University of Basel

DBM Basel

INTERNATIONAL PHD PROGRAM IN BIOMEDICINE
GUIDELINES

These guidelines apply to **every** PhD student at the DBM enrolling at the Faculty of Science of the University of Basel. The DBM PhD Program is based on the actual Promotionsordnung (doctoral degree regulations – in German only) of the Faculty of Science and has been implemented in the DBM PhD Program. **This document needs to be signed and handed/e-mailed to the DBM PhD Coordinator.**

Requirements for Candidates:

1. The PhD candidate must have very good command of spoken and written **English** (at least Cambridge level B2 or equivalent).
2. The **master degree/diploma** of the PhD candiate must be approved by the University of Basel (Student Services).
3. The master degree of the PhD candidate must qualify for the PhD program. *§4*
4. The PhD candidate **must matriculate** at the University of Basel. *§5*
5. The PhD student is responsible for establishing his/her **"PhD advisory committee" (PaC)** consisting of the first and second supervisor plus one external referee. *§9*

   At least one supervisor must be a member of the Faculty of Science (or recognized by the Faculty of Science), the other supervisor must be member of the Faculty of Medicine.
6. The PhD student **must obtain 18 European Credit Transfer System points** (**ECTS** credit points; see point 8 in the Guidelines below) in order to successfully conclude the doctoral degree. The PhD student **must** also take the **Research Integrity Course** in order to conclude his/her Doctoral studies. This course does not give any credit points, is mandatory and is available online.
7. The first or second supervisor has to be acknowledged within the dissertation topic. *§9²*

§The paragraphs refer to the new Promotionsordnung where details are described in German.

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PhD Program Guidelines (in detail):

1. PhD students at the DBM are expected to finish their research leading up to their thesis within **3-4 years**[1]. If the PhD project cannot be concluded within the four years, the extension has to be discussed and decided in a PAC meeting. In that case, a short request for prolongation, including the PAC meeting recommendation as well as a statement of extended salary guarantee, should be sent to the Managing Director (andrea.ottolini@unibas.ch) and to the PhD Coordinator, Karoliina Pelttari (phd-coordination-dbm@unibas.ch).

2. **Salaries** are according to the standards of the Swiss National Science Foundation.

3. **Contracts** for PhD students will initially be issued for one year. After a positive decision to continue the doctorate program by the PhD student and by the first supervisor, the contract will be extended for an additional 3 years*. A negative decision not to extend the contract should be communicated to the PhD student within the first 10 months.

   *The extended contract will typically terminate within 6 months after a successful defense of the PhD, even if the period of additional 3 years has not yet been completed.

4. A **PhD agreement form** (or a Doctoral agreement form, DA) must be signed by the first supervisor, the second supervisor, the PhD student and the DBM PhD Coordinator no later than **2 months** after matriculation. **The DA includes a statement of guarantee of financing for the PhD student for the full duration of the PhD by the first supervisor**.

5. Each student selects a PhD advisory Committee (**PaC**) at the beginning of the PhD. Selection of the PaC members, scheduling of the yearly meetings, and transfer of the signed meeting protocols to the DBM PhD Coordinator **is the responsibility of the PhD student**. **In order to obtain the PhD title, the PhD student must have completed 3 PaC meetings**.

6. PhD students meet with the PaC at least once per year to report their scientific activities and results. **The first meeting typically takes place 9-12 months after the beginning of the PhD.** No later than **one week** before the scheduled PaC meeting, the PhD student sends a scientific progress report (3-5 pages) to all members of the PaC.

   The meeting includes an oral progress report in the form of a scientific seminar followed by a discussion with the committee members. Subsequently, the PaC meeting proceeds as follows: (i) The PhD student discusses with the committee, in the absence of his/her first supervisor; (ii) The first supervisor discusses with the committee, in the absence of the PhD student; (iii) The PhD student, supervisors and other PaC members discuss any remaining issues.

   The **PaC discusses and validates the progress of the PhD** and helps to guide the proposed research plan for the following year. In cases where there is no or very little progress, the PaC can recommend to change the PhD project or discontinue the PhD even after the first year. An extension of the PhD program beyond 4 years should be discussed in a PAC meeting and the justification stated in the corresponding report.

   A **discontinuation of the PhD project** must be communicated to the PhD student as well as to the Managing Director, the PhD Coordinator and the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Science (§13). Thereafter, the PhD student must exmatriculate at the office of the Student Services of the University of Basel. Termination of a contract between parties should follow the rules and procedures set out by the human resources of the department.

[1] The duration of the PhD is limited to a maximum of 4 years according to the official rules of the University of Basel (see "Ordnung für das Wissenschaftliche Personal an der Universität Basel", dated 25.04.2013, §23. Dauer der Anstellung)

It is expected that at the time of the PhD exam, **at least one first author manuscript of the PhD work is accepted for publication**. Exceptions have to be approved by the PaC in advance.

7. **Protocols of all PaC meetings**: The first or second Supervisor writes a short protocol on the **official form**. All PaC members sign the protocol and receive a copy for their records. The PhD candidate sends an electronic copy of the report to the DBM PhD Coordinator. **The PhD candidate keeps the original copy for his/her records**.

8. PhD students are obliged to collect a total of **18 credit points** (ECTS points) from lectures, courses and meetings before they can graduate. The PhD student, together with their first supervisor, put together an individual study plan at the beginning of the dissertation (see Curriculum). A minimum of 6 credit points has to be covered by lectures and courses from the Biozentrum Graduate and Postgraduate Teaching Program. In general, PhD students should obtain at least 2/3 of their ECTS points from areas of their own methodical and scientific field, whereas a maximum of 6 ECTS points may be obtained from transferable skills: for details see Curriculum.

9. **Defense**: At the end of the PhD, students must submit a written thesis which has to be accepted by the Faculty of Science of the University of Basel. The PhD thesis defense includes an oral exam of at least one hour. For details see: Doctoral studies point 7.

   Note: Members of the PaC are also members of the PhD defense committee. An additional member of the Faculty of Science, who is not a member of the PaC, chairs the PhD defense (§20[4]).

10. After the defense, the PhD student **must** contact the DBM PhD Coordinator and communicate the date of the defense, thesis title and grade.

Relevant links: **DBM PhD Website**: http://biomedizin.unibas.ch/education/

PhD Coordinator at the DBM: Dr. Karoliina Pelttari

Read and agreed by:

Supervisor	**PhD candidate**
_____	_____
Date, Signature	Date, Signature