

Information for doctoral candidates

If you have any questions, please contact

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bio.uni-freiburg.de/studies/doctorate/doctorate-in-biology [↗]

1. Supervision of dissertations

Before you sign up for participation in the doctoral studies program, you must clarify who your supervisor is. If you perform your project in a research group of the Faculty of Biology, the question is easily dealt with: All full professors and associate professors of the faculty are authorized and entitled to supervise thesis works and the writing of the final dissertation. The situation is somewhat more complex, if you seek a doctoral degree from the Faculty of Biology but wish to perform your project externally, e.g. at the Medical Faculty of Freiburg University or at the Max Planck Institute of Immunobiology and Epigenetics. Some of the scientists working at these institutions have the right from the Faculty of Biology to supervise doctoral thesis works, i.e. they may independently supervise the work of biologists. If this is not the case for your chosen supervisor, you must definitely find an authorized person from the Faculty of Biology who will take on the official supervision, i.e. is responsible for your work vis-a-vis the Faculty of Biology. Here only lecturers who are members of the Faculty of Biology at the University of Freiburg may be considered. For a list of these supervisors, see our website [Doctoral degree in the field of Biology → Members of the Faculty of Biology with the right to supervise doctoral candidates](#) [↗]. A list of external supervisors with the right to supervise doctoral candidates at the Faculty of Biology can be found here → [Members of other faculties and research institutions with the right to supervise doctoral candidates](#) [↗].

Thesis committee: The doctoral thesis can be supervised by a single person or by a thesis committee. Collective supervision by a thesis committee is mandatory if the supervisor is a junior researcher who has not yet habilitated (§ 3 paragraphs 3 and 5 of the PhD regulations). The thesis committee consists of the supervisor and two scientists coming from the same research area but from research groups different from that of the supervisor. At least one of the additional two members must be a professor at the Faculty of Biology. An overview of the faculty members entitled to serve on a thesis committee can be found on the website → [Members of the Faculty of Biology, “thesis committee”](#) [↗].

Supervisors who are not entitled to supervise a doctoral student on their own (§ 3, paragraph 6 of the PhD regulations) can join the thesis committee as third member. The supervisor of the doctoral work is responsible for assembling the *thesis committee*.

2. Registration for the doctoral studies program

Important: International applicants from Non-EU countries need a document confirming that their University degree is equivalent to a German diploma or master's degree. Therefore, send a copy of both the Bachelor and Master diploma including transcripts of records to the doctoral studies office for examination before starting the doctoral work.

You must apply in writing for acceptance as a doctoral student, and this must be done within six months after the start of your thesis project. If you fail to meet this deadline, the application can only be approved in exceptional cases in which this delay has to be justified.

Please note: From now on the application for admission as a doctoral student has to be submitted only online. The [instructions for application are given here](#) [↗]. The supervision agreement is not available yet. Thus, please submit your application without the supervision agreement.

Send one signed printout together with the supporting documents to the following address:

An den Promotionsausschuss der Fakultät für Biologie
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
z. Hd. Frau Kendlinger
Schänzlestraße 1
79104 Freiburg

or hand them over personally. Do not send originals (!), necessary copies will be made for free in the office.

Checklist: documents for the registration as a doctoral candidate:

- University entrance diploma (graduation diploma),
- University diplomas,
- Good-conduct certificate („N“ for private purposes) not older than 6 months, available at [Freiburg City Council, Department Citizen Service \(Bürgerservice\), Fehrenbachallee 12, 79106 Freiburg](#) [↗] or at the registration office of your community,
- CV including information about previous studies

3. Immatriculation

Since March 30, 2018, doctoral students must enroll after being accepted as a doctoral student by the faculty, according to § 38 para. 5 of the Landeshochschulgesetz (LHG). This is generally also the case for doctoral students that have an employment contract with the University of Freiburg (e.g. research assistant). The [Service Center Studium](#) [↗] is in charge of this. Further information can be found on the homepage of the department [Freiburg Research Services](#) [↗].

4. Elected PhD representatives

The [PhD representatives of the Faculty of Biology](#) speak for you and your interests at various University levels [↗].

5. Address given on publications

Should you publish the results of your doctoral thesis work (dissertation) in a professional journal, the source of the work must be clearly indicated through a complete address with the name of the department of the Faculty of Biology.

Doctoral students who complete their work externally must supplement the address of their laboratory with a second address which must contain the identifier „Faculty of Biology“ (e.g. Name^{1,2} – ²University of Freiburg, Faculty of Biology, Schaezlestrasse 1, D–79104 Freiburg, Germany).

6. Form of the dissertation

The dissertation may be written in German or in English. It may be presented as a complete piece of work (monograph; non-cumulative) or consist of an overview accompanied by bound together publications, manuscripts and supplementary chapters (cumulative).

A cumulative doctoral thesis must consist of at least two publications. The publications must be published or accepted for publication in peer-reviewed, internationally recognized journals. You must be a (co-)first author in at least one publication. For publications with several authors, you must summarize your contributions in a brief text passage added before the paper. Important methods which are not considered standard methods can be described in an appendix. The overview of 15-30 pages should be written in the style of a review article, with an introduction to the scope and scientific approach and a discussion of the results. You should discuss further details with your supervisor.

The dissertation must contain a title page. An [up-to-date sample](#) is available for [download](#) [↗] on the website of the Faculty of Biology.

7. Submission of the dissertation

After finishing your doctoral thesis hand in the following documents at the doctoral studies office:

- the completed form "Submission of the thesis" (the document downloads automatically [[↗](#)]).

Fill out the form on the computer and send one unsigned copy, together with one CV by e-mail to renate.kendlinger@biologie.uni-freiburg.de. Bring one signed printout with the following documents to the doctoral studies program office:

- three original copies of the dissertation: one copy for the 2nd referee, one copy for the 3rd examiner, and one copy for the library of the faculty,
- a good-conduct certificate („N“ for private purposes) not older than 6 months, available at [Freiburg City Council, Department Citizen Service \(Bürgerservice\), Fehrenbachallee 12, 79106 Freiburg](#) [[↗](#)] or at the registration office of your community,

In any case you should hand over one additional copy of your dissertation to your supervisor(s) personally.

If you have questions please contact Renate Kendlinger.

8. Publication requirements

To fulfil the publication requirements at the University Library some extra copies of your dissertation are required:

- six additional copies of your dissertation when you submit your dissertation in the classical, non-cumulative form (monograph). Furthermore, a list of all your publications to date (including those in press) signed by your supervisor and indicating that essential parts have been published,

or

- six additional copies of your dissertation when you submit your dissertation in a cumulative form,

or

- two additional copies of your dissertation when you wish to publish your dissertation electronically (as pdf). In this case we strongly recommend you to obtain the approval of your supervisor.

The dissertation must be printed on age-resistant, wood- and acid-free paper and must have a glue binding (no(!) spiral binding!). Use the German standard paper size DIN A4, duplex printing is possible.

You must fulfil the publication requirements at the University Library within 1½ years after the oral exam. Should this deadline be exceeded, all rights from the doctoral procedure will expire. In justified cases, the Head of the PhD admission board can extend the deadline on request.

9. The doctoral degree examination procedure

The doctoral degree examination procedure consists of the evaluation of the dissertation, the public dissertation colloquium, and the oral examination (*rigorosum*).

The dissertation is evaluated by two referees, one of these being your thesis advisor/supervisor.

The dissertation colloquium includes a scientific lecture on the dissertation of a maximum of 30 minutes duration and a following discussion.

The oral examination follows immediately after the colloquium and lasts one hour. The oral examination covers areas of knowledge both closely and distantly related to the topic of the thesis. The examining committee consists of the chairman of the PhD admission board and three examiners, whereby the two dissertation referees are always assigned as examiners.

The assessment of your work can take up to six weeks from handing in your thesis in the doctoral studies office. Afterwards, the work with the reports must be available for another two weeks in the PhD office. Thereafter, an exam date can be settled. In total, you should calculate with an eight to twelve week exam procedure, which can be even longer during holiday time.

The PhD graduate program coordinator will contact you in due time and inform you about possible dates for the colloquium and oral exam so that you can fix the examination date with the examiners.

10. The result of the doctoral studies

The final grade consists of the arithmetic average of the exact (not rounded) grade for the dissertation as well as the exact (not rounded) grade for the oral exam.

The highest recognition „summa cum laude“ for the overall result is awarded, when the dissertation and the oral examination both were rated with the best grade of “1.0 with honors”.

The final doctoral degree certificate will not be handed out until the doctoral student has fulfilled the publication requirement at the University Library and has submitted the required copies of the dissertation to the Faculty of Biology. Until then, the doctoral student will receive a provisional certificate of passing the doctoral examination.