



Curriculum of the Doctoral Programme and the PhD Programme in Life Sciences

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§ 1 Qualification profile

The doctoral programme serves to prepare doctoral candidates for scientific work in the field of doctoral research. It provides a scientific education of international standard and aims to enable graduates to conduct independent research of international standard in their respective field of expertise.

§ 2 Scope of application and admission requirements

- (1) This Curriculum applies to doctoral candidates 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 this field or to subject-specific didactics of a relevant teacher education programme. Doctoral candidates can write a doctoral thesis in the following fields:
 - Biology
 - Nutritional Sciences
 - Molecular Biology
 - Pharmacy
 - Sport Science
- (2) Admission to the degree programme is based on the relevant provisions set out in the 2002 Universities Act as amended.
- (3) Graduates in the Nutritional Science, Pharmacy and Sport Science fields of doctoral science are awarded the degree "Dr.rer.nat", graduates in the fields Biology and Molecular Biology are awarded the degree "PhD".

§ 3 Structure of the doctoral programme

- (1) The degree programme duration is 3 years.
- (2) During the doctoral programme, doctoral candidates are required to complete the following:
 - a. Courses comprising 18 to 30 ECTS credits (corresponding to a subject/course equivalent to 12 to 30 hours per week per semester). Within this framework following achievements are possible:
 - b. Participation in relevant workshops/conferences: 2 ECTS/week (corresponds to 5 days)
 - c. Presentation of scientific results at conferences (lecture or poster), provided that the doctoral candidate presents these himself/herself: 4 ECTS.
 - d. Relevant research stays abroad, placements, methodology seminars: 2 ECTS/week (corresponds to 5 days)
 - e. Submission of the application for approval of the intended doctoral project to the competent body responsible for study matters within the first year after admission (see § 4).
 - f. Public presentation of the intended doctoral project at the Faculty (in consideration of protection of patent laws, intellectual property and other rights, if necessary)
 - g. Submission of a periodical, but at least annual, progress report,
 - h. Writing and completing the doctoral thesis (see § 6)
 - i. Public defence (see § 7).
- (3) The attendance of additional courses or workshops may be required for the acquisition of transferable skills.¹ These may be attended on a voluntary basis during the orientation period, in order to acquire the basics of scientific research, writing methods and project-oriented work as well as to concretise the intended doctoral project and set up the doctoral project.
- (4) The required achievements, (including ECTS credits and hours per week per semester), the language of instruction in the courses as well as all specifications pertaining to the writing and supervision of the doctoral thesis are recorded in the doctoral thesis agreement.
- (5) The overall scope of required achievements should generally not exceed 30 ECTS credits. In individual, justified cases, the upper limit can be exceeded given the approval of the competent body responsible for study matters.
- (6) Depending on the field of doctoral research the doctoral programme can be conducted

¹ This includes competences which go beyond discipline-specific knowledge and are relevant to the professional career of the doctoral candidates. This includes academic writing, project management, etc.

predominantly in a foreign language (English). In the Molecular Biology field of doctoral research the programme can be conducted exclusively in a foreign language (English).

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

The doctoral candidate has to submit an application for approval of the intended doctoral project, together with a confirmation of supervision by the supervisor. This application has to include a research proposal, a time schedule, as well as a list of all necessary resources. In principle, the research proposal is approved by the competent body responsible for study matters, following a public presentation at the Faculty (§ 3, section 2 c). If the intended doctoral project is part of a research project which has already been approved externally in accordance with international standards, the competent body responsible for study matters may approve the doctoral project prior to the presentation at the Faculty. The approval of the intended doctoral project is, in any case, a prerequisite for signing a doctoral thesis agreement.

§ 5 Doctoral thesis agreement

- (1) As set out in 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.

According to the Statues, the doctoral thesis agreement must include the following points:

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 study achievements required by the curriculum;
 9. Supervision specifications, in particular with regard to the frequency of feedback meetings between the supervisor and the doctoral candidate;
 10. Declaration of commitment of the doctoral candidate to abide by to the rules and regulations of good scientific practice.
- (2) The doctoral thesis agreement must be supplemented with periodical, but at least annual, progress reports made by the doctoral candidate in agreement with the supervisor. The unilateral termination of the agreement as well as substantial changes (regarding the

aforementioned points § 5, section 1, line 1–5) to the doctoral thesis agreement require the approval of the competent body responsible for study matters.

- (3) Courses prescribed for admission to the doctoral programme cannot be recognised as academic achievements pursuant to § 3, section 2 of this Curriculum.

§ 6 Doctoral thesis

- (1) Doctoral candidates have to write a doctoral thesis, which serves to demonstrate the candidate's ability to master scientific topics independently (§ 51, section 2, line 13 of the 2002 Universities Act). The doctoral thesis is expected to be of a quality that allows for 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 scientific journals and their presentation at scientific conferences prior to the submission of the doctoral thesis is encouraged.

§ 7 Public defence

Provided that all requirements specified in § 3 have been met and the doctoral thesis has been positively assessed by the assessors, the doctoral candidate has to pass a final oral examination (public defence) in front of an examination committee. This examination consists of the presentation and defence of the scientific work. The composition of the examination committee is set out in the provisions of the Statutes of the University of Vienna.

§ 8 Examination regulations

- (1) All courses are to be offered as one of the following types of courses:
- Courses with non-continuous assessment– lectures (*Vorlesung* – VO): The contents of these courses are presented in lectures. At the end of the semester, the doctoral candidates' knowledge is tested in a written or oral examination.
 - Courses with continuous assessment– seminars (*Seminare* – SE), introductory seminars (*Proseminare* – PS), project practical (*Projektpraktikum* – PR), exercises (*Übung* – UE): These courses serve the scientific discussion or to learn techniques and methods to deal with scientific issues and solve specific questions of a field. Course participants are assessed on the basis of multiple practical, written or oral assignments during and at the end of the course.
- (2) The number of participants in courses with continuous assessment is limited to a maximum number of 10. The competent body responsible for study matters may allow exceptions, e.g. if the course is part of a structured doctoral programme, and decide on a different maximum number of participants.

- (3) Registration procedure for courses with limited numbers of participants: if the number of registrations exceeds the maximum number of places available on a particular course, the following admission criteria apply:
- Candidates in a structured doctoral programme are to be prioritised if these courses are specifically announced within this programme
 - Selection on the basis of grades (grades in competences related to the course, successfully completed courses imparting important background knowledge).
 - Candidates in the relevant degree programme are to be prioritised if these courses are announced in these programmes.

§ 9 Completion of the doctoral programme

- (1) The doctoral programme is successfully completed if all requirements laid down in § 3, section 2 have been met.
- (2) Graduates of the doctoral programme are awarded, depending on their field of doctoral research, either a doctoral degree in Natural Sciences, abbreviated as “Dr.rer.nat.”, or a Doctor of Philosophy, abbreviated as “PhD”, pursuant to § 54, section 4 of the 2002 Universities Act.
- (3) According to § 2, section 1 the academic degree is awarded as follows:
- Biology (PhD)
 - Nutritional Sciences (Dr.rer.nat)
 - Molecular Biology (PhD)
 - Pharmacy (Dr.rer.nat)
 - Sport Science (Dr.rer.nat)

§ 10 Entry into force and transitional arrangements

- (1) This Curriculum enters into force on 1 October 2009.
- (2) Doctoral candidates enrolled in the doctoral programme in Natural Sciences 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 must decide either generally or in each individual case which courses completed and examinations passed can be recognised for this Curriculum.
- (3) 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, in the course of study, courses which were originally required in the degree programme are no longer offered, the competent body specified in the organisational regulations of the University of Vienna must decide *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.

- (4) The amendments to the Curriculum as stated in the University Gazette of 27 June 2012, number 277, edition 37 entered into force as of 1 October 2012.