

## GFA Information on Supervision and Examination

The doctorate in the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and the Faculty of Forest Sciences and Forest Ecology leading to the doctoral degree Dr.forest., Dr.sc.agr., Dr.rer.nat., Dr.rer.pol. or to its English equivalent Ph.D., takes place within the framework of doctoral GFA programmes. Information about these programmes are available online at <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/527314.html>. Students seeking the aforementioned doctoral degrees have to apply for admission to the appropriate GFA programme at the beginning of their doctoral project. They have to be enrolled at the University of Göttingen throughout their entire doctoral studies. For enrolment, they have to submit a certificate from the responsible faculty to the Office of Student Affairs, issued by the GFA. The form is simultaneously used for the admission to the GFA.

**Supervision:** For each doctorate, a thesis committee is appointed. Members are the first supervisor, one further authorised examiner and one further person holding at least a doctoral degree. The thesis committee may also have further members. The authorised examiners should not be in a dependent relationship. Two months after the admission or arrival in Germany, the PhD student nominates the committee. Afterwards, the graduate committee scrutinises and, if appropriate, appoints the thesis committee. Before applying for admission a preliminary topic and a work plan are agreed with the first supervisor.

Research work and schedule will be discussed with the thesis committee at least once a year (after approx. 6, 18, and 30 months) in joint meetings, with an orally presented status of the doctoral project and written and. A protocol of these meetings is generated, signed by all persons involved and submitted to the GFA. The protocols are a tool of transparency. Both, the doctoral students and the advisors, should set out in writing suggestions and concerns so that you can use the protocol as a guideline that keeps your work on track (also in case of conflict). Further information about the thesis committee can be found on the GFA website <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/530099.html>. Supervisors and students have to respect the [Rules of Good Practice for Doctoral Supervision](#).

**Doctoral examination:** For each doctorate examination procedure, the graduate committee appoints an examination board of at least three members, consisting of the reviewers, authorised examiners of the thesis committee and optionally other authorised examiners. Usually there are two reviewers, the first supervisor and a second person who does not have to be a member of the thesis committee. A list of authorised examiners can be found at <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/553614.html>. In exceptional cases, the graduate committee may grant an individual examination accreditation restricted to a certain doctoral process to persons with at least a doctoral degree.

Special requirements apply if the degrees "Dr.rer.nat." or "Dr.rer.pol." are aspired (§ 6 (5) of the GFA doctoral degree regulations). At least 50% of the members on the examination board have to be authorised examiners for these degrees!

The doctoral examination consists of a written doctoral thesis, the dissertation (also cumulative) and an oral examination, the disputation. The reviewers of the dissertation may propose the grades of "summa cum laude", "magna cum laude", "cum laude" or "rite". The disputation lasts 60-90 minutes consisting of a presentation by the doctoral candidate of a maximum of 30 minutes and questions from the examination board. Questions from the audience are permitted (§ 19 (5) of the GFA doctoral degree regulations). After the disputation, the examination board decides on an overall grade for the doctoral examination. The awarding of "summa cum laude" as an overall commendation is only possible if at least three expert opinions are available including an external one (§ 15 (5) and § 16 (5) of the GFA doctoral degree regulations). An examination certificate is issued on which the overall predicate and the achievements during the doctoral studies with the acquired credits are listed.