



Evolution and Ecology Research School Tübingen (EVEREST)

Checklist for EVEREST students

This checklist aids in structuring your involvement in EVEREST. Unsure? Refer to the FAQs on the next pages. No answer to your question? Contact everest@uni-tuebingen.de.

1	2	3	What?	Actions to be taken	Done?	FAQ
			Agree with your prime supervisor on your PhD project, incl. funding	→ Register as a PhD student with the Faculty of Science. → General information → Faculty registration form	<input type="checkbox"/>	1,2
				→ Send copy of this registration to your supervisor + everest@uni-tuebingen.de	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
			Complete EVEREST registration, incl. suggested Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC)	→ Send EVEREST registration form to everest@uni-tuebingen.de [within 3 months after PhD started]	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
				→ Send picture of yourself for Website to everest@uni-tuebingen.de	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			TAC-1 meeting: Arrange date for your first meeting [within 6 months after PhD started]	→ Write <i>TAC 1 research proposal</i> and send to TAC members 2 weeks before the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
				→ Send <i>TAC 1 meeting protocol</i> to everest@uni-tuebingen.de + all TAC	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
			After your TAC-1 meeting (the latest!), complete your <i>Supervision agreement</i> .	→ Send supervision agreement signed by all TAC members to everest@uni-tuebingen.de	<input type="checkbox"/>	4,5
			PhD retreat	→ Participate during first year, recommended in subsequent years. Attended years: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7, 12
			1 st credit update on scientific and transferrable skills	→ Send your first credit update, together with supporting documents, to everest@uni-tuebingen.de	<input type="checkbox"/>	12
			TAC-2 meeting: Takes place during 2 nd year of PhD.	→ Submit arranged date to EVEREST office by 31 Jan of your second year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
				→ Write <i>TAC 2 research update</i> , send to TAC two weeks before the meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
				→ Send <i>TAC 2 meeting protocol</i> to everest@uni-tuebingen.de + all TAC	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
			Hilgendorf lectures	→ Attend regularly	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
			Meeting StEvE	→ Present talk at least once. Year(s): <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9, 12
				→ Attend (passively, poster) each year. Attended years: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9
			Doctoral student seminar (DOSE)	→ Attend regularly. 14 attendances over 3 years required. Dates: / / / / / / / / / / / /	<input type="checkbox"/>	10, 12
				→ Host once (suggested in 2 nd year) Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
			2 nd credit update on scientific and transferrable skills	→ Send your second credit update, together with supporting documents, to everest@uni-tuebingen.de	<input type="checkbox"/>	11, 12
			TAC-3 meeting: Takes place during 3 rd year of PhD.	→ Submit arranged date to EVEREST office by 31 Jan of third year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
				→ Assemble <i>TAC 3 pre-meeting research update</i> , send to TAC members 2 weeks prior to meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
				→ Send <i>TAC 3 meeting protocol</i> to everest@uni-tuebingen.de + all TAC	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
			Meeting w/ EVEREST secretary (at least 1 month before thesis submission)	Arrange meeting w/ EVEREST secretary to check fulfilment of EVEREST requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	13
			Thesis submission	→ Arrange with Faculty of Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	13
			Thesis defence	→ Arrange with Faculty of Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	13
			Checkout form	→ Complete the Checkout form and send it to everest@uni-tuebingen.de	<input type="checkbox"/>	13



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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

(1) Why should I enrol in the EVEREST graduate school?

As a member of EVEREST, your PhD project is integrated into the lively evolution and ecology research environment in Tübingen. PhD students under supervision of EVEREST members are routinely subscribed to the research school, PhD students in other groups may join on request. → [Info leaflet](#) for incoming students online.

(2) What about the costs for EVEREST?

Participating research groups (scored at the level of professorships) pay a yearly fee of € 500 for each participating PhD student, to a maximum of € 1,500 per year. These fees will *not* be paid by the individual student, but from one of the group's own accounts (e.g. annual budget, external funding, overheads). Note that costs for graduate programs may be implemented in research grant applications.

(3) How to register as a PhD student in EVEREST?

Registration is a **2-step process** that involves, first, formal registration as a PhD student with the Faculty of Science, and second, formal registration in EVEREST.

- (a) *Registration with the Faculty:* Use the forms provided on the [faculty website](#). Make sure that you send copies of this registration also to (i) your direct thesis supervisor(s) and (ii) to the EVEREST secretary (everest@uni-tuebingen.de).
- (b) *Registration with EVEREST:* This registration is central to inform the graduate school about the start of your PhD thesis and help assembling your individual *Thesis Advisory Committee*. Use the [EVEREST registration form](#) and send the original signed form to the EVEREST secretary (everest@uni-tuebingen.de).

(4) What is the role of the EVEREST supervision agreement?

The Supervision Agreement is central to your EVEREST registration. It represents a reciprocally binding agreement between you and your *Thesis Advisory Committee* members to support your education within EVEREST. For all details on the supervision agreement, check the ...

→ [EVEREST Supervision agreement.pdf](#)

(5) What is a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC), and how to assemble it?

The *Thesis Advisory Committee* is there to guide you throughout your PhD project and provide stimulating input beyond that of your direct supervisor. For all details on the role and composition of *Thesis Advisory Committees*, check the ...

→ [EVEREST TAC forms and rules.pdf](#)



(6) How to schedule, prepare, structure, and document TAC meetings?

Please find detailed information on the scheduling (once per year), preparations required by the PhD student (finding a room, writing your PhD status report), the structure of a meeting (talk, discussion, private meetings), and its documentation (TAC protocol forms) in a dedicated document:

→ [EVEREST TAC forms and rules.pdf](#)

(7) What is the PhD retreat, and how can I contribute?

The PhD retreat is an informal 2 to 3 day event where all EVEREST PhD students convene at a nice location somewhere in Southern Germany, exchange about research and career planning, and have time to discuss scientific issues with participating faculty from EVEREST. The retreat strengthens ties among PhD students and advisors in EVEREST in a relaxed atmosphere, while also supporting scientific progress. The meeting is organised by a small committee of 2-3 students, each awarded 1 cp.

→ [PhD retreated online](#)

(8) What are Hilgendorf lectures, why should I attend, and how can I contribute?

The Hilgendorf lecture series is dedicated to Franz Martin Hilgendorf (1839-1904), a pioneer in the formulation of the evolution theory who did his PhD in Tübingen. It provides a framework within EVEREST to invite high profile international researchers for a public guest lecture on their most recent and exciting research. Usually, EVEREST organises three Hilgendorf lectures per semester. To enhance benefits for EVEREST PhD students, we arrange **joint dinners** for up to 5 students with the Hilgendorf speaker. Moreover, we encourage speakers to stay in Tübingen for 2 days, offering time to arrange further meetings, for example to discuss your current research ideas.

EVEREST PhD students have the option to **invite one Hilgendorf speaker** per year. This requires that the student representatives collect proposals, organise votes, and ultimately invite the candidate (jointly with the EVEREST coordinators) well in time.

→ [Hilgendorf lecture online](#)

(9) What is the StEvE-meeting, and what is my expected contribution?

In autumn every year, EVEREST members organise a 2-day *Meeting of all Students in Evolution and Ecology* (StEvE) in Tübingen. The prime incentive is to have PhD students at any stage present and discuss their research proposals, progress reports, or near-final data analyses. The meeting is attended by EVEREST researchers as well as BSc or MSc students interested in ecology and evolution. EVEREST PhD students are expected to attend each year's meeting (if in Tübingen) and orally **present** their own research **at least once**. Multiple contributions (e.g. a poster with the research proposal in the first year, and a talk on final analyses in third year) are warmly encouraged.

→ [Meeting StEvE online](#)



*(10) What is the **Doctoral Seminar (Dose)**, and what is my expected contribution?*

The doctoral seminar supports continuous informal exchange among PhD students and offers insights into the each other's research projects and approaches. Doctoral seminars are scheduled by the EVEREST student representatives and usually take place once every month. Each *Dose* is **hosted** by a single PhD student, who is expected to provide a brief introduction to her or his research project. The format is flexible – consider adding “hands-on” components to complement a brief introductory talk, e.g. by showing your key techniques or introducing research equipment available in your group. Use the opportunity to seek input regarding open questions with respect to the planning or technical implementation of your project. Students may also dedicate Dose slots to discussions about research topics or skills of broader interest.

→ [Doctoral seminar online](#)

*(11) What kind of **skill training and support** is EVEREST offering?*

EVEREST students have multiple options to enhance their skills and obtain individual support:

- (i) Attend MSc courses offered at the University of Tübingen,
- (ii) Participate in the offers of the graduate academy of the University,
- (iii) Participate in the offers of the [Max Planck Research School](#),
- (iv) Attend dedicated skill training workshops offered by EVEREST faculty,
- (v) Contact (associate) members of EVEREST for individual guidance (e.g. regarding statistics, bioinformatics, scientific writing, ...),
- (vi) Attend specialised methodological workshops outside the University (check funding options with your supervisor or the EVEREST coordinators).
- (vii) Seek funding from EVEREST to organize an own workshop in Tübingen.

A detailed list of suggestions is regularly updated by the EVEREST coordinators and can be obtained on request.

*(12) What are the rules regarding the acquisition of **credit points** in EVEREST?*

EVEREST PhD students acquire 15 ECTS cp in total over their 3 years study period. Please make sure to regularly update the EVEREST office about your activities, for which you can acquire ECTS, at least once a year. This includes providing supporting documents for your activities. For specific requirements and flexibility, please check our detailed overview on credit points in EVEREST.

→ [Credit point regulations online](#)

*(13) How to organise the **submission and defence** of my PhD thesis?*

It is most crucial that you plan and organise your PhD submission and defence well in advance. In terms of **formal regulations**, familiarize with the [requirements of the Faculty of Science](#). Make sure you have all required documents in place (including, for example, an official police clearance certificate), and you propose a panel of 2 thesis examiners plus 2 additional oral defence examiners as to comply to current regulations.

In terms of **organisation**, contact the (two) examiners of your written thesis in time and assure that they are available at your intended time of submission. Also, contact the (four) examiners for your oral defence and fix date and time. Be reminded that the official examiners of your thesis can, but don't need to be members of your EVEREST *Thesis Advisory Committee* (TAC).

Finally, please **inform** the EVEREST office and all members of your TAC (in particular when they are NOT your oral examiners) about your defence. Also, consider arranging a meeting with the



EVEREST secretary no later than 1 month prior your defence as to cross-check the status of your EVEREST credit points.

Once your thesis has been officially accepted by the Faculty of Science, you obtain your official **EVEREST certificate**, which complements the Doctoral diploma and also accredits the courses and skills you have obtained while being an EVEREST student.

If you apply for jobs before your PhD thesis has been finished, EVEREST can provide a confirmation of your enrolment in EVEREST on request.

After finishing your thesis, make sure to officially check out of EVEREST by completing and submitting your Checkout Form (this would also have to be done if you had to check out of EVEREST prematurely).

*(14) What is the role of **student representatives** in EVEREST, and how to become one?*

Every two years, the EVEREST PhD students elect two representatives (one from Biology, one from Geosciences) who will be directly involved into the organisation of the research school. Student representatives (i) are members of the EVEREST steering committee (SC) and the EVEREST board, and are invited to all respective meetings (usually 2-4 per year), (ii) coordinate the Doctoral seminar (Dose), (iii) together with the EVEREST coordinators initiate and support the organisation of the PhD retreat, and (iv) present and discuss the needs and concerns of students to the EVEREST board.