

Self-check

Why do I want to do a doctorate?



- I am fascinated by science.
- I want to learn more about my field of research.
- I find it exciting to delve deeper into scientific issues.
- Scientific research is fun.
- I intend to pursue a career in academia or research & development (outside of academia).
- A doctorate is common in my discipline (e.g. chemistry, biology).
- I hope to find a better job with a higher income.
- My family and friends expect me to do a doctorate.
- I would like to enjoy university life a bit longer.
- I have no other idea or no other job choice to making a living at the moment.

If you agree mostly with the second half of the questions, you should seriously review your motivation for pursuing a doctorate!

A doctorate requires considerable self-motivation, stamina and a genuine interest in academic work. Those who are motivated in terms of content and intrinsic motivation usually cope better with challenges such as setbacks or frustration.

Ask yourself: Do I want to do a doctorate because I am passionate about science and research – or because I am driven by external factors (career, environment, lack of alternatives)?

Clear, intrinsic motivation is a decisive success factor for a fulfilling and successful doctorate.

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Requirements for a doctorate



Formal

- I have the grades and language skills as required by the respective FU departmental doctoral regulations.
- I already have been offered a place for a doctorate.
- I have already looked into funding options for a doctorate, have secured funding, or plan to apply for funding..

Personal

- I am persistent even when faced with setbacks.
- I can handle criticism and failures while still being able to motivate myself.
- I assign myself work tasks and work on them in a disciplined manner.
- I am familiar with the basics of scientific writing and with the publication culture in my research field.
- I am willing to work on the same topic for three years or longer.

Private

- I receive support from family and friends in overcoming challenges. I am aware of the fact that pursuing a doctorate may restrict my family and leisure time activities.
- I feel that I am in good health and confident that I can bear potential stress elements (mental and physical) related to pursuing a doctorate.

For a doctorate, you should agree with most of these statements.

Take time to honestly consider your answers.

Seek exchange:

Your impression can be supplemented by a conversation with people from your personal environment, but also with current doctoral candidates, supervisors or colleagues. This will give you additional insights and help with any unanswered questions.

Familiarize yourself with the requirements of a doctorate:

Visit the websites of the Dohlem Research School, the relevant doctoral office, read field reports, talk to doctoral candidates or attend information events. This will create realistic expectations.

Don't be afraid to admit your doubts:

A doctorate is not always the right path - there are many fulfilling career paths.