

Curriculum for the doctoral programme in Social Sciences

Version: August 2022

University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 11 May 2009, 22nd edition, number 167

Typing error corrections: University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 9 June 2009, 24th edition, number 175

1. (Minor) amendment: University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 25 June 2012, 36th edition, number 254 Typing error corrections: University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 8 October 2012, 1st edition, number 7

2. (Minor) amendment: University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 29 March 2017, 21st edition, number 87

3. Amendment and republication: University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 25 June 2018, 34th edition, number 170

Curriculum amendment: University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 29 June 2020, 26th edition, number 139

4. (Minor) amendment: University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 26 March 2021, 25th edition, number 98

5. (Minor) amendment: University Gazette 2002 Universities Act as of 1 April 2022, 19th edition, number 82

6. (Minor) amendment: University Gazette 2022 Universities Act as of 28 June 2022, 46th edition, number 350

§ 1 Objectives and qualification profile

(1) The doctoral programme in Social Sciences at the University of Vienna serves to prepare doctoral candidates for academic work in their field of doctoral research as well as to educate and promote early stage researchers. The doctoral programme provides an academic education of international standard and entails independent academic work in the doctoral candidate's field of doctoral research.

(2) Graduates of the doctoral programme in Social Sciences are able to conduct independent research of international standard in their respective field of doctoral research.

(3) Subject to the availability of courses, the doctoral programme can be completed partially or fully in a foreign language.

§ 2 Scope of application and entry requirements

(1) This Curriculum applies to students who intend to write a doctoral thesis in a field of doctoral research that corresponds to one of the bachelor's or diploma programmes in the field of social sciences or which can be attributed to social sciences.

(2) Doctoral candidates can write a doctoral thesis in the following fields:

- Demography, geography, development studies, social and cultural anthropology, nursing science, political science, communication, psychology, sociology and science and technology studies.

(3) In addition to the standardised prerequisites specified in the 2002 Universities Act, requirements for admission to the doctoral programme in Social Sciences are

- a. the completion of an eligible diploma or master's programme, or
- b. the completion of an eligible degree programme at least at the same level of university education at a recognised Austrian or foreign post-secondary educational institution.

(4) To compensate for significant disciplinary differences, supplementary examinations can be stipulated, which have to be completed until the end of the second semester of the doctoral programme. The Rectorate may specify which supplementary examinations are a prerequisite for taking examinations specified in the Curriculum of the doctoral programme.

(5) If the significant disciplinary differences according to para. 3 exceed the extent of 60 ECTS credits, this is not considered an eligible degree programme and the candidate is not admitted to the doctoral programme.

§ 3 Qualitative entry requirements

(1) Applicants for the doctoral programme in Social Sciences have to undergo a special admission procedure that assesses whether the applicant fulfils all the qualitative admission requirements.

(2) The assessment of the applicants' qualifications is based on the following criteria:

- a) Adequate subject-specific and methodological expertise with regard to the intended doctoral programme and the intended field of doctoral research.
- b) Motivation and academic potential to undertake the intended academic work, and compatibility of the intended doctoral project with a current research area at the University.

(3) For the assessment of these criteria, applicants have to provide the following application documents:

1. Curriculum vitae including a list of publications and evidence of previous professional experience, e.g. research activities, provided that this is a special qualification required for the intended doctoral project.
2. Letter of motivation describing the applicant's personal eligibility for a doctoral programme in Social Sciences in one of the fields of doctoral research at the University of Vienna stated above.
3. Description of the intended doctoral project and the planned link to research at the University of Vienna in the intended field of doctoral research.
4. Written indication by a member of the Faculty/Centre who is allowed to supervise a doctoral thesis which states their willingness to supervise the relevant doctoral project according to the stipulations in the section of the University's Statutes governing university studies. This indication does not replace the supervisor's official confirmation of supervision or the approval of the intended doctoral project by the competent body responsible for study matters. If the applicant can demonstrate a compelling reason, the applicant does not have to submit such an indication.

(4) The competent body responsible for study matters may issue guidelines for the presentation of the documents described in para. 3. These guidelines have to be published in due time on its website.

(5) If the written documents are insufficient for reaching a positive or negative decision on the fulfilment of the qualitative admission requirements, the competent body responsible for study matters may also interview the applicant. The use of video conferencing systems and similar communication media is permissible subject to the verification of the applicant's identity without any doubt. The procedure and results of the interview have to be recorded in summary minutes.

§ 4 Duration and scope

The degree programme duration is 3 years.

§ 5 Structure of the doctoral programme

(1) The degree programme begins with an entry period which ends with the conclusion of the doctoral thesis agreement. The aim of this entry period is the development of an individual research proposal and the preparation for the public presentation at the Faculty.

(2) During the doctoral programme, doctoral candidates are required to complete the following:

1. Examination credits: During the doctoral programme in Social Sciences, doctoral candidates have to complete achievements comprising 30 ECTS credits. At least 20 ECTS credits must be obtained through courses, of which at least 15 ECTS credits must be obtained through courses with continuous assessment. All activities relating to the doctoral thesis (attending academic workshops, holding presentations at international conferences, subject-related aspects in the organisation of academic events, academic practical courses, teaching, participation in research projects, etc.) which are linked to the doctoral thesis may be considered achievements relevant to the Curriculum. Before the conclusion of the doctoral thesis agreement, doctoral candidates may complete courses with continuous assessment comprising 10 ECTS credits (see section 11). This does not include the SE Research Workshop (Forschungswerkstatt) and the Advanced Seminar for Doctoral Candidates (Vertiefungsseminar). Doctoral candidates may only attend the SE Introduction Course (Einführungskurs) before they successfully complete the public presentation at the Faculty.
2. The application for approval of the intended doctoral project in the form of a written research proposal has to be submitted within the first year of studies to the competent body responsible for study matters, and has to include objectives and methods, a time schedule and list of resources needed, as well as a confirmation of supervision. For the research proposal, the competent body responsible for study matters can issue formal specifications the doctoral candidate has to meet. They have to present their intended doctoral project in a public presentation at the Faculty.
3. Doctoral candidates have to submit periodical, at least annual, progress reports (the frequency of which is to be specified in the doctoral thesis agreement) to their supervisors.
4. After concluding the doctoral thesis agreement (see section 7), the doctoral candidates have to write a doctoral thesis (see section 8).
5. When all examinations have been passed and the doctoral thesis and public defence are positively assessed, the doctoral programme is completed (see section 9). The stipulations in the section of the University's Statutes governing university studies apply.

(3) The exact specification of courses that have to be completed by the doctoral candidate as well as all details about writing and supervision of the doctoral thesis have to be recorded in the doctoral thesis agreement.

§ 6 Submission of the intended doctoral project and public presentation at the Faculty

(1) The doctoral candidate has to submit an application for approval of the intended doctoral project within the first year of doctoral studies to the competent body responsible for study matters in the form of a written research proposal (see section 5, para. 2, lit. b) and has to present the intended doctoral project in a public presentation at the Faculty. For the research proposal, the competent body responsible for study matters can issue formal specifications the doctoral candidate has to meet.

(2) For the submission and approval of the intended doctoral project and the public presentation at the Faculty, the stipulations in the section of the University's Statutes governing university studies apply.

§ 7 Doctoral thesis agreement

For the doctoral thesis agreement, the stipulations in the section of the University's Statutes governing university studies apply.

According to the Statutes, a doctoral thesis agreement has to be concluded between the supervisor and the doctoral candidate and approved by the competent body responsible for study matters. In addition to the stipulations in the Statutes, the aspect of reconciling the doctoral thesis agreement with any programme or work relevant to the doctoral thesis must be considered.

The doctoral thesis agreement consists of the following items:

1. The doctoral candidate's name, student ID number, date of birth;
2. The supervisors' names;
3. The topic of the doctoral thesis;
4. The curriculum under which the doctoral candidate is studying;
5. The field of doctoral research to which the doctoral thesis pertains;
6. The research proposal, on which the approval is based;
7. The time schedule for the intended doctoral project;
8. The proof of the academic achievements required by the Curriculum;
9. The key dates regarding supervision, especially the frequency of feedback meetings between supervisors and the doctoral candidate;
10. Letter of commitment on compliance with good academic practice signed by the doctoral candidate.

§ 8 Doctoral thesis

(1) Doctoral candidates have to write a doctoral thesis, which serves to demonstrate the candidate's ability to master academic topics independently. The doctoral thesis is expected to be of a quality to merit publication, at least in parts, in accordance with the standards in the field of research.

(2) The publication of partial results of the doctoral project in academic journals and their presentation at academic conferences prior to the submission of the doctoral thesis is encouraged.

(3) The doctoral thesis may take the form of a monograph or a collection of papers.

(4) The completed doctoral thesis must be submitted to the Studienpräses for assessment. According to the University's Statutes, the Studienpräses will forward the thesis to at least two suitable assessors qualified in the respective subject. In any case, every supervisor of a doctoral thesis is entitled to present a statement on the doctoral thesis of which the assessors have to be notified. The doctoral thesis must be assessed within a maximum period of four months.

(5) If two assessors have been consulted and one of them decides to fail the doctoral thesis, the competent body responsible for study matters has to consult another assessor.

(6) If two or three assessors have been consulted and two of them decide to fail the doctoral thesis, the final result is fail.

§ 9 Public defence

Provided that all achievements specified in section 5, para. 2 have been met and the doctoral thesis has been positively assessed, the doctoral candidate has to pass a final oral examination (public defence) in front of an examination committee. This single examination consists of the presentation and defence of the academic work by the doctoral candidate and an examination by an examination committee. This examination includes the doctoral thesis topic and related subject areas.

§ 10 Grading

For grading, the stipulations in the section of the University's Statutes governing university studies apply.

§ 11 Course classification

(1) All courses with non-continuous assessment (npi) have to be offered as one of the following types of courses:

Lecture for doctoral candidates (Vorlesung für DissertantInnen, VO), non-continuous assessment: Lectures (including special lectures or Spezialvorlesungen) present course contents in lectures and offer a detailed insight into special subject areas and current issues of research in social sciences. Lecture series (Ringvorlesungen) consist of independent, but content-wise related lectures held by more than one academic. They offer a detailed insight into partial aspects of special subject areas or current issues of research in social sciences. At the end of the semester, the doctoral candidates' knowledge is tested in a written or oral examination.

(2) All courses with continuous assessment (pi) have to be offered as one of the following types of courses:

Seminar for doctoral candidates (Seminar für DissertantInnen, SE), continuous assessment: Seminars offer research-oriented insight into a theoretical or methodological area.

Seminars can be offered as advanced seminars (Vertiefungsseminare) if they offer insights into a theoretical or methodological area at an advanced level. The prerequisite for participation in advanced seminars is the conclusion of the doctoral thesis agreement. Information about the expected subject-specific prior knowledge is published in the course directory.

The SE Research Workshop (Forschungswerkstatt) is a course with continuous assessment and focuses on the analysis of empirical material that has already been collected. The prerequisite for participation in the Research Workshop is the conclusion of the doctoral thesis agreement.

The SE Introduction Course (Einführungskurs) is a course with continuous assessment and prepares doctoral candidates for the public presentation at the Faculty. Doctoral candidates may only attend the Introduction Course before they successfully complete the public presentation at the Faculty.

Research colloquia for doctoral candidates (Forschungskolloquien für DissertantInnen) are another subtype of seminars and are courses with continuous assessment: Research colloquia resemble seminars and serve to enable doctoral candidates to closely examine their own field of doctoral research. If possible, doctoral candidates should attend a colloquium held by their supervisor.

For all courses with continuous assessment, at least two partial achievements are the basis for assessment.

§ 12 Courses with a limited number of participants and registration procedures

(1) The following general limits on the number of students apply in the following courses:

The maximum number of participants in courses with continuous assessment is limited to 15.

(2) Modalities concerning the registration for courses and examinations as well as the allocation of places in courses are governed by the stipulations in the Statutes of the University of Vienna.

§ 13 Examination regulations

(1) Proof of performance in courses

The lecturer of a course is responsible for making the necessary announcements according to the stipulations in the Statutes.

(2) Examination content

The examination content relevant to preparing and holding examinations must be in line with the required number of ECTS credits.

(3) Examination procedure

The examination procedure is subject to the stipulations in the Statutes of the University of Vienna.

(4) No double recognition and no dual use

Courses taken and examinations passed in the master's or diploma programme, which constitute an entry requirement for the doctoral programme, cannot be recognised again in the doctoral programme.

§ 14 Academic degree

Graduates of the doctoral programme, who have been admitted pursuant to section 2 and section 3, are awarded the academic degree “*Doktor/Doktorin* der Philosophie”, abbreviated as Dr. phil.

§ 15 Entry into force

- (1) This Curriculum enters into force on 1 October 2009.
- (2) The amendments to the Curriculum as stated in the University Gazette of 25 June 2012, number 254, 36th edition enter into force on 1 October 2012.
- (3) The amendments to the Curriculum as stated in the University Gazette of 29 March 2017, number 87, 21st edition enter into force on 1 October 2017.
- (4) The amendments to the Curriculum as stated in the University Gazette of 25 June 2018, number 170, 34th edition enter into force on 1 October 2018 and already apply to admissions as of the winter semester of 2018/2019.
- (5) The amendments to the Curriculum as stated in the University Gazette of 26 March 2021, number 98, 25th edition enter into force on 1 October 2021.
- (6) The amendments to the Curriculum as stated in the University Gazette of {pubdate2}, number {article_number}, {document_number} edition enter into force on 1 October 2022.
- (7) The amendments to the Curriculum as stated in the University Gazette of 28 June 2022, number 350, 46th edition enter into force on 1 October 2022.

§ 16 Transitional provisions

- (1) This Curriculum applies to all students who commence their degree programme as of the winter semester of 2009/2010.
- (2) If, at a later stage of the degree programme, courses are no longer offered which were compulsory under the original curricula, the competent body responsible for study matters specified in the organisational regulations of the University of Vienna decides ex officio (equivalence regulation) or at the request of the doctoral candidate which courses and examinations have to be completed instead.
- (3) Doctoral candidates enrolled in the doctoral programme in Philosophy (“Doktoratsstudium der Philosophie”) prior to the entry into force of this Curriculum can voluntarily and at any time accept the provisions of this Curriculum by means of a simple statement. The competent body specified in the organisational regulations will be entitled to determine in general or on a case-by-case basis which of the courses taken and examinations passed will be recognised for this Curriculum.
- (4) Doctoral candidates who pursue a degree programme which entered into force prior to this Curriculum are entitled to complete their degree programme by 30 November 2017.
If, at a later stage of the degree programme, courses are no longer offered which were compulsory under the original curricula, the competent body specified in the organisational regulations of the University of Vienna decides ex officio or at the request of the doctoral candidate which courses and examinations have to be completed and recognised instead by issuing an official notice.
- (5) Doctoral candidates who already pursued a doctoral programme in the field of social sciences prior to the date stated in section 15, para. 3 are entitled to complete their degree programme by 30 April 2021.
- (6) The competent body responsible for study matters specified in the organisational regulations is entitled to determine in general or on a case-by-case basis which of the courses taken and examinations passed will be recognised for this Curriculum.