

GGNB Information for Supervisors and Examiners

Every doctorate at Göttingen University leading to the doctoral degree *Dr.rer.nat.* or to its Anglophone equivalent *Ph.D.*, *Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences*, takes place within the framework of one of the GAUSS programs. Sixteen of these are part of GGNB. Information about these programs is available at www.ggnb.uni-goettingen.de.

Students seeking the aforementioned doctoral degree have to apply for admission to the appropriate GGNB or GAUSS program. They have to be enrolled at Göttingen University throughout their entire doctoral project until the thesis defense. To enroll, they are required to submit to the Office of Student Affairs resp. International Office/Incoming Office an admission letter issued by the program.

How supervision works: Every doctoral student is guided by a thesis advisory committee (TAC) consisting of the supervisor and at least two further independent members. At least two members of the TAC have to be members of the relevant program, and at least one of members 1 and 2 (i.e. the future reviewers of the doctoral thesis) has to be a full university professor of Göttingen University. Depending on the program, there are additional conditions and achievement-based requirements to the doctoral students. Every program requires that the doctoral student submit to the TAC at regular intervals, but not less than once a year, a report detailing the status of the doctoral project. The TAC shall certify this each time. The committee must verify whether the results are sufficient for finalizing the doctoral thesis, and consult about its completion or continuation. ***Supervisors and students have to adhere to the [GAUSS rules of good practice for doctoral supervision](#).***

How the doctoral examination works: For each doctoral examination procedure, the program committee will appoint an examination board of at least 6 members and a chairperson thereof. At least three members of the examination board, including the reviewers, must have examiner status within the program in question. The other board members must similarly be authorized to examine, but may have acquired the examination accreditation to examine within any of the GAUSS programs. All GAUSS members authorized to examine are listed on this [GAUSS page](#), including the indication of the respective programs. For members of the TAC who do not have examiner status it is possible to apply for an [individual examination accreditation](#) for one examination procedure.

The doctoral examination consists of a written doctoral thesis, the dissertation, and an oral examination, the thesis defense. The reviewers of the dissertation may propose the grades of "summa cum laude", "magna cum laude", "cum laude" or "rite". A grade of "summa cum laude" can only be awarded if all reviewers propose this distinction for the dissertation in their written report, the examination board unanimously grades the candidate's performance in the thesis defense as meriting this distinction, and there are at least three reviews including an external one. The doctoral certificate will then state the grade "summa cum laude" as an overall grade.

In the thesis defense, the candidate should place his/her/their dissertation in a larger scientific context by giving a presentation of 30 minutes and, after the presentation, answer the related questions. The candidate must demonstrate more profound knowledge of the scientific results and methods relating to areas outside the field of research undertaken for the dissertation. It must thereby be ensured consistently in all programs that the second part does not develop into a type of test of facts or minor subject examination where questions are asked about previously agreed on excerpts from a textbook. Rather, the second part should have the nature of scientific examination that tests the candidate's ability to think and work in a scientific manner. Questions are initially permitted only by members of the examination board. The examination board or the chairperson ensures that thereafter, all members of the audience can ask questions within reasonable limits. After the thesis defense, the examination board decides on an overall grade for the doctoral examination