UNIL | Université de Lausanne
Faculté de biologie et de médecine

ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE FÉDÉRALE DE LAUSANNE

MD-PHD PROGRAMME
GENERAL INFORMATION

The MD-PhD programme of the University of Lausanne and the EPFL (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne) belongs to the inter-university MD-PhD programme, created by the Swiss University Conference, in collaboration with the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences.

Objectives

The MD-PhD programme allows medical students who are curious, motivated and with a keen interest for sciences, to follow a course of the 3rd cycle in sciences and biology. It also allows students to acquire scientific competences for research, centered on the diseases and the patient. It is important that the translational link to the clinics remains established and that the clinical teaching persues after the MD-PhD programme.

Admission requirements to the MD-PhD programme

The students receive information on the MD-PhD programme at the beginning of their studies. The candidates must have passed the exams of the 1st year or the following years of the Bachelor in Medicine. The selection criteria is based on successful grades, scientific commitment, planned research project and an interview with the President of the MD-PhD Commission. Once selected candidates are admitted into the programme.

Admission requirements to the MD-PhD doctorate

Are admitted in the MD-PhD doctorate, students who

- hold a Master in Medicine of a Swiss University or an other diploma judged equivalent by the UNIL Admissions Office
- have passed the preparatory training (Track I or II)

Programme description

The MD-PhD programme includes a *Preparatory training* and a *Doctoral training* part.

Preparatory training

Each candidate selected by the MD-PhD Commission must follow courses in disciplines which prepare them in an optimal way to biomedecine, clinical research, human or social sciences.

The success of the preparatory training is the prerequisite for the continuation of the MD-PhD programme after obtaining a Master degree in Medicine.

Theoretical knowledge is acquired during the studies in medicine (Track I) or after obtaining a Master degree in Medicine (Track II).

Track I

The preparatory training (min. 25 ECTS credits) is conducted in parallel to the studies in medicine and contains courses, seminars, practical works and the Master thesis, proposed by the Lausanne University School of Medicine. The ECTS credits can be caught up with summer schools. The PhD thesis starts after completion of the studies in medicine.

Track II

The preparatory training (min. 25 ECTS credits) is conducted after completion of the medical degree and contains courses and practical works, proposed by the Lausanne University School of Biology or the EPFL. The MD-PhD thesis starts after the preparatory training.

Deadline registration (Track II)

- **before 30 April** (autumn semester) and **before 30 November** (spring semester)
- EPFL : no deadline

Doctoral training

Candidates have a choice between :

- UNIL programme in the field of sciences and other disciplines of competence of the FBM; this doctorate in medicine and in sciences (MD-PhD) is granted by the University of Lausanne on proposal for its Faculty of Biology and Medicine.
- EPFL programme in the field of cellular and molecular biology, biotechnologies, neurosciences, biomedical engineering and other disciplines of competence of the EPFL; this doctorate in medicine and in sciences (MD-PhD) is granted jointly by the UNIL and the EPFL.

Thesis work

The place and the subject of the thesis must be selected as soon as possible. The characteristics of the PhD thesis correspond to the usual provisions of the Doctoral School. This work lasts minimum 3 years.

Thesis committee

The composition of the thesis committee is managed by each Doctoral School. The thesis committee controls each year the advance of the thesis and takes up duties of council, coordination and mentoring near the students. The training during the doctorate is equivalent to 12 ECTS credits.

Application process

1) The interested candidate contacts the MD-PhD secretary: md-phd@unil.ch. (send a CV with a photo, diplomas/grades and results of the exams in medicine);
2) The candidate discusses his intentions with the President and the Secretary of the MD-PhD Commission and he receives all the information necessary. The President and the Secretary of the MD-PhD Commission are at disposal of the candidate for new meetings, information or to help with the research of the laboratory and the financing.
3) The candidate is called by the local Commission to present his motivations, his host laboratory and a plan of his preparatory training (min. 25 ECTS credits). He has to find a thesis director who agrees to supervise his MD-PhD thesis and provide financial support. The host laboratory must be affiliated to the FBM or EPFL Doctoral School (send forms I & II).
4) The candidate is now allowed to start his preparatory training and enrolls FBM or EPFL courses.
5) The candidate presents again his thesis project (Powerpoint presentation: 5min and 3 slides). If passed: Full acceptance into the programme.
6) The candidate is now fully recognized as a PhD student of the FBM or EPFL Doctoral School. He joins one of the existing schools for his MD-PhD and conducts his continuing training during his thesis, according to the requirements of the respective schools.

Subsidies

The MD-PhD students can apply for a specific SAMS (Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences) fellowship. This is a prestigious competitive fellowship, awarded directly to the candidate, and which provides a salary up to 3 years. **Only students with a Swiss citizenship or established in Switzerland for at least 2 years are eligible.** The candidates selected by the local Commission who would not have obtained a fellowship, are authorized to continue the programme but will have to find other subsidies for their doctorate.

The NCCR (National Center of Competence in Research in Molecular Oncology) offers a certain number of scholarships per year for candidates interested by this discipline. The candidates are selected by the local Commission.

The inter-university MD-PhD commission (SAMS) also offers one or two scholarships per year for physicians or dentists who would like to carry out a doctorate in human or social-ethical sciences or jurisprudence. The scholarships last three years. The training programme will be especially adapted to the candidates and to the requirements of the Faculties concerned. Interested candidates can contact the local MD-PhD Commission.

The granting of contributions does not cover the preparatory training.

Contact

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