

Information sheet: Award of Doctorates at the Department of Materials and Geo Sciences



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Prerequisites for acceptance as a doctoral candidate: Applicants have to hold a university degree (Master, Diplom, or, for „Fast Track“, Bachelor) that was concluded with a final thesis and with a final grade no worse than 2.5* or a technical college („Fachhochschule“) degree with a final grade no worse than 1.5*. Exceptions to the minimum grade may be considered by the doctoral board.

*: in the German grading system, i.e., 1=very good, 2=good, 3=satisfactory, 4=sufficient, 5=fail.

1. Confirmation of Supervision

At first, you need to obtain a written “confirmation of supervision,” signed by the desired supervisor. The respective form is provided on the [promotion web pages of the department](#).

2. Online Registration for Doctoral Candidates (Self Service)

For doing a doctorate at the Technical University of Darmstadt (TU Darmstadt), an online registration is mandatory. The enrollment as a student is optional. Both is possible all year round without deadlines.

All applicants make their registration/enrollment via the web portal TUCaN: www.tucan.tu-darmstadt.de. If you have already studied at TU Darmstadt, please use your TU-ID for login. Otherwise, please [create a new account](#). Do not be confused by the terms “application/online application” in TUCaN; for technical reasons, these are used for both registration and enrollment.

The process is almost identical for all doctoral candidates. The only peculiarity is a check of equivalency (see section 3) for candidates that are referred to as “international”. The term „international“ is used for candidates who obtained their higher education entrance qualification („Hochschulzugangsberechtigung“, HZB) or their Master’s degree outside of Germany.

HZB from	Master’s Degree from	Candidates
Germany	Germany	national
Germany	abroad	international
abroad	Germany, TU Darmstadt	international
abroad	Germany, NOT TU Darmstadt	international
abroad	abroad	international

After having completed the online process an “**application for registration / enrollment**” (for national doctoral candidates) or a “**cover sheet**” (for international doctoral candidates) will be generated in the portal. Please print out the respective document.

3. International Candidates only: Equivalence Check

The TU Office for International Admissions (Referat (Ref.) VIII A) checks international certificates for equivalence with a German university degree that would allow to become a doctoral candidate. The dean’s office of the department then receives a recommendation of equivalence (positive or negative) and, where applicable, a final grade translated into the German grading

system from the Ref. VIII A.

For this, please submit the following documents to the **Office for International Admissions** (Ref. VIII A):



- The “**cover sheet**” generated in TUCaN (see section 2)
- Certificates entitling to a doctorate: **Bachelor's/Master's certificates** with overview of subjects and grades, each as officially certified copies and translations
 - Note: copies of certified copies are not acceptable!
- Copy of your **passport**
- **Curriculum Vitae**
- Note: Language certificates are not needed.

Once your complete documents have been received, you will be issued the “**Zulassungsbescheid für die Promotion unter aufschiebender Bedingung**” (“letter of conditional admission to doctoral studies”). This admission is NOT an acceptance as a doctoral candidate. Only the department’s doctoral committee decides on the acceptance (see section 6). Additionally, you will receive your “**Antrag Einschreibung/Registrierung (international)**” (“application for enrollment/registration”). Both documents are available in the TUCaN portal under “My documents”. You will be informed about the provisioning of the documents by e-mail.

4. Application for Admission as a Doctoral Candidate to the Department

Please submit the following documents to the **dean’s office** (you need not to wait for the results of the equivalence check by Ref. VIII A):

- A copy of the **confirmation of supervision**, signed by the desired supervisor and by the doctoral mentor,
- a signed “**application for enrollment/registration**” from TUCaN,
- a signed “**application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate**” of the department (see below),
- copies of **certificates and transcripts** (Bachelor’s & Master’s or Diplom, if applicable),
- a short **CV**.

The application form for acceptance can be downloaded from the [promotion web pages of the department](#). Note that it is necessary to name a professor or a leading scientist of TU Darmstadt as a doctoral mentor and that he/she has agreed to this. The doctoral mentor should belong to a different research group than the primary advisor from section 1. It is possible to name a member of a different department. The doctoral mentor does not have to be identical to the second referee of the dissertation. He/she should have the expertise and be formally able to become your supervisor in case your original supervisor ceases to be available.

Language skills: For the acceptance as a doctoral candidate you need to present proof of sufficient German or English language skills. “Sufficient” means that you satisfy at least one of the following conditions and provide related evidence:

1. German or English is your mother tongue.
 2. The course of studies that academically qualifies you to become a doctoral candidate at the department was taught in one of these languages.
 3. You have acquired a language certificate in one of these languages at a level of at least C1.
- See the related [equivalence table of the TU Darmstadt language center](#).

The Language skills are confirmed by the signatures of the supervisor and the doctoral mentor.



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5. If you wish to enroll: Hand in Documents at Ref. II B / VIII A

- National Doctoral Candidates send their documents to Ref. II B.
- International Doctoral Candidates send their documents to Ref. VIII A.

You can infer from your TUCaN account which documents need to be submitted.

6. Doctoral Board Meeting: Acceptance as a Doctoral Candidate

In case the departmental doctoral board accepts you as a doctoral candidate you will receive a corresponding letter. In this letter you will be informed about your duty to participate in the materials science or geosciences doctoral candidates' seminar, in the materials science or geosciences colloquium, and in at least two more courses that you have to agree upon with your supervisor. In agreement with your supervisor, one of these two courses may be replaced with a suitable summer school.

Upon your application to the chair of the doctoral board and with the agreement of your supervisor, participation in the materials science or geosciences colloquium may be replaced by the participation in colloquia at other German universities or recognized non-university scientific research institutes, if there exists a scientific cooperation with them. Participation has to be documented in a suitable form. The approval of colloquia series (that need to be named in the application) is provided by the chair of the doctoral board after consultation with your supervisor. The doctoral board decides about individual cases concerning colloquia series of other institutions (e.g. foreign universities or universities without a scientific cooperation).

Moreover, the letter informs you about your duty to publish in connection with the dissertation at least one article as a first author in a peer-reviewed journal listed in the Web of Science.


Publication of the article (at least its acceptance by the journal), the participation in the seminar, the colloquium and the two additional courses have to be proven when submitting an application for installing an individual examination committee.

Applicants with a degree from a technical college ("Fachhochschule" or "Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften") will at first only receive a conditional acceptance. They obtain the additional obligation to visit main courses agreed upon with their advisor amounting to at least 12 credit points (CP) and to pass the respective exams. Only after these obligations are satisfied, the doctoral board decides to unconditionally accept the candidate. Fulfillment of this obligation has to be proven at the latest with the application of the installation of an individual examination committee.

7. Doctoral Board Meeting: Installation of an Examination Committee

You have to file an application for the installation of an individual examination committee (online form on the [promotion web pages of the department](#)) to the doctoral board for approval via the dean's office. This application should be submitted **at least three months before submission of your dissertation**.

At the same time, proof of participation in the doctoral candidates' seminar, the colloquium, the two additional courses ("Hörerschein") and, if applicable, the satisfaction of further obligations must be provided (see section 6).



With this application you have to hand in any publications that were prepared in the context of your dissertation. At this time, at least one such publication with the doctoral candidate as the first author has to have reached the status of acceptance in a peer reviewed journal listed in the Web of Science. The publication (copy of the first page is sufficient) or proof of acceptance has to be submitted along with the application.

When suggesting the composition of the individual examination committee, the doctoral candidate needs to observe the regulations of the university and the department. These are contained in the TU's general doctoral regulations and specific departmental provisions both of which are available on the [promotion web pages of the department](#). Passages relevant for the composition of the Examination Committee are the following (NOTE: translations are for information purposes only; the original German version is legally binding):

From the general doctoral regulations of TU Darmstadt:

§ 4 Examination committee

- (1) The examination committee consists of at least four individuals and is composed of:
 - a) An individual from the group of full-time professors in the lead department for the doctorate that takes the chair of the committee. The chairperson is not allowed to assume the function as a referee or advisor at the same time. If the chairperson is unable to participate, another member of the committee from this group will assume the chair function;
 - b) The referees (first referee, co-referee(s)) of the dissertation according to § 11 and
 - c) At least one additional individual who is full-time professor at the department or is authorized to be selected as a referee in accordance with § 11.

The doctoral board should ensure that the majority of members on the examination committee are from the group of full-time professors at the TU Darmstadt. The specific provisions of the department can make this majority compulsory. At least one member of the examination committee must hold the doctorate being awarded or represent a corresponding academic field.

(2) The examination committee is quorate if at least three of its members are present or electronically connected. The specific provisions of the department may prescribe a minimal size of the committee that exceeds the minimal size set by § 4 (1) sentence 1.

(3) The examination committee decides on the acceptance, revision or rejection of dissertations, carries out the dissertation defence and assesses the doctoral performance. It decides if the dissertation defence should be repeated and sets any conditions for publication of the dissertation. The requirements must be documented in the minutes.



§11 Appointment of Referees

- (1) By virtue of the admission to the doctoral procedure, the doctoral board assigns the first referee and at least one co-referee for the dissertation.
- (2) The following may be selected as referees:
 - a) Full-time professors of TU Darmstadt;
 - b) Full-time professors of other universities;
 - c) Joint professors, adjunct professors and private lecturers of TU Darmstadt, professors who have been relieved of duties, retired professors, part-time professors, honorary professors, adjunct professors and guest lecturers;
 - d) Professors of TU Darmstadt according to § 70 (1) HessHG und § 70 (5) HessHG;
 - e) Junior scientists of TU Darmstadt in the programs Emmy Noether (DFG) and Athene Young Investigator (TU Darmstadt) and other programs that aim at qualifying for a professorship and for which the members have been selected in a quality-controlled competitive procedure with independent external referees;
 - f) Individuals according to § 11 (2) a) and c) through e) until three years after leaving TU Darmstadt.
- (3) Moreover, the following individuals can be chosen as a referee:
 - a) professors who have been relieved of duties, retired professors, part-time professors, honorary professors, adjunct professors, guest lecturers and private lecturers of other universities;
 - b) Junior scientists according to § 11 (2) e) of other universities
 - c) Members of a technical college of a university of applied sciences
 - d) leading scientist of a recognised research institute.
- (4) The specific provision of the department may stipulate a minimum number of referees from the group of full-time professors of the department and may prescribe a justifying statement for the choice of referees according to § 11 (3).
- (5) The candidate may suggest referees.
- (6) In case of a double or multiple dissertation in the sense of § 1 (4) additional first referees or co-referees may be determined by the partner university/universities along the provisions of the cooperation agreement.

From the specific provisions of the department (“Besondere Bestimmungen des FB Material- und Geowissenschaften”; these relate to the general doctoral regulations of TU Darmstadt, see above):

Amendments to § 4 Par. 1:

For the Examination Committee holds: At least one of the members of the Examination Committee shall not be member of the Materials Science and Geosciences Department. The members from the group of full-time professors of the Materials Science and Geosciences Department must constitute the majority of the Examination Committee. The examination committee must consist of 5 members (including the chair).

Amendments to § 11 Par. 3:

At least one referee has to be member of the department. Referee and co-referee must not be member of the same research group.

Moreover, at least one member of the board should not belong to a Materials Science (Geo Science, respectively) department/institute if the Doctorate is to be achieved in Materials Science (Applied Geosciences, respectively).

For intended examiners and referees who are not members of TU Darmstadt, you need to provide their university and department or research institution, a respective web address with relevant



information, and submit a short CV.

8. Submission of the Dissertation

The dean's office needs to obtain a searchable pdf file and a printed copy of the dissertation for the chair of the examination commission. Moreover, each reviewer and each examiner may ask for a printed copy. Please ask your reviewers and examiners in advance if they require a printed copy so you can hand in a suitable number of copies. Please bring your pdf file on a USB stick that you can take with you afterwards. Upon request, you may submit your thesis to the reviewers and examiner yourself.

When submitting your thesis you also need to hand an originally signed "[Declaration concerning the initiation of the doctoral examination procedure](#)".

Additionally, a 100 € fee has to be paid to a TU account. The dean's office will inform you about the details upon submission.

Cumulative Dissertation

There is the possibility of a cumulative dissertation (except: fast track). The dissertation must contain at least three of your original articles that have been accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal listed in the Web of Science and that contain the main results of your dissertation. You have to be the first author of at least two of these publications. Please also read § 9 Par. 4 and 5 of the general doctoral regulations of TU Darmstadt and our corresponding "[Guidelines Cumulative Dissertation](#)".

9. Date of the Defense

Arrange yourself a date for the defense with the members of the examination committee. Please observe that the referee reports have to arrive in the dean's office at least four weeks prior to the defense and that the referees need about six weeks for the preparation of their reports. The room will be booked by the dean's office. You choose the chairperson of your defense from the group of full-time professors in the department and inform the Dean's Office about the name of the respective professor. Once date, room, and chairperson have been fixed and the referee reports have become available, the invitations for the defense can be sent out by the dean's office. This must happen at least two weeks before the defense.

Basic technical equipment (screen, video projector, camera, pc) is available in the seminar rooms of building L2|01. In all external rooms it is not guaranteed that suitable presentation equipment exists. On resp. before your exam date you are responsible yourself for preparation and setup of your presentation and, if applicable, for the connection to the preset zoom meeting. You will get instructions upon submission of your dissertation. These are also available on our [web pages](#).

10. After the Defense: Obligations and Publication

After passing the defense you will receive a letter that, if applicable, contains information about the necessity of changes of the dissertation imposed during the defense. This letter has to be signed by the first referee after the changes to the dissertation have been implemented and needs to be



returned to the dean's office (approval for printing the dissertation).

Only now, the dissertation may (and must) be published, see §19 of the "Rules for the award of doctorates at TU Darmstadt" (Promotionsordnung der TU Darmstadt). Formal provisions regarding the publication may be found on the TU web pages (s. link to FAQ list at the bottom of this document), in particular concerning the title page and the "[Declaration on the transfer of rights to the dissertation](#)" (here, the „Versionsangabe“ is the name of the file that was uploaded to the university library (ULB) for publication). You need to fill out the "declaration regarding the dissertation the transfer of rights" completely, sign it and submit it to the dean's office.

As soon as the ULB informs the dean's office that the dissertation has been published, the dean's office may hand out your doctoral certificate to you. Only after receiving the certificate you may use your doctoral title.

Links with further Information

Here are some links with information about the doctorate at TU Darmstadt and in particular at our department:

- [General Information about Doctorates at the TU](#)
- [FAQ about Doctorates at the TU](#)
- [General Doctoral Regulations \(„Allgemeine Promotionsordnung“\) and Specific Regulations of the Departments](#)
- [Information about Registration/Enrollment](#)
- [Information about the Doctorate at Department 11 \(Materials- & Geosciences\)](#)
- [Direct Link to the Documents und Forms of our Department](#)