

**Process Graduate School of Life Sciences:
Assessment for admission for a doctorate
without a master's degree or equivalent diploma**

Goal

To describe the Graduate School of Life Sciences' procedure for assessing admission for a doctorate, if the person concerned does not hold a master's degree or equivalent.

Framework

- Higher Education and Scientific Research Act
- Utrecht University PhD Regulations

Process

The intended supervisor submits a request for admission for a doctorate to the dean, or a designated person on behalf of her/him. This request consists of a curriculum vitae of the the person concerned, relevant diplomas and a motivation statement from the intended supervisor.

The dean, or a person designated on his/her behalf, submits the request to both the Board of Examiners of the Graduate School of Life Sciences, as well as to the director of the Graduate School of Life Sciences. Both independently give an opinion to the dean, or the person designated by her/him. They do this based on the supplied information and possible discussions with the intended PhD candidate and supervisor. In their judgment, they take into account the end targets of the master's degree of the Graduate School of Life Sciences.

The dean then submits a file to the Doctorate Board. This file contains:

- curriculum vitae of the intended PhD candidate, including relevant diplomas;
- motivation statement from the intended supervisor;
- opinion of the Examination Board of the Graduate School of Life Sciences;
- opinion of the director of the Graduate School of Life Sciences;
- dean's opinion and proposal for a decision for the Doctorate Board.

The Doctorate Board assesses the file and makes a decision about admission. The office of the relevant faculty informs the intended PhD candidate and intended supervisor about the decision.

Note

This process does not apply to persons with a foreign diploma equivalent to a Dutch master's degree. If, after evaluation of your foreign diploma by the International Student Admissions Office or by Nuffic, it appears that your foreign diploma is not equivalent to a Dutch master's degree, the procedure above should be applied.

Background information

1. From the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, HWH). Please note that the HWH is only in Dutch and prevails in cases of uncertainty.

Article 7.18. Award of the degrees of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy; access and design of the PhD degree.

1. The Doctorate Board of a university, the Open University or an ideological university is authorized to award the degrees of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy. The degrees of Doctor and Doctor of Philosophy are equivalent.

The award of a doctorate degree is open to everyone:

a. who has been awarded the Master's degree pursuant to Article 7.10a, first or second paragraph; and that

b. has written a dissertation, or produced evidence of ability to independently practice science, and

c. has met the requirements set out in the Doctorate Regulations referred to in Article 7.19.

In special cases, the Doctorate Board may grant access to a doctorate to persons who comply with the second paragraph under b and c, but who do not comply with the paragraph under a.

2. From the PhD regulations

Article 4 Request for admission / Exemption

After approval by the dean, PhD candidates must submit a request for admission to the Doctorate Board by the start of the research on which the doctorate is based.

The Doctorate Board may grant admission to the doctorate to those who do not possess the required degree, but who do comply with the requirements of Article 7.18 paragraph 2 sub b and c of the WHW, if the applicant demonstrates in some other way that he/she has sufficient knowledge. This request shall be accompanied by a recommendation from a professor of Utrecht University.

3. From the letter of the rector dated 19-02-2020 relating to the communication of the new PhD regulations:

If it appears that the diploma does not grant admission to the doctorate, the diploma must be submitted to the Doctorate Board for assessment prior to the start of the PhD programme. Here, a file must be prepared, containing a motivation statement of the intended supervisor and the judgment of the Examination Board about the candidate's level of education.