

Welcome new PhD students

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Bonn-Cologne Graduate School
of Physics and Astronomy

ML4Q
MATTER AND LIGHT FOR
QUANTUM COMPUTING

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Overview

- **What is the BCGS? Other GradSchools and programmes**
- **How to register as PhD student?**
- **Docfile and KLIPS**
- **Some formal aspects of the PhD regulations**
- **Thesis Advisory Committee**
- **Further important aspects for PhDs**
- **Special training offers**
- **Albertus Magnus Center**

Joint GradSchool in Physics in Cologne & Bonn

- Founded in 2007, all graduate students in Physics/ Astronomy in Cologne and Bonn are members of the BCGS by now.
- 5-year programme, MSc + PhD (2 + 3 yrs)
Cologne: ~120 MSc + ~150 PhD (steady state)
- All fields of Physics/Astronomy represented in Cologne & Bonn (+ FZJ, + MPIfR).



Aims and Key Features

- **International, competitive graduate programme, attract gifted students already after BSc**
- **Joint teaching programme, complementary research interests in Cologne & Bonn**
- **Excellent & productive research environment for PhD students**



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Benefit for PhD students?

- **Structured PhD programme vs. Individual PhD**
 - Thesis Advisory Committee, not only one supervisor
 - Teaching offers (e.g. Intensive Weeks)
 - Regular Poster Session
- **Financial support**
 - Funds for travel reimbursement
 - Hardship cases
- **Special training offers**
 - Specifically for BCGS e.g. “Scientific Integrity“
 - Also from AMC (Cologne) & Graduate Center (Bonn)

Other important programmes

- **Other GradSchools (additional membership possible):**
 - SFB 956 (Astro, Bonn & Cologne)
 - IMPRS Astro (Bonn & Cologne)
 - FZJ (...)
- **“Umbrella“ programmes (offering trainings, further support)**
 - Cologne: Albertus Magnus Center for Early Career Researchers (AMC)
 - Bonn: Bonn Graduate Center
- **Scientific training programmes**
 - ML4Q Research School (Aachen, Bonn & Cologne)

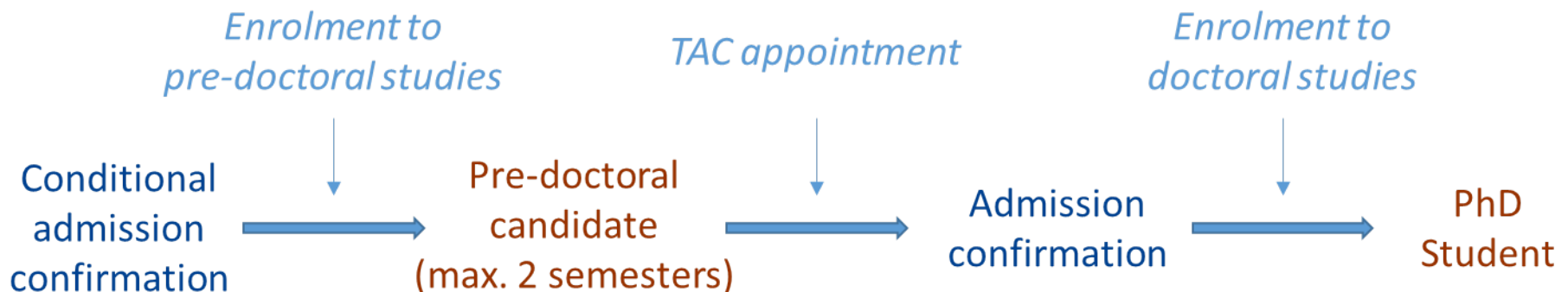
How to register as PhD student?

▪ **Doctoral office of the faculty + Docfile:**

- You need to register in Docfile, fill in the application form and provide documents listed at:

<https://mathnat.uni-koeln.de/en/doctoral-candidates/doctoral-procedure>

- All documents (including application form) should be uploaded to Docfile as scanned pdf
- The signed application form should be sent to the doctoral office



How to register as PhD student?

- **Enrolment at the university as a (pre-)doctoral student (Students' Office or International Office).**
 - **TO KEEP IN MIND:** you need to be enrolled throughout your PhD studies.
- **During your PhD you will need to provide additional documents, e.g. the confirmation of attending the Scientific Integrity course.**

Docfile

- **Tool for online registration & management for doctoral candidates**

- **Why is it needed?**

Due to new regulations, universities have to provide statistical information about their doctoral students

- **What is it good for?**

You can upload your documents as well as update your personal and contact data online

It simplifies the communication between dean's office and graduate schools

- **Once a year check your docfile status, submit changes to *mnf-docfile@uni-koeln.de***

KLIPS – tool for Campus Management

- **What is it good for?**
 - Download & printing of student's documents (e.g. confirmation of student status)
 - Online management of personal information and **semester fee**
 - *Registration for courses and overview of exam results*
 - *Search for courses, lecturers or rooms*
- **To use it – register with your uni-account**

Some formal aspects of the PhD regulations

New PhD regulations (as of March 2020)

- **Being a member of a GS is the rule!** (If not, you need to provide a supervision agreement including the name of 2nd supervisor.)
- **Compulsory course on “Scientific Integrity“** (GS-members will get this via the BCGS)
- **PhD students have to register in the doctoral office at the beginning of their PhD project**
- **PhD students have to be enrolled for the complete PhD time** (old regulations: enrolled for at least two semesters)

Some formal aspects of the PhD regulations

New PhD regulations (as of March 2020)

- **First, enrollment in “preparatory PhD studies“** (2 semesters at most!). **After documents are checked conditional admission – only after TAC is appointed unconditional admission and enrollment as PhD student.** (As a result: enrolled for the complete PhD time)
- **Degrees: Dr. rer. nat./PhD** (instead of only Dr. rer. nat.)
- **Further changes refer to the dissertation and the referees** (list available upon request).

Thesis Advisory Committee

- **What is it?**
 - Consists of direct PhD supervisor and two additional mentors of relevant expertise
 - Accompany the student throughout the PhD project, via regular TAC meetings and whenever additional support is needed (e.g. if original project plan needs modification).
 - Can serve as a mentoring platform in scientific development and career planning

Thesis Advisory Committee

- **Why is it good for you?**
 - It's good for your project(s), if you can get external feedback and discuss potential problems or new directions with someone not directly involved.
 - Mentor outside of your group can be helpful if there are issues between you and your supervisor, that are not that easily solved in the dependence position.

THESE DO NOT HAVE TO BE 'BAD' ISSUES

- Things are working well, you have enough to write up, but your boss doesn't want you to stop, because there are still so many side projects to follow – an opinion from external prof might help in keeping your PhD in planned time frame.

NO TAC – NO PhD

Thesis Advisory Committee – practical issues

- **Selection of the TAC:**
 - You should arrange your TAC together with your PI, but make sure you feel comfortable with people you chose as you mentors!
 - Your TAC members should have an expertise that is useful for your topic.
 - It is advisable to have one TAC member from partner university if it has an added value for the project (for ML4Q students, it would be optimal to have two external members).
 - You should assemble your TAC within 6 months.

Thesis Advisory Committee – practical issues

- **Formalities:**
 - You and your TAC members have to sign the Mentoring Agreement and submit it to BCSG office
 - You should have at least 1 TAC meeting during your PhD, meeting once a year is recommended.
 - The TAC meeting should be documented by filling the form, to be submitted to the BCGS office.

Further important aspects for PhD students

- **Accommodation**
- **Insurances (Health, Liability)**

Health insurance is mandatory (should be done before or shortly after the arrival), Liability insurance („Haftpflicht“) is highly recommended
- **Type of residence permit: according to § 16 (as a student) vs. § 18 (as employee)**

Important differences, contact International Office to figure out what is best for you
- **Contract issues (incl. taking holidays, sick leave)**

Training offers

- **Registered PhD students can use the offer of the Albertus Magnus Centre (UoC) and Bonn Graduate Centre (UoB)**
- **Training offered by BCGS and its ‘subprogrammes’**
 - Scientific Integrity
 - Career Coaching for female scientist
 - Research Data Management
 - Alumni Career Talks
 - ...

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