

Procedure for Pre-Doctoral Evaluation (Predoc) - Faculty of Biology

Purpose of the Exam:

The exam aims to evaluate doctoral candidates' readiness for independent research by assessing their approach to the research problem, their knowledge of the field and relevant literature, and their critical thinking skills. Additionally, the exam will determine the suitability of the proposed project for PhD-level research.

Composition of the Examining Committee:

Before submitting the PreDoc proposal, an examiners proposal form must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School at the Technion. The examining committee should consist of at least five members:

- The primary supervisor
- A co-supervisor, if applicable
- A representative from the Committee for Graduate Studies in the Faculty of Biology, appointed by the committee
- A faculty member from another faculty or university
- Two additional faculty members

Key Points Regarding the Examination Committee Members:

- On the examiner proposal form, accurately fill out the column titled "Examiner's Connection to the Proposed Research".
- Examiners must hold the rank of Assistant Professor or higher, an equivalent rank in the research faculty, or be recognized experts in the relevant research field(s).
- At least one of the examiners must be at the supervisor's level or more senior.
- The committee chairman is typically the representative from the Graduate Studies Committee, provided he/she holds at least the rank of supervisor. If not, the chairman will be appointed from among the members of the examining committee by the Vice Dean for Graduate Studies.
- In accordance with the Technion Graduate School's procedures, none of the examining committee members should have direct collaboration with the student or their supervisor concerning the proposed research project.
- Faculty members or researchers with expertise in the research topic may be added as additional examiners.

Duties of the Committee Chairman:

- Responsible for the timeline of the exam.
- Ensure the exam is conducted formally, with the student expected to respond to the examiners' questions independently, without any assistance or intervention from the supervisor(s).
- Ensure the exam is carried out in a dignified and respectful manner.
- Appoint a follow-up committee.
- Complete and submit the required exam forms.

Candidate Examination:

- The exam will be held approximately one month after the submission of the PreDoc proposal, with all examiners and the student physically present.
- In exceptional cases, and with prior approval from the Vice Dean for Graduate Studies, a hybrid exam may be conducted, allowing one examiner to participate remotely via Zoom or a similar platform.
- Examinees are not expected to provide refreshments or drinks.
- The exam is expected to last no longer than two hours.
- Please do not exclude the student at the beginning of the exam. Instead, allow the student to introduce themselves and share any personal issues or challenges they have faced while carrying out the project.
- The supervisor will provide their opinion on the student and/or the proposed research only at the conclusion of the exam.
- The student's research presentation should include the following elements (not necessarily in this order):
 - Overview of the research subject including background material
 - Presenting and justifying the research hypothesis and/or research goals
 - Preliminary results and their analysis
 - Research plan according to the goals, including methods
 - Alternative approaches, highlighting critical points/achievements
 - Project timeline
- At the conclusion of the exam, a decision will be made regarding both the student's passing status and the committee's acceptance of the research proposal. A passing status will be valid solely for the presented research topic and for a period not exceeding six years from the exam date. In the event of a disagreement among the examiners, a vote will be conducted.



- Should the student pass the exam, any additional requirements, such as the completion of specific courses or necessary improvements and clarifications in the research proposal, will be outlined.
- In case the student does not pass the exam, the reasons for the failure must be clearly specified. Additionally, it will be determined whether the student may resubmit the research proposal, along with establishing a schedule for resubmission (within two semesters). The student who fails the exam must submit a revised, concise description of their research to the supervisor approximately one month before the scheduled re-examination date.
- The chairman, in consultation with the supervisor, will appoint a follow-up committee to serve as the student's advisory team. This committee will provide ongoing guidance and support throughout the PhD program.