

# Curriculum of the Doctoral Programme in Natural Sciences and in Technical Sciences in the field of Natural Sciences

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This is only a translation and not a legal binding document. Legally binding are only the curricula issued in the University Gazette.

## § 1 Qualification profile

The doctoral programme serves to prepare doctoral candidates for scientific work in the field of the 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

(1) This curriculum applies to students who want 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 a master programme in those Natural Sciences subjects for which no bachelor's programme is available) or to subject-specific didactics of a relevant teacher education programme. Doctoral candidates can write a doctoral thesis in the following fields:

- *Astronomy*
- *Chemistry*
- *Environmental Sciences*
- *Earth Sciences*
- *Geography*
- *Geophysics*
- *Information Technology*
- *Mathematics*
- *Meteorology*
- *Physics*

- *Psychology*
- *Sport Science*

(2) Admission to the programme is based on the relevant provisions set out in the 2002 Universities Act as amended.<sup>1</sup>

(3) With the exception of doctoral theses in the field of “Computer Science”, graduates are awarded the degree in Natural Sciences, abbreviated as Dr.rer.nat. Graduates in the field “Computer Science” are awarded the degree “Dr.techn”, pursuant to § 54 (4) 2002 Universities Act.

### **§ 3 Structure of the doctoral programme**

(1) The degree programme duration is 3 years.

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

- a) Courses comprising 12 to 30 ETCS credits (corresponding to a subject/course equivalent to 8 to 30 hours per week per semester),
- b) any additional achievements as set out in the doctoral thesis agreement (e.g. participation in workshops, presentations at international conferences, handling academic aspects in the organization of academic events, internships or other practical experience, etc.),
- c) 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),
- d) Public presentation of the intended doctoral project at the Faculty (in consideration of protection of patent laws, intellectual property and other rights, if necessary see § 4),
- e) Submission of a periodical, but at least annual, progress report,
- f) Writing and completing the doctoral thesis (see § 6)
- g) Public defence (see § 7).

(3) The attendance of additional courses or workshops may be required for the acquisition of transferable skills.<sup>2</sup> 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 points and hours per week per semester) as well as all specifications pertaining to the writing and supervision of the doctoral thesis are recorded in the doctoral thesis agreement.

(5) The doctoral programme can be conducted partially or completely in English.

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<sup>1</sup> Universities Act 2002 §§ 63, 64 admission regulations

<sup>2</sup> 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.

## **§ 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 d). If the intended doctoral project is part of a research project which has already been approved externally in accordance with international standards<sup>3</sup>, 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**

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.

## **§ 6 Doctoral thesis**

(1) Doctoral candidates have to write a doctoral thesis, which serves to demonstrate the candidate's ability to master scientific topics and challenges 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 thesis in academic journals and their presentation at scientific conferences prior to the submission of the thesis is encouraged.

## **§ 7 Public defence**

Provided that all study requirements laid out 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.

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<sup>3</sup> This requirement is considered as fulfilled with regard to FWF projects, approved PhD/doctoral programmes, and Initiative Groups.

## **§ 8 Examination regulations**

(1) As part of the doctoral study in Natural Sciences and Technical Sciences both courses with continuous assessment of coursework and with non-continuous assessment can be taken.

(2) Courses with continuous assessment of coursework are limited to a maximum number of 12 participants. The competent body responsible for study matters may allow exceptions for space, staff, financial, and/or other logistical reasons.

(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:

(i) Candidates in a structured doctoral programme are to be prioritised if these courses are specifically announced within this programme

(ii) If attendance of courses is mandatory for the completion of the doctoral programme, i.e. students have put down certain courses in their doctoral thesis agreement then they are to be given priority.

(iii) Selection on the basis of grades (grades in competences related to the course, successfully completed courses imparting important background knowledge).

(iv) Duration of study

## **§ 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 from a field of research other than Computer Science are awarded a doctoral degree in Natural Sciences, abbreviated as “Dr.rer.nat.”, pursuant to §54 (4) of the 2002Universities Act.

(3) Graduates of the doctoral programme from the field of research Computer Science are awarded a doctoral degree in Technical Sciences, abbreviated as “Dr.techn.”, pursuant to §54 (4) of the 2002Universities Act.

## **§ 10 Entry into force and transitional arrangements**

(1) This Curriculum enters into force on 1 October 1 2009.

(2) Doctoral candidates enrolled in the doctoral programme in Natural Sciences according to § 2 (1) 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 and by issuing an official notice.

(4) The amendments of the Curriculum as stated in the University Gazette of 25 June 2012, number 255, edition 36 entered into force as of 1 October 2012.

#### **APPENDIX:**

According to § 5 of the statutes, the doctoral thesis agreement must include following points:

1. The student's name, students 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 that need to be completed according to 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 to the rules and regulations of good scientific practice.