



Regulations for the Doctoral Program Microbiology & Immunology (MIM)

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I. General Information

1. The goal of the doctoral program in Microbiology & Immunology (MIM) is to attract motivated and talented students from all over the world to do a doctorate in the natural sciences and to provide them with an education that conveys both specialized knowledge and transferrable skills.
2. The PhD program in Microbiology & Immunology is part of the Life Science Zurich Graduate School (LSZGS), a joint organization belonging to the University of Zurich and ETH Zurich. The doctoral studies are regulated according to the Ordinance for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree at MNF (January 31, 2011), changes to the Ordinance from March 4, 2019 and the Doctoral Program Regulations at MNF (December 13, 2012) as well as the corresponding documents from ETH Zurich. Fulfilling any additional requirements imposed by the MNF is mandatory in order to obtain a doctoral degree at UZH. This concerns all those doctoral students whose research group belongs to the UZH.
3. Any additional information or documents are located on the MIM program's homepage.

II. Admission

1. Only candidates with a MSc or an equivalent degree, and who are proficient in English, will be admitted. Membership in the MIM program does not equate with a matriculation at UZH. The formal requirements for admission to UZH must also be fulfilled.
2. Track I: Online Application via the LSZGS Website
Candidates submit their applications via the LSZGS homepage (application deadlines July 1 and December 1). An admissions committee (consisting of three research group leaders belonging to the program) selects the candidates who will be invited for interviews (usually in weeks 6 and 36). Candidates who successfully pass the interview, are admitted to the program. Membership in the program expires after half a year, if a candidate cannot find a research group leader, who offers a PhD project and is willing to supervise the candidate within this timeframe.
3. Track II: Direct application to a research group leader
Applicants may also apply directly to a research group leader, who can accept them as a doctoral candidate. Candidates must then apply to the Program Coordination for admission to the program within 6 months of starting the PhD. A complete application includes the LSZGS's form, filled in online, and a letter of recommendation from their PhD advisor. The Steering Committee decides whether (i) the candidate is directly admitted; (ii) an additional admission interview is required; or (iii) the application is rejected. There are no deadlines for Track II applications.
4. Applicants who did not pass their Track I interview (with any of the LSZGS Programs) are excluded from Track II. In contrast, applicants who had applied via Track I but were not invited for an interview, are still eligible to apply via Track II.

III. Structure of the Doctoral Program

1. Curricular Requirements

In order to complete their dissertation, students must earn at least 12 ECTS Credits, in addition to the yearly committee meetings. The MIM program recommends the following ECTS distribution:

Module/Course	ECTS Credits
Compulsory Modules: "Introductory Course" ¹⁾	1
MIM Retreat	1
Active participation in a conference / congress	1
Courses within the PhD research topic (lectures, seminars, participation in conferences, etc.)	min. 5
Courses in transferrable skills and languages	max. 4
Total	min. 12

1) The Introductory Course takes place once a year

The doctoral committee members and the PhD advisor discuss and decide together with the candidate on a sensible and balanced coursework portfolio.

2. Teaching Assistance

PhD students at the MNF (UZH) are obliged to participate in 100-420 hours of teaching. The specific teaching plan is worked out with the PhD advisor and in agreement with the Biology Studies Coordination Office, according to the rules specified in the document "Teaching requirement for PhD students" (see <https://www.biologie.uzh.ch/de/Studium/Doktorat.html>).

3. Doctoral Committee and Doctoral Committee Meetings

The doctoral committee should consist of at least three members, two of which (including the head) must have the right to confer a PhD at MNF. The responsible faculty member or the thesis supervisor has to be a member of MIM.

The MIM also suggests the following guidelines for the committee's composition:

- The head (MNF faculty member or principal investigator with the right to confer a PhD at MNF).
- The PhD advisor (in the case the head and the advisor are not the same person).
- An external expert from a related field of research - ideally also a member of the MIM program.
- An expert not involved in the program, whose expertise lie outside the dissertation's area of focus.

It is mandatory that at least one member of the PhD committee is an independent person, i.e., not belonging to the same research group or being a close collaborator of the official supervisor. At least one committee member should be a basic researcher

The PhD student together with the advisor determine the composition of the doctoral committee. The composition of the committee must be reported to the MIM program coordination and entered in the MNF StudentAdmin database.

The first committee meeting must take place within the first year after registration at the MNF. For this meeting, the student should prepare a research proposal, including a description of the research project, as well as milestones and intermediate goals. In addition, a Committee Meeting Report (the form can be downloaded under <https://mim.ethz.ch/documents---links.html>) must be prepared and signed by all

meeting attendees. This report together with the research proposal is considered as doctoral agreement.

In case of an unsatisfactory student performance, the committee meeting can be repeated once. If the student fails a second time, he/she will be excluded from the program.

All subsequent meetings take place annually. Students should write a progress report prior to the meetings. The actual meeting includes a project presentation, followed by a discussion with the doctoral committee. It is imperative that the student has the opportunity to speak to the committee members without his or her direct supervisors being present. A Committee Meeting Report should be completed after every meeting, containing the results of the meeting and signed by all participants.

PhD students are responsible for organizing these meetings. At least two members of the doctoral committee (including the head) must be present. All reports and forms should be uploaded to the StudendAdmin database.

The thesis defense must take place no later than 18 months after the last thesis committee meeting.

Should a PhD student fail to comply with the regulations of the MIM PhD Program, he/she may be excluded from the program.

IV. Dissertations and Doctoral Degree

The specifications outlined in the Ordinance for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree apply here.

As mentioned therein, the doctoral thesis can be written either as a monograph or as a collection of scientific articles (cumulative dissertation). For cumulative dissertations, the MIM program does not make specific recommendations regarding the number of articles required and their publication status.