

**SCIENTIFIC DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES
at the University of Applied Arts Vienna**

Guideline

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No liability for errors. Legally valid are, without exception, only those versions of the curriculum and the statutes published in the gazette of the University of Applied Arts Vienna.

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General information and curriculum

“Doctoral programmes” mean degree programmes which develop students’ ability to undertake independent scientific work, and promote the training and career promotion of junior academic staff, building on the basis provided by diploma and master’s programmes. (§ 51 Abs. 2 Z 12 [UG](#))

“Doctoral theses” mean academic theses which, unlike diploma and master’s theses, serve to demonstrate students’ ability to master scientific topics independently. (§ 51 Abs. 2 Z 13 [UG](#))

The University of Applied Arts Vienna has established the following doctoral programmes in the sciences, each with a study duration of three years:

- Doctoral Programme in **Natural Sciences** (Programme Number: 791)
- Doctoral Programme in **Philosophy** (Programme Number: 792)
- Doctoral Programme in **Technical Sciences** (Programme Number: 786)

All doctoral studies are more closely regulated by a [curriculum](#). It also contains a qualification profile and a description of possible fields of occupation for graduates.

Upon successful completion of the degree programme, a corresponding **academic degree** is awarded, depending on the degree programme: Doctor of Natural Sciences (Dr.rer.nat.), Doctor of Philosophy (Dr.phil.), or Doctor of Technical Sciences (Dr.techn.).

Information on all doctoral programmes at the University of Applied Arts is available on the university's website under [Study Programmes](#) > Degree programmes > Doctorate. Details on the amount and due date of the **tuition fee** are available on the university website in the section [Financial Issues](#) .

Entrance phase

Admission

Please consult the curriculum for admission **requirements**. The [Vice-Rector for Research and Digitality](#) is responsible for admissions, as is the [Office of Student and Academic Affairs](#), which can be contacted with any questions relating to admissions: studien@uni-ak.ac.at. The University of Applied Arts' website provides all relevant information on admission, including deadlines and the required forms: [Admission](#) > Necessary steps > Scientific doctorate. First, the "[Application for admission to a doctoral programme](#)" must be submitted. This must include a dissertation topic and one supervisor (see next point).

Supervision

A **supervisor with a *venia docendi* (authorisation to teach) appropriate to the dissertation topic** is required to supervise and assess dissertations. The application for admission (see above) must already include the name of a potential supervisor who has been independently researched by the student. This helps students to properly situate their projects at the University of Applied Arts. The potential supervisor must be contacted **before the start of the programme**. Students must obtain a **provisional, informal confirmation** of supervision, which must be enclosed with the application for admission. The supervision will be confirmed in the dissertation agreement (see below) within the first two semesters.

You can find an overview of the institutes at the University of Applied Arts on the university website ([Research and Education in Art and Science](#)). This is where you will also find the corresponding contact details for teaching staff.

If the dissertation is **interdisciplinary**, **two supervisors** are required: a first and a second supervisor. Students may propose an **external second supervisor** (e.g. a professor from another university), provided that this person has a teaching authorisation (*venia docendi*) and is qualified in the subject. The second supervisor **does not** have to be included in the application for admission.

Exposé and short presentation

Within the first two semesters, students must present their research project through an **exposé** and in a **short public presentation** to a scientific advisory board. As the requested primary supervisor must also be a member of the scientific advisory board, students should at least discuss their registration for **the short presentation with the requested primary supervisor**, and ideally also with the requested secondary supervisor, if applicable. Students **must be admitted** to the program at the time of the short public presentation.

The **exposé** is a written proposal for the planned dissertation project and describes the research interest and the specific research question. The recommended length is approx. 2,500 words (excluding sources) and should include the following:

- Name of the doctoral candidate, name(s) of potential supervisor(s)
- Working title
- Description of the doctoral project
- Clearly formulated research question
- Presentation of the planned methodology
- References
- Timetable and work schedule
- Short curriculum vitae as an appendix

Three dates are offered each year for the **short presentation** (in March, May and December). Students have **15 minutes** each to present their research project to the scientific advisory board, followed by 10 minutes of discussion. The **current dates** and **deadlines** can be found online here: [Support Doctoral Projects](#) > Short Presentation > Registration, dates, and deadlines.

Support Art and Research

To **register** for a presentation, please send an e-mail to Support Art and Research (for doctoral projects: sdkf@uni-ak.ac.at) by the respective deadline, in consultation with the requested primary supervisor. Students are required to provide the following **preliminary information** upon registration:

- **Topic** of the dissertation
- Possible supervisor(s)
- **Language** of the dissertation (German/English)
- Whether a **subject-specific** or **interdisciplinary project** is being pursued and **which subjects** are involved; a second supervisor is mandatory for an interdisciplinary project
- Whether a **monograph** or **cumulative dissertation** is planned (further information on cumulative dissertations can be found in APPENDIX 1 of the curriculum)

Students should send the **exposé as a PDF file** by e-mail to sdkf@uni-ak.ac.at. The relevant deadline can also be viewed online at [Support Doctoral Projects](#) > Short Presentation > Registration, dates, and deadlines. Support Art and Research will then send the exposés to the scientific advisory board and all participants.

Dissertation agreement

After the short presentation, the scientific advisory board will decide whether or not to recommend the presented dissertation project, and if so, under which conditions. The advisory board must include the desired primary supervisor. The supervisor(s) will determine whether the dissertation can be realised in the form presented, based on the scientific quality of the exposé and the short presentation, taking into account the recommendation of the scientific advisory board. Shortly after the presentation, Support Art and Research will inform the students whether a recommendation has been made and, if so, which one. If the scientific advisory board **rejects** the dissertation project, it will also determine whether the project may be presented again at a future short presentation date.

Once the feasibility of the dissertation project has been confirmed, students complete the [dissertation agreement](#) together with their supervisor(s) and submit the form by e-mail to Support Art and Research (sdkf@uni-ak.ac.at). Support Art and Research will then forward the form to the Vice-Rector for Research and Digitality for approval. In the event of approval, the dissertation agreement is sent by Support Art and Research to the student, the supervisor(s) and the Office of Student and Academic Affairs, which stores the agreement in the student file. **With the signing and approval of the dissertation agreement, the supervision of the student by the supervisor(s) is confirmed.**

The dissertation agreement must be completed after the short presentation no later than the **end of the second semester** of study. Amongst others, the **recommendation of the scientific advisory board** and the **planned courses** (see research phase) must be included. Students must decide on what courses to take together with their supervisor(s). 8 ECTS credits coming from private seminars or dissertation seminars with the respective supervisor(s) are mandatory. A maximum of 24 ECTS credits can be completed.

Amendment of the Dissertation Agreement

It is possible to change the dissertation agreement. Students must explain and justify the planned changes together with their supervisor(s) in a letter. The letter must include the following points:

- Information on the doctoral candidate (name, matriculation number, e-mail)
- Specification of the doctoral programme
- Information on the initial dissertation project (working title, date of the short presentation)
- Details and justification of the planned change(s)
- Date, declaration of consent and signature of all supervisors and the student

At the same time, the dissertation agreement must be redrafted by the student and supervisor and sent to Support Art and Research (sdkf@uni-ak.ac.at) together with the letter of amendment. Support Art and Research forwards everything to the Vice-Rector for Research and Digitality for approval and forwards the result to all parties involved.

Support Art and Research

Research phase

Course examinations

In addition to writing an academic dissertation, students must complete coursework totalling **a maximum of 24 ECTS credits**. These are stipulated in the dissertation agreement. In all cases, it is compulsory to **attend private seminars or dissertation seminars totalling 8 ECTS credits with the respective supervisor(s)**. Students may not complete more than one Privatissimum or seminar for doctoral candidates before concluding the dissertation agreement.

Interim presentation

In addition to the short presentation, a **public interim presentation** is recommended, which takes place in the presence of the first supervisor and, if applicable, the second supervisor and external respondents. The aim is to present the research progress based on preliminary research results. Further internal and/or external presentations are also welcome, for example, in the context of active participation in conferences or congresses. Interim presentations that are already planned can be recorded in the dissertation agreement (see above).

Stays abroad

The [International Office](#) of the University of Applied Arts is available for information on stays abroad. Interim presentations already planned can be recorded in the dissertation agreement (see above). Any planned stays abroad can be recorded in the dissertation agreement (see above).

Provision of workstations

[Support Art and Research](#) provides **temporary workstations and infrastructure for researchers and students** within the scope of available funds. Students enrolled in scientific doctoral programmes must have **already completed their dissertation agreement** in order to use these services. All relevant information can be found in the respective [infosheet](#).

In addition, the [library](#) can be used. The University of Applied Arts offers workshops with different terms of use. Further information and contact persons can be found on the [university's website](#).

Termination of the supervisory relationship

If a student has not performed well over a period of three semesters, the Vice-Rector for Research and Diversity may terminate the supervisory relationship in consultation with the supervisor. The student's position must be taken into account when terminating the supervision.

Final phase

The doctoral programme is completed with the rigorosum (doctoral examination). This includes:

- the positive assessment of all specified **courses**
- the positive assessment of the **dissertation**
- the oral defence of the dissertation (**defensio**) before an examination committee

All requirements for graduation can be found on the university's website in the section [Graduation](#).

To enter the final phase, students must obtain the following **informal confirmations**:

- confirmation from Support Art and Research (sdkf@uni-ak.ac.at) that the **short presentation** has been passed, and the **dissertation agreement** concluded, and
- a confirmation from the [Office of Student and Academic Affairs](#) that all **courses** specified in the dissertation agreement have been successfully completed.

These confirmations must be submitted by the student to the [Office of the Dean of Studies](#), together with the Dissertation Agreement and the Application for Appointment of Reviewers (see below).

Formal requirements for dissertations

The first pages of the dissertation must be structured according to these guidelines (see Appendix 1 and 2). In addition, **abstracts** in German and English (max. 250 words each) should be included in the thesis.

Three copies of the dissertation must be bound with a **glued spine and hard cover** and printed DIN A4, upright format, and two-sided. The first and last name must be stated on the spine of the book. The **print version and digital version** of the dissertation must be **identical**. It is recommended that the dissertation be bound only after it has been approved by the office of the Dean of Studies (see below: Submission of the dissertation).

Appointment of dissertation examiners

The dissertation must be assessed by the following persons within a maximum of four months:

- by the supervisor
- if applicable, by the secondary **supervisor**
- by an **external person not involved in the supervision who is authorised to teach** in the subject of the dissertation or a closely related subject

The examiners must justify their evaluation in the scope of **independently prepared reviews**. The examiners are appointed by the Dean of Studies. Students can make suggestions in this regard. In this case, students should submit the [Application for the appointment of dissertation examiners](#) to the [Office of the Dean of Studies](#). The appointment of the **external examiner** must be approved by the Dean of Studies, who will review the qualifications of the examiner in question.

Submission and evaluation of the dissertation

Once the Dean of Studies has appointed the examiners, the dissertation can be submitted. Together with the **form for the [Submission of the Dissertation](#)**, a **digital version** must be submitted to the [Office of the Dean of Studies](#). Subsequently, students are asked to submit **three bound copies** of their dissertation. It is recommended that the dissertation be printed and bound only after consulting with the office of the Dean of Studies. The prevention of the use of the dissertation ("exclusion from use" pursuant to [§ 86 para. 4 UG](#)) has to be requested together with the submission of the dissertation (see below: Publication of the dissertation in electronic form).

Support Art and Research

All examiners receive a form for assessing the dissertation and a digital copy of the dissertation from the Dean of Studies. The above-mentioned examiners must submit their evaluation of the submitted dissertation to the Dean of Studies within four months. The evaluation must also take into account the results of the plagiarism check.

Plagiarism check

The dissertation must be subjected to a **plagiarism check** as the **prerequisite for the evaluation**. Students receive a link from their supervisor to the "[Turnitin](#)" software which checks for plagiarism. Further information on the plagiarism check is available on the website of the University of Applied Arts at [Graduation](#) > Plagiarism check.

Defence (defensio)

If all the curriculum requirements are met, students can register for the final examination (defence). To register, please submit the [Application for admission to the defence](#) to the [Office of the Dean of Studies](#).

As soon as the positive assessments of the dissertation are available, **but no earlier than two weeks** after submission of the application for admission to the defence, the **defence** can take place. In the defence, the dissertation must be defended in its academic context before the **examination committee**. The examination interview takes place between the doctoral candidate and the examination committee.

The **examination board** for the assessment of the defence is made up of the following persons, whereby **one person must be external**:

- **First supervisor** (specified by the supervisor of the dissertation)
- **Second supervisor**, if available (if this person is external, they can be replaced by a person with a teaching authorisation from the dissertation subject or a closely related subject (internal or external)),
OR
if no second supervisor is available: a **person with a teaching authorisation from the dissertation subject or a closely related subject** (internal or external)
(specified by the supervisor of the dissertation or based on the proposal of the doctoral candidate)
- **Another person with a teaching authorisation from the dissertation subject or a closely related subject** who is entrusted with the presidency (based on the proposal of the doctoral candidate)

Students propose the members of the Examination Board to the [Dean of Studies](#) using the form [Application for admission to the defence](#); if the proposal is accepted, they discuss the date, place and time of the defence with all members of the Examination Board and communicate this in turn as a suggestion to the [Dean of Studies](#). The dean then officially appoints the examination board. The defence is announced **publicly**.

Publication of the dissertation in electronic form

Using the Digital Asset Management System [PHAIDRA](#), which is provided by the University Library, the positively assessed dissertation is made available on the Internet and accessible via the search portal [supA](#). **After the successful defence**, students must upload the digital version of the dissertation in PDF/A format via [PHAIDRA](#). A detailed [workflow description](#) can be found on the PHAIDRA website. For questions, the team of the [library](#) is at your disposal.

If the publication would jeopardise a student's important legal or economic interests, **the dissertation may be embargoed** ("exclusion from use" pursuant to [§ 86 para. 4 UG](#)) through the Dean's Office. A corresponding application **must be made** and approved by the [Dean of Studies](#) before uploading the dissertation. Otherwise the work is irrevocably published once it has been uploaded. **The upload of an embargoed dissertation must be carried out in consultation with the library.**

Support Art and Research

Graduation and award of the academic degree

The rigorosum includes the positive assessment of all courses specified in the dissertation agreement, the positive assessment of the dissertation and the positive assessment of the defence. Upon receipt of all these academic achievements, the doctoral programme in question is completed.

Before the final documents are issued, students must obtain a **confirmation of** clearance from the [library](#), complete the [online form](#) from **Statistics Austria** and send the corresponding confirmation message to the Office of Student and Academic Affairs as a PDF. Further details, contact information and necessary steps can be found at [Graduation](#) > Important information > Pre-requisites for receiving an academic degree.

The **degree will be conferred during the next academic ceremony following graduation** (see [Academic Calendar and Events](#)), provided that all required coursework has been received by the Office of Student and Academic Affairs at least one week beforehand. All graduates are invited, participation is free.

Annex

Appendix 1: Cover sheet

The following information must be given on the cover page of the dissertation, in the following recommended order:

**<German title of the dissertation>
<If applicable, subtitle>**

**<English title of the dissertation>
<If applicable, English subtitle>**

Dissertation for obtaining the academic degree of
<Doctor> of <Philosophy/Natural Sciences/Technical Sciences>
at the University of Applied Arts Vienna

By:
< Name of author >

Vienna, in < Month, Year >

Supervised by:
<Mention of all supervisors incl. specification of institution and subject>

Examined by:
<Mention of all examiners incl. specification of institution and subject>

Appendix 2: Explanation of good scientific practice

On sheet 2, the following text must be quoted and signed:

Name: <Name of author>

Title of the dissertation: <Title>

I hereby declare that

that I have written this dissertation independently in accordance with the principles of good scientific practice, have not used any sources and aids other than those specified and have not used any other unauthorized aids,

that this dissertation has not yet been submitted for assessment in any form either in Austria or abroad and,

that this copy fully matches both the work submitted electronically and the work uploaded for publication by the University Library of the University of Applied Arts Vienna.

Date: _____

Signature: _____