

Thesis extensions

According to the RerNat-O Doctoral Degree Regulations (Appendix 11 § 2), the PhD thesis has to be submitted within 3 years after the start of the project. Application for two extensions (max. 6 months each) is possible. The GGNB Board in its meetings on 12 June 2009, 12 February 2018 and 23 November 2023 has agreed on the following procedure for applications for extensions of doctoral theses:

General rules:

- Discuss need for thesis extension in thesis advisory committee meetings
 - Scientific reasons
 - Other reasons (e.g. significant delay due to illness or parental leave)
- Discuss the further funding for the extension
- Complete the application form:
 - Explain well-founded scientific (and/or, if applicable, other) reasons for extension in detail,
 - Attach detailed schedule until requested new deadline,
 - Have TAC members sign application for extension form at meeting or shortly thereafter, or copy them in when sending us the application by email
- Send the following documents to GGNB/IMPRS/MolMed/CVS Office three months (resp. five months for 4+ extensions, see below) before submission deadline:
 - Application for extension form
 - Schedule
 - In case of other reasons for extension, e.g. sick leave, parental leave:
 - Proof of absence times, e.g. sick certificates, confirmation of parental leave
 - Statement by supervisor explaining in detail the delay and the time needed to overcome it
 - (Signed) TAC Meeting confirmation sheet
- If other reasons apply indicate them in the application form – once the “regular” extension has started, the absence times cannot be considered anymore
- Decision on first and second extension (3 + ½ + ½ years) is made by program committee
- Decision on extension beyond 4 years (possible only in exceptional cases) is made by GGNB Board (meets only 4 times per year, see below)

1st extension (for max. 6 months):

The thesis advisory committee members and the PhD student discuss the timeline in the 3rd thesis advisory committee meeting (2.5 years after the start of the thesis project).

2nd extension (for max. 6 months):

If a second extension is required, the thesis advisory committee meets in due time to evaluate the need for additional experiments. At this meeting, a timeline for submission needs to be defined to comply with the four-year limit given by the GGNB Doctoral Degree Regulations.

IMPORTANT:

4+ extensions:

An extension beyond 4 years is possible only in very exceptional cases with the consent of the members of the GGNB Board. Any extension beyond 4 years again requires a thesis advisory committee meeting. It is strongly advised to discuss a realistic timeframe and potential need for this extension already in

the meeting for the second extension. The entire application procedure has to be completed at least **5 months** before the current submission deadline.

The following application procedure has to be followed:

- hold a TAC meeting ,
- individual discussion with the two thesis advisory committee members (without supervisor),
- meeting of the PhD student with the speaker of the program,
- submission of written application for extension to GGNB/IMPRS Office, including:
 - o detailed statement: the reasons for the extension have to be beyond the control of the doctoral student and were impossible to foresee,
 - o application form signed by all thesis advisory committee members and the speaker of the program,
 - o detailed schedule for submission,
 - o detailed statement by the supervisor explaining why the thesis cannot be submitted on time and what steps are planned to ensure the completion of the doctorate during the extension time,
 - o separate statements by the other two thesis advisory committee members why they support a further extension.

The program speaker will then present the case before the GGNB Board, which has to decide on the extension. The GGNB Board may decide to invite the supervisor and/or PhD student to present the reasons for the extension at one of its meetings.

The GGNB Board usually convenes four times per year (early spring, late spring, fall, winter).