Second Supervisor	within 12 months of start of doctoral studies
3	Application for the external expert	at the latest eight weeks before the Faculty Assembly (see schedule overview)
4	Initiation of the Doctoral Degree Procedure	at the latest four weeks before the Faculty Assembly (see schedule overview)
5	Submission of referee reports	at the latest one week before the Faculty Assembly (see schedule overview)
6	Admission to doctoral exam	approval by the Faculty Assembly (see schedule overview)
7	Doctoral exam (thesis defense)	to be completed within six months after approval by the Faculty Assembly
8	Exmatriculation	candidates are required to exmatriculate after passing their doctoral exam
9	Submission of depositary copies of the dissertation Entitlement to hold academic title Dr. phil. (PhD)	to be completed within two years after doctoral exam

1. Doctoral Agreement

Doctoral candidates are required to define a [Doctoral Agreement](#) with their Doctoral Committee and/or their First Supervisor during the first semester of their doctoral studies. The completed and signed cover sheet of the Doctoral Agreement should be sent as PDF to diss-philnat@unibas.ch; a copy of the cover sheet is kept by the doctoral candidate for their records. A Doctoral Committee meeting takes place at least once a year. Present are at least: First Supervisor, Second Supervisor and doctoral candidate. The content of the Doctoral Agreement must be reappraised at least once a year, and updated if necessary. Changes regarding the information on the cover sheet must be communicated to the Dean's Office in the form of an updated doctoral agreement. The doctoral candidate is responsible for the administration of records/protocols of the annual doctoral supervisory meetings (with copy to First Supervisor) and the updated Doctoral Agreement.

To initiate the Doctoral Degree Procedure, the complete Doctoral Agreement (i.e. including the supervisory meeting sheets) and the completed Doctoral Application documents (see Section 4) are submitted to the Dean's Office.

The Doctoral Committee comprises:

- First Supervisor*
- Second Supervisor*
- External expert**
- Other experts (subject to application)

* At least one supervisor must be a Group I faculty member of the Faculty of Science, and must be accredited in the respective doctoral subject/discipline

** Members of the University of Basel or of one of the following institutes may not serve as external experts: Swiss TPH, FMI, IOB, PSI, D-BSSE ETH Zurich in Basel, FHNW or of the institution where the dissertation is carried out.

Applications for the admission of a First Supervisor from outside the Faculty of Science should include a current CV and a publication list of the prospective supervisor.

Roles

First Supervisor: The First Supervisor directly supervises/guides the doctoral student – their role is that of a thesis advisor and they prepare the report. There can be two First Supervisors, in which case the report would be prepared jointly by both First Supervisors (one grade).

Second Supervisor: The Second Supervisor assumes the role of an independent person and participates in the annual Doctoral Committee meetings. If the First Supervisor is a member of Group I, the Second Supervisor does not have to prepare a report. However, if the First Supervisor is not a member of Group I, the Second Supervisor must prepare a report.

External experts: The external expert is not a member of the University of Basel and prepares a second or third independent report.

Confirmation of supervision:

The confirmation of supervision required to register for doctoral studies must be provided by a Group I member of the Faculty of Science who is either the First or Second Supervisor on the Doctoral Committee.

1.2 Credit points and learning contract

In order to fulfill the requirements of the Faculty of Science, doctoral students must earn at least 12 credit points (CP), or at least 18 CP if participating in a PhD program. Credit points obtained as part of previous MSc programs cannot be transferred or accredited.

Language courses that have no relation to the dissertation project cannot be counted towards the 12/18 CP to be acquired.

Credit points may also be awarded for activities/accomplishments outside the normal course and lecture program of the university (e.g. conference contributions), stipulated in the learning contract (LC; see Appendix I).

Before the activity/accomplishment for which they intend to obtain credit points, doctoral candidates are required to create an LC in the Online Services.

Important: it is worth providing a meaningful title for the activity, as this will appear on the degree transcript. This title cannot subsequently be amended. It is also worth choosing an title in english, as this will not be translated on the english version of the degree completion documents.

Once the LC has been created, the approval process is initiated. The LC is automatically forwarded to the assessor (usually the First Supervisor) for examination. Following the approval of the assessor, the LC is again automatically forwarded to the responsible staff member of the department or institute. Once the LC has been approved by the responsible staff member, the academic achievement can be performed. Afterwards the LC can be assessed online by the assessor.

Further information and the procedure for external assessors can be found in the corresponding documentation in the Online Services.

For academic achievements during doctoral studies at another university, a learning contract is not necessary, but a confirmation (in the original) of successful completion must be submitted to the Dean's Office. In order to recognize these credit points for the doctoral degree, the confirmation must be signed by the First Supervisor before submission to the Dean's Office.

2. Appointment of the Second Supervisor

In the event that the Second Supervisor has not been appointed at the time of the completion and submission of the Doctoral Agreement, an application for supervising admission must be made by sending an updated Doctoral Agreement with the name of the Second Supervisor to the Dean's Office within 12 months of commencement of doctoral studies.

3. Application for the external expert

The external expert must be applied for at the Dean's Office at least eight weeks before the Faculty Assembly using the corresponding [form](#). The form must be accompanied by a current CV and a current list of publications by the external expert.

The application form and the additional documents must be sent as a PDF file to diss-philnat@unibas.ch.

Please note that no approval confirmations will be sent. If rejected, you will be informed at least two weeks before the date of the "Initiation of the Doctoral Degree Procedure."

The external expert must meet the following criteria:

- Not a member of the University of Basel (for the last 5 years) or the following institutes: Swiss TPH, FMI, IOB, PSI, D-BSSE ETH Zurich in Basel, FHNW or of the institution where the dissertation is carried out
- Qualified as a university lecturer (habilitiert) or equivalently qualified
- No scientific collaboration in the dissertation project
- No publications with the doctoral candidate
- No current or previous dependent relationship (expert - supervisor as well as expert - doctoral candidate)

4. Initiation of the Doctoral Degree Procedure

The Doctoral Degree Procedure is initiated as soon as the following documents are submitted at least four weeks before the relevant Faculty Assembly. All documents must be sent as PDF to diss-philnat@unibas.ch:

- [PhD Application](#) (the completed form should be signed by the First Supervisor of the Doctoral Committee, or by the Second Supervisor if they are the faculty's only Group I representative. All points listed in the Doctoral Agreement must be fulfilled at the time of submission of the Doctoral Application). The application for any additional experts must be made on the PhD application form. All persons listed on the Doctoral Committee participate in the doctoral exam.
- The entire Doctoral Agreement, including all documentation of supervisory meetings.
- The student's academic progress summary (from Online Services). Approval is confirmed by signature of the First Supervisor.
- Dissertation manuscript (for the submission of the manuscript we recommend SWITCHfilesender: <https://www.switch.ch/de/services/filesender/>). At the latest at this point in time, the dissertation manuscript must be sent to all members of the doctoral committee.
- CV
- The following written declaration: *"I hereby declare that this doctoral dissertation '...' (title) has been completed exclusively with the assistance mentioned herein and that it has not been submitted to any other university or to any other faculty at the University of Basel. Name, date and signature."*
This declaration must not be included in the dissertation. In case of a *cotutelle de thèse*, candidates are required to use the formulation according to *Promotionsordnung* § 17, Sec. d.

Notice:

The name shown in Online Services will appear on the degree completion documents. If it is incorrect or incomplete, this must be communicated immediately with a passport copy to the Student Administration Office <https://www.unibas.ch/en/Student-Administration-Office-Enquiry.html>

5. Submission of referee reports

[Referee reports](#) must be sent to diss-philnat@unibas.ch at the latest one week before the Faculty Assembly.

If the First Supervisor is not a Group I member of the Faculty of Science, the First Supervisor, Second Supervisor and the external expert are required to submit independent reports. If the First Supervisor is a Group I member of the Faculty of Science, a report by the Second Supervisor may be waived (but is desirable).

Referee reports should conclude with a recommendation to the Faculty of Science to accept or reject the dissertation, including a grade (indicated in full or half grades).

6. Admission to doctoral exam

The Faculty Assembly decides on final acceptance of the dissertation and admits the candidate to the doctoral exam. No letters of confirmation will be sent out to candidates.

7. Doctoral exam

Doctoral candidates are asked to make the necessary arrangements related to their doctoral exam. The doctoral exam is held as a presence exam. Optionally, the external expert can participate in the exam via video conference if travel is not justifiable due to the distance.

Candidates should email the following details to diss-philnat@unibas.ch as soon as they are available:

- **Date** (of the exam)
- **Time** (starting time)
- **Place** (institute)
- **Room** (number)
- **Chair** (doctoral exams must be chaired by an appointed Group I member or by a *Titularprofessor* of the Faculty of Science. The chair is not a member of the candidate's Doctoral Committee).

Shortly before the doctoral exam, the Dean's Office will send out invitations to all members of the Doctoral Committee (including the external expert) and the chair. The exam documents are sent directly to the chair by e-mail. The completed original exam protocol is to be returned to the Dean's Office after the exam.

Doctoral candidates who pass their exam are entitled to hold the title 'Dr. phil. des.' ('Dr. phil. Designata' or 'Dr. phil. Designatus').

The doctoral committee can nominate an outstanding thesis for the faculty prize.

This applies in particular to dissertations which are evaluated by all involved experts with the maximum grade. Should the members of the committee agree that the importance and quality of the scientific contributions of a dissertation are particularly valuable, the committee should write an additional short statement for the attention of the Faculty Prize Committee. This report briefly summarizes the work and justifies how the dissertation stands out from other work in the same field and what makes the accomplishments particularly outstanding. The report includes information about the title and author of the dissertation and must be signed and dated and submitted to the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Science.

The deadline for submitting a nomination is 31 March.

8. Exmatriculation

Candidates who have passed their doctoral exam are expected to exmatriculate from the University of Basel.

9. Depositary copies and entitlement to hold academic title

Doctoral candidates are obliged to submit the final dissertation within two years of their doctoral exam. Dissertations must be submitted to the Dean's Office in the required format.

When all requirements have been fulfilled, candidates obtain their doctoral diploma and are then entitled to hold the academic title of 'Dr. phil.' (PhD).

There are countries that require a legalization (apostille) of the certificate. We therefore recommend to contact the respective embassy of your home country in Switzerland before leaving the country.

For further information, please contact:

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www.philnat.unibas.ch
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Appendix 1

Award of credit points (1 CP = workload of 30 hours)

Type	CP
Participation at a summer school/winter school	1-3 CP, depending on effort required
Participation in an inter/national conference/symposium (of at least three days) without abstract submission	1 CP
Public paper/presentation	1-2 CP, depending on effort required
Participation in an inter/national conference/symposium/workshop with oral presentation	1-2 CP
Participation in an inter/national conference/symposium/workshop with poster presentation	1-2 CP
Teaching activities in the research field of the doctoral candidate's dissertation	max. three CP can be credited in total
(Co-)Organization of a conference, workshop or similar event	1-3 CP, depending on effort required