



# Regulations for the Doctoral Program RNA Biology (RNA)

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## I. General Information

1. The goal of the doctoral program RNA Biology is to offer national and international MSc graduates a structured environment for completing their PhD studies in this subject. Equivalent degrees from national and international universities can be accredited by the Faculty whose subject area is most similar.
2. The program is run by the Life Science Zurich Graduate School (LSZGS), a joint organization belonging to UZH and ETHZ, as well as the Graduate School for Cellular and Biomedical Sciences (GCB) of the University of Bern (Unibe)
3. For UZH and ETH students, doctoral studies in RNA Biology are regulated according to the Ordinance for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree (PVO) and the Doctoral Program Regulations at the Faculty of Science (MNF). For doctoral students at the University of Bern, doctoral studies in RNA Biology are regulated according to the GCB's Ordinance for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree. Conferral of a PhD is based on the following requirements:
  - Composition and successful defense of a dissertation containing original research.
  - Earning of 12 ECTS credits for students at ETHZ or UZH or 6 ECTS credits for students at Unibe.
  - Completion of all the relevant conditions and additional requirements set by the institute or department where the student matriculated.
4. The doctoral degree is conferred by the university or institution of higher learning, where the PhD advisor is employed (ETHZ, UZH or Unibe).

## II. Admission

1. Candidates are admitted to the program over two separate tracks.
2. Track I: Online application on the LSZGS website  
First, the application must be accepted according to the conditions of the Admissions Committee for the RNA Biology PhD program. Then applicants are interviewed by the head of a research group participating in the program with the right to confer PhDs at ETHZ, UZH or Unibe. If a candidate is accepted and a research group head with the right to confer PhDs at ETHZ, UZH or Unibe offers to serve as their advisor, he or she will be admitted to the program over track I.
3. Track II: Direct application to the head of a research group  
Candidates may also directly apply to and interview with a research group leader participating in the program with the right to confer PhDs at ETHZ, UZH or Unibe. Candidates in track II must submit the following documents to the Admissions Committee for the RNA Biology PhD Program in electronic form:
  - 1) CV
  - 2) Brief letter of intent (0.5 to 1 A4 page)
  - 3) A letter of confirmation written by the PhD advisor, explaining why he or she approves their admission.

The members of the Admissions Committee decide whether to accept a candidate based on the documents listed above. The candidate will subsequently be informed of their decision via email.

4. Doctoral students at GCB, who have been admitted to the RNA Biology PhD program, must follow the admissions procedures at GCB.

### **III. Structure of the Doctoral Program**

#### **1. Curricular Portion**

By the time students apply for their PhD defense, they must have earned the respective number of credit points. One credit point corresponds to 30 hours of work. The required ECTS credits can be earned by completing courses and attending scientific conferences. The following courses and activities are recommended to doctoral students in the RNA Biology program:

- RNA Biology lectures I & II (3 ECTS credits per lecture)
- Participation in the NCCR RNA & Disease Summer Schools
- Participation in the Swiss RNA workshop
- Attendance of the NCCR RNA & Disease Research seminars

#### **2. Course of Studies**

Students' course of studies is dependent on the regulations described in the Ordinance for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree of their respective home institutions.

#### **3. Teaching Assistance**

Working as a teaching assistant is a requirement for PhD conferral as specified in the regulations of each home institution:

Unibe: Teaching assistance should not exceed 10% employment.

UZH: Teaching assistance of at least 100 hours and no more than 420 hours.

### **IV. Doctoral Committee**

The composition of the advisory committee (Unibe) or doctoral committee (ETHZ/UZH) is regulated according to the provisions in the Ordinance for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree of each home institutions

Every advisory/doctoral committee should contain at least two members of the RNA Biology PhD program. Two of its members should belong to different institutes.

### **V. Doctoral Degree**

Conferral of a PhD is regulated according to the provisions of each home institution.