



PARIS
LODRON
UNIVERSITÄT
SALZBURG

Dissertation Guide

Faculty of Social Sciences
Paris Lodron University Salzburg

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Please note:

This guide provides assistance and advice. Only the statutes of the University of Salzburg and the curriculum of the doctoral program of the Faculty of Social Sciences in their current versions are legally binding. For information regarding admission to doctoral study programmes please visit the admission office:

https://www.plus.ac.at/studium/vor-dem-studium-3/zulas-sungsvoraussetzungen/?lang=en&zi_study=5

For information regarding the doctoral programme at the Faculty of Social Sciences, please visit this website:

<https://www.plus.ac.at/gesellschaftswissenschaftliche-fakultaet/studium-mehr/doktoratsstudium-2/?lang=en>

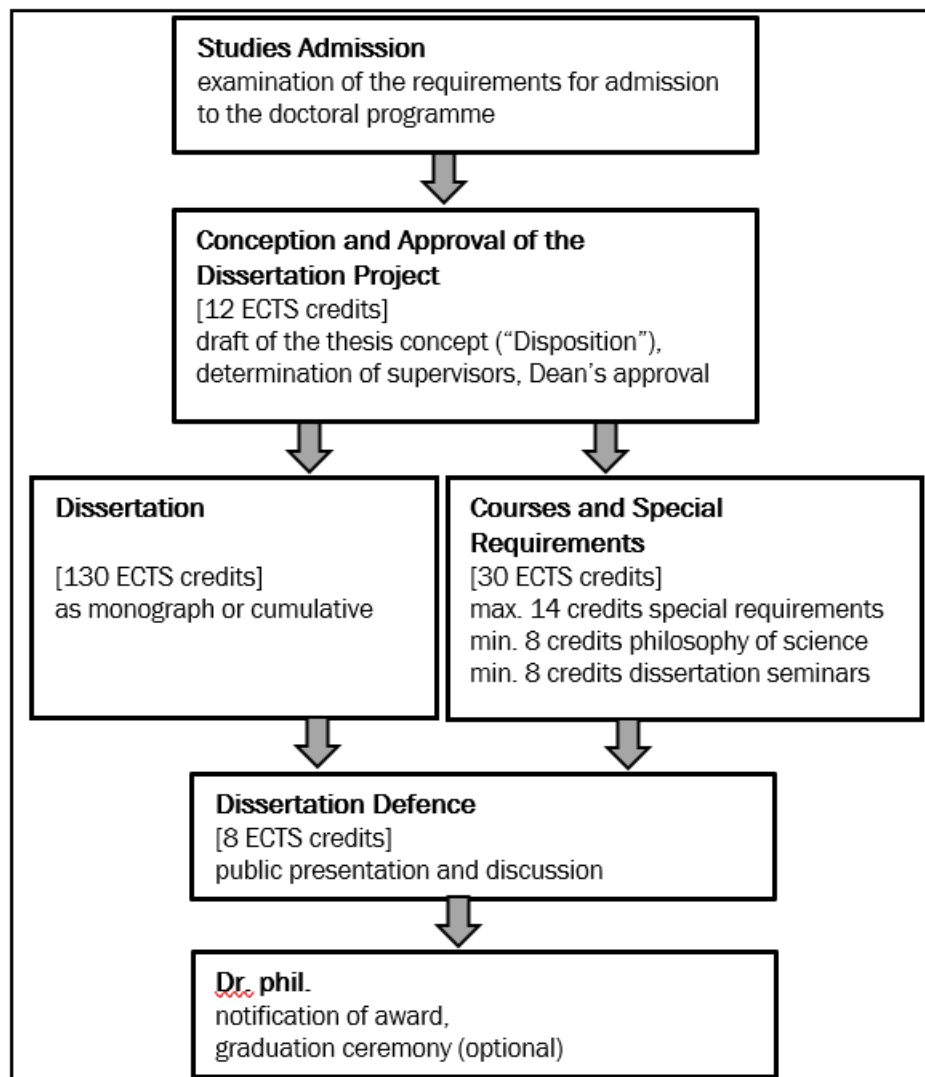
Admission

Doctoral programme

The doctoral programme equates a workload of 180 ECTS credits, which corresponds to a duration of six semesters of fulltime studies. Although the doctoral programme is not formally divided into sections, it may be helpful to distinguish between the different phases and elements this guideline is based on:

- The first step is seeking admission to the doctoral programme according to (Austrian) Study Law. This requires a Master level degree (“Magister”, MA, teaching degree or equivalent diploma). Please note that the studies admission is not the same as the approval of the dissertation project!
- In a second step, the topic of the dissertation must be approved by the Dean. The approval requires the submission of a disposition (German: “Disposition”), which outlines the research project. The first phase of a doctoral programme is thus dedicated to working on the disposition. The approved disposition also confirms the supervisor of the dissertation. It is strongly recommended to have arranged supervision at this point (see chapter on supervision).
- After the approval of the disposition, research and composition of the dissertation thesis begin. This work will certainly take up the largest part of the doctoral programme.
- During this time, the candidate is also expected to complete mandatory courses and fulfil other special achievements (German: “Sonderleistungen”). Such achievements include, for example, conference participations or publications in scientific journals.

- When the research phase is completed and the dissertation thesis has been submitted, the final phase begins: The thesis will be examined, and afterwards the candidate must present the thesis in front of an academic audience.



Admissions procedure

Application for admission

Please visit <https://www.plus.ac.at/studium/studienabteilung/?lang=en> for current information and the forms that are needed to apply for admission.

Tuition and ÖH (student's union) fees

Doctoral students will have to pay the ÖH (Austrian Student's Union) fees and might have to pay tuition fees at the beginning of each semester. For more information, please visit <https://www.plus.ac.at/studium/vor-dem-studium-3/studienbeitrag/?lang=en>.

Conception and approval of the dissertation project (disposition phase)

Draft of the thesis concept (disposition)

After the admission according to Austrian Study Law, the first few months serve to specify the research topic. Every dissertation project at the Faculty of Social Sciences must be approved by the Dean. Submitting the disposition at the Faculty Office requires the announcement of two supervisors, primary and secondary, as well as their approval of the disposition.

A disposition comprises the conception of the planned doctoral thesis and offers an insight into the dissertation project. Such overview is not a short version of the dissertation, but rather an itinerary or basis for the dissertation. It does not only give the Dean the opportunity to examine the dissertation project in more detail but also provides the supervisors with a basis on which students can receive appropriate scholarly advice and support for their ongoing work. The disposition cannot be changed after being approved. The dissertation may, however, deviate from the research plan if there are no significant discrepancies and changes. “Major” changes such as a cumulative work instead of a monograph or a new dissertation topic, for example, must be re-approved by the doctoral committee. In general, the disposition outlines the conception of the research project, includes methodology and methods and defines a theoretical framework of the dissertation. It should be drafted in the first two semesters of the doctoral programme, discussed with the proposed primary supervisor, comprise approx. 10 to 15 pages and submitted to the responsible examinations office after the second semester at the latest. This step is important to protect the students’ own interests - through the statements of the proposed supervisors, they receive reliable feedback on their project.

A disposition should include the following aspects:

- Review of the **state of research** which is supposed to be addressed in the planned dissertation. These considerations should lead to the phrasing and differentiation of (a) concrete research question(s), which form(s) the basis of academic work; this should demonstrate that the dissertation project leads to independent academic/scientific work;
- general considerations regarding the **theoretical foundation** as well as the **methodological approach** for the purpose of analysing the research object and answering the research question;
- **research itinerary** or working **schedule**;
- **general outline** of the planned work.

- A planned **cumulative dissertation** must be explicitly stated in the disposition. The number of planned contributions must also be stated, along with information on which aspects of the research questions will be covered by which contribution (see chapter “Cumulative dissertation”).

Only *one* dissertation seminar can be accredited before the disposition is approved, and only one per semester. The presentation of the dissertation project may also take place as part of a dissertation seminar, for example, and in the presence of a competent person appointed by the doctoral committee, if the presentation does not take place within a departmental colloquium.

Presentation of the dissertation project

Before finalising and submitting the disposition, the dissertation project must be **presented publicly** at least once to the department. The presentation is not a defence, but an opportunity to receive feedback and constructive suggestions as part of the discussion towards submitting the disposition. The presentation can take place, for example, as part of a departmental colloquium or a doctoral seminar. The presentation must be open to the public (e.g. by inviting the entire department and other colleagues in the field). In any case, the **member of the faculty’s doctoral committee** who is representing the thesis’ sub-discipline (or a person with a relevant habilitation as a substitute representative) must attend and confirm that the presentation was held as part of the dissertation registration process (see form on the website of the examinations office). If possible, the primary and secondary supervisor should also attend the presentation of the disposition. In cases where the member of the doctoral committee responsible for the subject area is also the primary or secondary supervisor, the substitute representative of the subject area takes over their agenda.

Please note: There is no formal supervisory confirmation before the Dean has approved the disposition.

Registering the dissertation

In order to officially register the dissertation, students must enter the required information (topic of the dissertation project, primary and secondary supervisors) in the PAAV system and upload the disposition and the statements from the supervisors. Both primary and secondary supervisors must provide a statement on the disposition, which must be submitted together with the disposition.

The examinations office obtains a statement of the responsible member of the doctoral committee (in case this person is holding a supervisory function: the responsible substitute member). If all statements are positive, the Dean approves the dissertation project and formally appoints the supervisors.

If there are concerns or objections regarding the disposition, it can be returned to the student for revision and must be resubmitted. If the topic and the disposition are not deemed suitable after another review, students may contact the study authority (Vice Rector for Academic Affairs) to request another review and decision.

Dean's approval

The application for dissertation is considered as successful if not rejected by the Dean within four weeks. As soon as a positive decision has been made, the thesis topic and supervisor are confirmed as approved in PLUS Online by the examinations office.

12 ECTS credits are awarded for the successful draft of the disposition.

Changing the dissertation project

The disposition sets the framework of the dissertation project. Within this framework, certain adaptations and changes are possible and often necessary. A research project cannot be predetermined in every detail and must provide room for insights gained throughout the research period. It may also make sense to modify or change the title of the dissertation from the title stated in the disposition. Such changes are permitted and if they remain within the framework defined in the disposition there is no need for a new application or any formal explanation.

However, if a fundamental change to the dissertation project is considered, a new submission of the disposition is necessary, including all steps up to the approval by the Dean (see above). Please note that dissertation seminars attended after the approval of the first disposition of the dissertation project do not count towards the new disposition. It may also be necessary to re-evaluate other achievements.

Supervisors and supervision

Doctoral candidates are supported by a primary supervisor and one or two secondary supervisors while drafting their dissertation.

The **main supervisor** must fulfil the following criteria:

The supervisor is a habilitated academic (Univ.-Prof./Univ.Doiz./Priv.-Doiz./Assoz.-Prof.) with an active employment relationship with the University of Salzburg and who is a member of the department in which the dissertation project is carried out. Emeriti and retired professors cannot act as primary supervisors but may complete ongoing supervision agreements. Members of the university's academic staff with a doctorate, but without a habilitation may be appointed as principal supervisors only if they are leading or have led a project funded by competitively awarded research grants and the dissertation is closely related to the subject of the project, or if they have an equivalent academic qualification in a field of research closely related to the subject of the dissertation.. § 24 section 5 of the Statutes of the University of Salzburg also state that "In the case of a cooperation with domestic or foreign post-secondary educational institutions, the study authority may provide for joint primary

supervision.”

The **secondary supervisor** may also belong to another department or another faculty, if there are objective reasons, and does not have to be habilitated. It is possible to choose several co-supervisors. In justified cases, the secondary supervisor may also be a member of another university.

It is strongly recommended to have conversations with professors from the relevant faculty before starting the doctoral programme. The goal of these considerations and preliminary conversations is to discuss the content of the intended topic of the thesis and to discuss any supervision opportunities at the department. It is important to reflect on and clarify mutual expectations and aims, but also resources and conditions before agreeing on establishing the supervision process. While students may propose primary and secondary supervisors, the latter are formally appointed by the Dean after consultation with the doctoral committee, , and after confirmation of the disposition.

Responsibilities of the primary and secondary supervisor

Primary and secondary supervisors are the contact persons for the students regarding all subject-related questions during the doctoral programme. Therefore, specific expertise is the crucial factor for the choice of supervisor. The supervisor accompanies the doctoral candidate during the research process. Hence, a good basis for the dialogue between the doctoral candidate and supervisor is extremely important too.

Supervisors are responsible for providing advice regarding the preparation of the disposition. Experience shows that a lot of support is required in this phase because students often do not yet have the routine to put a research agenda into clear words and estimate future working steps. Both the primary and secondary supervisor(s) must submit a statement regarding the disposition, which usually consists of a one- to two-page assessment on the relevance of the topic and the proposed research approach.

The primary supervisor is expected to write a detailed review and grades the dissertation at the end of the doctoral programme. A second review is prepared by an external academic (not employed at the University of Salzburg) with relevant expertise in the field.

Supervision agreement

The supervision agreement will be formally entered after the approval of the disposition. The doctoral candidate has a right to adequate supervision. This means that the supervisors are obliged to make time for meetings and to give feedback accordingly.

There should be regular exchange between the doctoral candidate and the primary supervisor, which should amount to at least two meetings per semester, if possible. In some phases of the doctoral programme more frequent meetings might be useful. It is recommended to determine work steps (milestones) as well as supervisory contacts (supervision schedule) beforehand.

There should also be a minimum level of exchange between the doctoral candidate and the secondary supervisor; at least regarding the first draft of the dissertation (before completion of the disposition) and towards the end of the work.

If questions or problems arise, supervisors should respond in a timely manner or be available for a meeting outside already scheduled supervision meetings.

On the other hand, students are obliged to keep appointments with their supervisors and regularly report on essential steps regarding their work progress, but also on possible delays or interruptions. Students are also obliged to adhere to the guidelines for the safeguarding of good academic practice¹ while writing their thesis and to present the dissertation project in a suitable form (e.g. at a conference or in the doctoral seminar). In addition, the supervision agreement must also specify the time horizon by which the dissertation is intended to be completed.

The supervision of the dissertation must be documented regularly in the PAAV system (meetings, essential points of discussion).

Dissolving a Supervision Agreement

Dissolving a supervision agreement is possible at any time up to the submission of the dissertation if both parties agree. Both parties must declare their consent (informally, e.g. by email) to the dissolution. Afterwards, the registration is cancelled, and the student can determine the new supervisor and submit the relevant documents (written statement from the new supervisor).

The agreement can also be dissolved unilaterally for important reasons. This is the case, for example, if one of the two parties to the agreement does not comply with essential points of the supervision agreement.

The Dean must be informed beforehand about the reasons for any unilateral dissolution of the supervision agreement. It is strongly recommended that both sides attempt mediation in the presence of the Dean if requested by the Dean within four weeks of receipt of the dissolution notice.

The supervision agreement is considered unilaterally dissolved four weeks after receipt of the dissolution notice or after an unsuccessful mediation attempt. In this case the student can state the new supervisor right after that.

¹ <https://www.plus.ac.at/the-university-of-salzburg/associations-boards-committees/commission-for-the-safeguarding-of-good-academic-practice/?lang=en>

Courses and special achievements

Attending courses

The doctoral programme at the University of Salzburg requires the attendance of courses and seminars, as well as the completion of special achievements, in addition to writing the dissertation. A total of 30 ECTS credits is intended for attending courses and completing special achievements. Thereof, 8-12 ECTS credits are intended for dissertation seminars, at least 8 ECTS credits for courses and a maximum of 14 ECTS credits for special achievements. If the doctoral candidate completes fewer or no special achievements, the lacking ECTS credits can be acquired through the completion of courses for doctoral students.

Dissertation seminars

During the doctoral programme, the candidate must attend at least two dissertation seminars. As one semester hour of a doctoral seminar is calculated with 2 ECTS credits, at least two two-hour or four one-hour courses in this category must be completed. In these courses, which may be titled different in the various departments², students present their research project and results in consultation with the primary supervisor. If the primary supervisor is not also the lecturer of the course, his/her presence is required at least for the presentation of the supervised students.

Occasionally there are courses that are titled as dissertation seminars or similarly, but they have a specific thematic focus and cannot be accredited as dissertation seminars under module 1. Which of the seminars can be accredited as dissertation seminars is recognisable in PLUS Online.

Doctorate School PLUS

At the Doctorate School PLUS, additional interdisciplinary courses and workshops teaching practical skills are available to doctoral students from all faculties, such as various academic writing workshops, courses on project- and time management regarding the dissertation, presentation techniques, planning your own university teaching, academic journalism, etc. These courses count as special achievements ("interdisciplinary skills"). These courses can be credited as special achievements ("interdisciplinary skills"), but not as dissertation seminars or courses under the modules 1 and 2.

The Doctorate School PLUS is also home to various research groups. These groups are interdisciplinary clusters in which doctoral candidates from different disciplines work together on a general topic. Among other things, they offer doctoral students a better network opportunity and support from lecturers and external experts. Third-party funded research groups may also offer a possibility to finance dissertations within their research projects.

² „Doktorand:innenseminar“, „Konversatorium“, „Kolloquium“ etc.

For more information and the current services please visit <https://www.plus.ac.at/doctorate-school-plus-en/?lang=en>.

Courses

In addition to the dissertation seminars, the doctoral programme requires students to complete courses with a focus on theory of science, history of science and/or a subject-specific, theoretical, methodical or methodological focus, in the amount of at least 8 ECTS credits. These courses serve to reflect on the general or subject-specific foundations, methods and objectives of academic research. Other courses held by other departments (in other subject areas) can also be attended.

After consultation with the supervisor of the dissertation, further courses may be attended in addition to that, including courses from the master's programme, which are related to the dissertation topic. The chairperson of the Curricular Commission of the Doctoral Programme at the Faculty Social Sciences can accredit these courses upon application after the disposition has been approved. The application must follow by email and must include the dissertation topic, a description of the course (e.g. according to PLUS-Online) and a statement (reasons). Credit will be awarded after individual assessment either before or after attending the course to which the application refers to. The application for credit can therefore be issued at any time after the approved disposition or upon presentation of the examination pass, but if the application is issued later, there is no guarantee for accreditation.

Recognition of courses

Students who have transferred from other universities during the doctoral programme can apply for recognition of already completed courses, provided the courses are compatible with the curriculum in Salzburg. The contact person for such credit transfer is the chairperson of the Curricular Commission.

If a course that is not part of the curriculum of the doctoral programme should exceptionally be recognised as a scientific theory course, the student must apply to the chairperson of the Curricular Commission for admission before the start of the semester and provide subject-related reasons. The chairperson verifies if there is a thematic focus as mentioned above and whether the requirements of the respective courses correspond to a doctoral programme. Courses from a bachelor's degree programme generally do not qualify.

In the case of study visits/stays abroad, students should also contact the chairperson of the Curricular Commission *beforehand*, to verify whether planned courses will be recognised for the curriculum, providing all documents required for the verification.

External courses

As a rule, all courses of the doctoral programme must be completed at the University of Salzburg. If students wish to attend courses at another university, they need to submit an informal application for co-registration (German: “Antrag auf Mitbelegung”) addressed to the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Experience³, along with subject-related reasons. This application will only be granted in rare exceptional cases, e.g. attending a course held by an external secondary supervisor. The application must include a confirmation from the Chair of the Curricular Commission that the course applied for can be recognised.

Special achievements

Special achievements may help students to grow into the international academic community of their research area. In addition to writing their dissertation, it is recommended that students also pursue academic activities outside their own university and establish contacts with academic networks.

The curriculum of the doctoral programme stipulates special achievements of up to **14 ECTS credits**. These achievements are recognised by the Dean upon application to the Examinations Office and after individual assessment. The application form can be downloaded from the website of the Examinations Office of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Type and scope of the work must be proven with the relevant supporting documents.

The following achievements can be recognised:

- lecturing a(n own) university course in a relevant subject field at the University of Salzburg or another university (up to 2 ECTS credits per course; max. 6 ECTS credits);
- active participation in international workshops and conferences incl. paper, presentation, poster or similar (up to 6 ECTS credits per active participation);
- publications in academic journals or edited volumes that are connected to the dissertation, but that are not part of the cumulative dissertation (up to 6 ECTS credits per publication);
- participation in a Summer School programme or similar (up to 4 ECTS credits per participation);
- stays abroad at a university, research facility or post graduate programme for study or research purposes (1 ECTS credit per month and a maximum of 6 ECTS credits, if proven);
- successful completion of university courses which teach interdisciplinary skills, e.g. project management, science ethics, rhetoric, university didactics, foreign languages in the subject area (up to 6 ECTS credits);
- patents as part of the dissertation (up to 6 ECTS credits per patent).

³ Current contact person for application for co-registration: Erika Mourad-Granner.

If special achievements are not completed to the required extent, missing ECTS credits can be substituted by courses from the doctoral programme (see “Sonderleistungen”).

Explanatory notes on special achievements

Active participation in academic conferences and congresses

For ECTS credits to be recognised, proof of presentation activities must be provided. For this purpose, a confirmation of the presentation by the organising office as well as a printout of the abstract submitted for the presentation and the conference programme in which the doctoral candidate appears as a speaker must be enclosed. If no confirmation can be issued by the organiser's office, documents showing that the lecture was held must be enclosed. This can also be a printout of the lecture, in combination with the conference programme.

Please note that if a presentation was co-authored or given jointly, the credits awarded are based on the proven performance, i.e. the ECTS credits are differentiated according to first, second or third authorship. For this purpose, statements from the co-authors on the share of the work or responsibility for the presentation should be enclosed.

Publications

Next to collaborating and participating in congresses and conferences, it is desirable for doctoral students to publish independently during their doctoral studies. However, only publications that are relevant to the subject and published in scientific journals or edited volumes will be recognised. Publications that are part of a cumulative dissertation cannot be recognised. Curating museum catalogues is recognised as a publication if the activity is verifiably content-related, meaning scientifically conceptual; layout or editing activities, for example, do not count as scientific achievements.

In this context, a distinction must be made between **short publications** (less than 3,000 words, rewarded with 1 ECTS) and **long publications** (more than 3,000 words; rewarded with 3 ECTS credits; e.g. contribution in edited volumes). **Peer reviewed publications** earn additional 3 ECTS credits. Regarding authorship, the same applies to the recognition of special achievements as to awarding ECTS credits for a presentation: If a contribution was not written by the student alone, the work will be assessed individually and ECTS points will be awarded according to second or third authorship. If necessary, statements from the co-authors on their share of the work or responsibility must be enclosed.

Scholarly visits to a domestic or foreign university

Doctoral students may receive a maximum of 6 ECTS credits for their stay at a domestic or foreign university (1 ECTS credit per month), if the duration of their stay is one month or longer. The invitation and confirmation of supervision from the host university must be enclosed with the application.

Holding courses or assisting in courses

Independent teaching of academic courses at a university can be recognised with 3 ECTS credits for a two-hour course and 2 ECTS credits for a one-hour course. Courses that impart applied knowledge, such as the introductory courses in scientific work, are only credited with half of the ECTS credits mentioned. Participation (in terms of content and concept) in a course lasting at least two hours can also be honoured with a maximum of 1 ECTS credits. However, this must involve participation in the entire course; individual lectures within a course cannot be awarded ECTS credits. Special achievements are only recognised if PLUS Online provides proof of the course that was held. Should this not be the case (for example if the course was held at another university), a confirmation that the course has been held must be submitted by the head of department of the university/university of applied sciences/teacher training college. A maximum of 6 ECTS credits can be awarded in total for holding courses.

Completion of interdisciplinary university courses

The successful completion of courses that teach interdisciplinary skills, such as project management, rhetoric, scientific ethics and foreign languages, can be credited with up to 6 ECTS credits. The higher education teaching course (German: "Hochschuldidaktik or HSD+") and the Doctorate School PLUS course programme can also be credited.

Dissertation

Formal structure of the dissertation

The dissertation can be written either as a **monograph** or as a **cumulative** dissertation. The monograph is the classic form. In this case the dissertation consists of a coherent, comprehensive work on a specific topic.

Although there is no binding format template or something similar for a dissertation, standard design criteria are recommended for orientation. In any case, the following criteria are recommended:

- Font type and size: Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial, 11 or 12 point; headings 12 to 14 point; footnotes 8 to 10 point
- Line spacing: 1.0, main text justified
- Margins: top 2,5 cm, bottom 2 cm, left and right 2,5 cm (Microsoft Word standard setting)
- Header or footer: dissertation title and page number; if necessary, titles of main chapters
- Page numbers: Table of contents and other directories (e.g. table of figures), which

precede the main text may be paginated using Roman numerals (I, II, III etc.), followed by Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3 etc.) from the introduction onwards.

A printed copy of the dissertation must be made available to the University Library. This is handled via PAAV. There are guidelines on the website of the University print shop “Printcenter”, which can also be commissioned directly with the printing: <https://www.plus.ac.at/wirtschaftsabteilung/printcenter/studierende/> (information currently available only in German).

- Print on high quality, white, non-transparent A4-formatted paper, double-sided.
- Binding: For archiving purposes in the library, the printed dissertation must be self-standing. This requires hard binding (no spiral binding, no plastic cover, but hard cover). Paperback binding is only possible with a hard cardboard cover.
- Attachments (maps, photos, data CDs, etc.) must be attached to the back cover in a pocket or flap (not enclosed separately) and listed in the table of contents.

In addition to the actual text, the thesis must also contain the usual elements for academic work (table of contents, list of tables and figures, bibliography). Furthermore, the dissertation should begin with an abstract in German and English, maximum one page for each (German and English).

Template for the cover page:

The cover should include the following:

- Dissertation title
- type of thesis (here: dissertation)
- „to obtain...“
- faculty, university
- author
- supervisor or assessor
- department supervisor or assessor
- Salzburg, submission date (month and year)

Dissertation title

Dissertation

to obtain a doctoral degree

at the Faculty of Social Sciences
at the Paris Lodron University Salzburg

submitted by
name

Assessor: Prof. Dr. xxxx

Department:

Salzburg, month, year of submission

Monograph

As for a monograph, the length of a dissertation is not explicitly regulated, but results from various conditions such as subject-specific circumstances or the chosen methodological approach: A dissertation in philosophy dealing with a question from the field of logic may comprise fewer pages than a study in literary studies or a historical investigation, but it does not mean less effort. A comparison with diploma or master theses is also only possible to a limited extent. Although a dissertation is generally much more extensive than a diploma/master's thesis, the qualitative difference is more important than the number of pages.

Although it is also possible to write a dissertation based on one's own diploma or master's thesis, it must contain significant new scientific findings. The part added to the existing thesis must be worthy of a dissertation in its own right; a mere extension of an existing thesis is not sufficient. This also applies if the master's/diploma thesis was of above-average length or complexity. Whatever has already been used for assessment can serve as a basis for further research but cannot be 'utilised' again.

The dissertation can be written in German, English or another language appropriate to the subject. In the case of a cumulative dissertation, articles may be written in different languages. However, it is advisable to specify the language and other criteria for publications

in a supplementary agreement to the cumulative dissertation (see chapter “Cumulative dissertation”).

Joint work on a topic by several students is permitted if the performance of the individual students can be assessed separately. In practice, however, this approach is rarely chosen (for good reasons) and should be examined in detail in advance. Thorough considerations and intensive consultation with the supervisors and the Dean are always necessary in such cases.

In contrast to common practice in Germany, the publication of a monograph dissertation as book publication by a publishing company is not mandatory, but possible and even expressly desired in case of good theses, as the publication represents an important step for a further academic career. In the case of a monograph dissertation, individual research results can also be published in the form of articles in specialist journals or edited volumes. This can be done *before* the submission of the dissertation and can then be recognised as a special achievement. Preliminary publications should be referred to in the dissertation; they must be cited accordingly. A dissertation must be written in accordance with good academic practice; this means that doctoral candidates must work in a scientifically correct manner. Any use of uncited or improperly referenced literature or tacit paraphrasing of another person's text is considered plagiarism. The use of one's own text must also be referenced. Dissertations are checked by plagiarism software after submission. In the event of proven plagiarism, graduates may be stripped of their title even years after completing their doctorate.

Cumulative dissertation

Upon submission, these articles must be accompanied by a detailed introduction or synopsis in which the thematic context of the individual contributions is outlined. If contributions were written in co-authorship, a list signed by the co-authors must be submitted in which the respective contribution of the doctoral candidate is stated.

The disposition must state if a cumulative dissertation is aimed for, how many contributions it will contain and which thematic aspects of the dissertation topic the contributions will address. The necessary number of publications for a cumulative dissertation depends on the subject specifics and planned publications (type of journal or edited volumes; sole or co-authorship etc.). In any case, the publication strategy should be discussed and determined with the supervisory team, bearing in mind that reviews and revisions of submitted articles can often take several months or that an article may be rejected.

In the case of a cumulative dissertation, the contributions submitted for the dissertation cannot also be recognised as special achievements. However, further publications in addition to the dissertation can be recognised.

Cumulative dissertations are based on an agreement on:

- the number of publications;
- single or multiple authorship of planned publications;
- type and quality of the journal (inter alia, double-blind peer review);
- publication language(s).

Completion of the doctoral programme

The **completion of the doctoral programme** consists of three steps:

- Submission of the examination pass as evidence for the completed courses and special achievements, respectively;
- submission of the dissertation (by upload to PAAV) and evaluation by two assessors;
- defending the dissertation in a public presentation followed by a discussion.

Examination pass and proof of special achievements

Completed courses and special achievements must be listed in the examination pass and the form for special achievements. Both forms are available on the Examination Office's (Faculty of Social Sciences) website and can be completed digitally and then printed. Together with the relevant documents confirming the information, they must be submitted to the Examinations Office. Examination pass and proof of special achievements can be submitted independently of each other (and independently of the dissertation) as soon as the respective achievements have been completed in full. If you have any questions about crediting, you can contact the Dean (regarding special achievements) or the Chair of the Curriculum Committee (regarding courses) before the official submission.

Submission of the dissertation

If the dissertation is completed, it must be digitally submitted:

- First, the **dissertation must be uploaded to PAAV** (<https://paav.sbg.ac.at>) (as a PDF)
- While uploading the thesis, PAAV requires **further information**:
 - abstract of the thesis in German or in the original language, respectively, and English (each max. 4.000 characters);
 - at least three keywords;
 - fields of science according to ÖSTAT (selectable on the online form).

The thesis is automatically subjected to a plagiarism check, the result is brought to the attention of the primary supervisor. If they approve of the submission (they receive an email from the system), orders can be placed via PAAV in the print shop (Printcenter). Please visit <https://www.plus.ac.at/wirtschaftsabteilung/printcenter/studierende/> for further information (website only available in German).

Please note: Uploaded and printed work must be identical!

Publication

In accordance with the legal provisions⁴, the electronically submitted dissertation will be automatically forwarded to the university or national library, where it is included in the catalogue of holdings and is therefore publicly accessible. There is no further publication obligation (e.g. publication via a publishing company).

The publication of the dissertation is nevertheless worth considering and regarding an academic career strongly recommended. The most straightforward option is making the dissertation freely accessible worldwide as digital full text via ePLUS, the open access publication server of the University of Salzburg. The University of Salzburg is committed to the principles of open access publishing and supports students by providing a corresponding infrastructure for online publications. In this case the dissertation does not only appear in the University Library's catalogue but is also displayed in full text. This service is free of charge.

A traditional publication as a monograph via a publishing company is also possible (perhaps after a revision of the dissertation), or in the form of scientific articles in specialist journals or edited volumes. Supervisors can offer advice, as they can not only assess the strengths and weaknesses of the dissertation but are also familiar with publication practices in the respective subject area.

In specific cases it may be necessary to refrain from a publication. If significant economic or legal interests of the student are affected (e.g. because internal data of a company or organisation were used for a dissertation under the condition of confidentiality), it is possible to apply for "access to the copies deposited to be withheld" (German: "Ausschluss der Benützung"). The request must be justified and must be made when the dissertation is submitted. The University's legal department will then issue an official notification. Withholding access to the dissertation can be granted for a maximum of five years. In such cases, the dissertation is available at the University Library or the National Library, but not evident in the catalogue during granted period, access or a loan by third parties is not possible.

Assessment

The dissertation will be reviewed by two assessors; their reviews usually comprise several pages. The assessors must be habilitated. One review is prepared by the primary supervisor, the second review is usually written by an academic in the relevant field who is not employed at the University of Salzburg and who was not involved in the supervision of the dissertation as a secondary supervisor. As for the appointment of the second assessor, a ranked list of proposals can be submitted by the supervisors and the doctoral candidate.

The second assessor is determined by the Dean, in consultation with a member of the

⁴ See § 86 UG 2002 (Austrian Universities Act).

doctoral committee in the respective study field. The dissertation is then forwarded to the assessors by the examinations office. The assessment period is two months and can be extended on important grounds. Once the reviews have been received, they will be visible to students via PAAV.

The grading of the dissertation follows the standard grading scale. The overall grade is calculated from the arithmetic mean of the grades of the two reviews, values of (up to) x.5 are adjusted downwards, a value of more than x.5 is adjusted upwards. If one of the two reviews is positive and the other negative, the Dean must request a further review. The assessment period again is two months and can be extended on important grounds. If the third review is positive, the overall grade for the thesis is calculated from the arithmetic mean of the three grades in accordance with the previously mentioned rules. If the third assessment is negative, the dissertation is also assessed negatively. The same applies if both of the original assessments are negative; in this case, no further review is commissioned.

Defending the dissertation

If two assessments (reviews) are positive, the dissertation defence can be scheduled. This marks the end of the doctoral programme. For the defence of the thesis, the Dean appoints an examination committee that consists of a chairperson and two discussants. All members of the examination committee must be habilitated in the relevant or at least related subject. The supervisory team and the doctoral candidate may make suggestions for the composition of the examination committee. The doctoral candidate gives a presentation on the content and results of the dissertation, followed by a discussion about the subject.

For a better understanding of the dissertation defence procedure, doctoral students are advised to attend such events during their studies (ideally in their own or a related department).

Students and primary and secondary supervisors can make suggestions for the choice of discussants. The appointment follows by Dean and if necessary, after consultation with the subject-related member of the doctoral committee.

The primary supervisor usually takes the chair, a secondary supervisor can be chosen as a discussant; however, at least one member of the examination committee must be neither one of the supervisors nor an assessor for the dissertation. A discussant can also be a person who is not employed at the University of Salzburg.⁵ The examinations office forwards the dissertation and the assessment to the members of the examination committee in time before the dissertation defence.

The date for the defence must be made public at least two weeks in advance and the examinations office must necessarily have received the following documents beforehand:

⁵ Travel or accommodation costs cannot be reimbursed.

- all commissioned assessments;
- the approved examination pass regarding courses according to the curriculum as well as a confirmation of the recognition of special achievements in the amount of at least 30 ECTS;
- the application form for the dissertation defence⁶ including an informal email from the members of the examination committee proving that the date has been approved of.

Approximately 14 days before the set date for the dissertation defence, the examinations office sends an invitation to all academic staff in the faculty and to all students enrolled in the dissertation programme. The defence is open to the university public. It begins with a presentation by the doctoral candidate on the content and results of the dissertation. This is followed by examining the doctoral candidate about the knowledge of the subject, the content of the dissertation, and the response to its assessment. After the questioning of the examination committee, a general discussion, led by the chairperson, follows. After the defence of the dissertation, the examination committee discusses the grading behind closed doors.

The overall performance of the doctoral candidate in the thesis defence, i.e. the structure and content of the presentation and argumentation in the discussion, is assessed with a grade from 1 to 5. If there is no joint agreement on the grading, the grade determined by the arithmetic mean of the three assessments of the discussants and the chairperson, whereby values up to x.5 are adjusted downwards and values above x.5 are adjusted upwards.

Students are allowed to repeat negatively assessed exams three times.

Graduation

After the successful defence, the Examinations Office finalises the documents as soon as possible. This can take up to 4 weeks maximum, depending on the workload. As soon as the degree has been registered, a notification will be automated, and the student will be notified by email via Plus Online. The student is asked to return the mandatory statistics (instructions in the email) to the Examinations Office by email. The student then receives the officially signed final documents by email (student account). The graduation documents include the notification of award, stating the academic degree *Doctor of Philosophy* (lat. *Doctor philosophiae*, abbreviated to *Dr. phil.*), as well as the degree certificate and the diploma supplement. This contains an overall grade for the courses of the dissertation programme, for the dissertation itself and for the defence.

These final documents allow for the registration for the graduation ceremony. Attending

⁶ Students receive the form via email if all requirements are met.

the ceremony is not mandatory, the costs/fees for attending are minimal. The registration must take place at least two weeks before the desired date for the graduation ceremony (at the University's Communication and Fundraising department⁷), dates are published on the internet. The successful completion of the doctoral programme can be celebrated with colleagues, family and friends at this ceremony with the presentation of the degree by the Head of the University ("Rector") and Dean.

Responsibilities and contacts

List of departments

The doctoral programme at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Salzburg is designed for six semesters and, in line with the Bologna structure, has the training and promotion of young academics as its primary educational goal. The focus is on writing a comprehensive, independent research paper (dissertation), which is defended in a public defence at the end of the course.

Unlike most bachelor's or master's programmes, the doctoral programme is set up for the **entire faculty** and is therefore also organised by the faculty, although each dissertation is assigned to a specific department and subject. A doctoral programme can be completed at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Salzburg in the following subjects:

- Educational Science
- European Union Studies
- History
- Communication Studies
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Sociology
- Social Geography
- other subjects offered at the faculty (based on a corresponding teacher training programme)

Possible funding for the doctoral programme

Employment at the University

An employment at the University provides good conditions for working on a dissertation. **Positions for doctoral candidates** are available in all departments of the Faculty of Social

⁷ <https://www.plus.ac.at/communication-and-fundraising/the-department/?lang=en>

Sciences. They are often assigned to a sub-division or thematic focus within a department. The dissertation topic should then lie within this research area. By the integration into the department or a research project, a corresponding infrastructure (workspace, computer, etc.) is available; in addition, there is also funding for expenses such as the participation in congresses etc. All positions are fixed-term contracts and are published in the University Bulletin, the recruiting process is a standardised application procedure.

There are also positions that are funded externally (through **research grants**). In this case the topic of the dissertation is to a certain extent determined by the research project; the time limit of the contract may also be shorter due to the duration of the project.

Doctorate Schools can be externally funded (e.g. the *Doctoral College of the Salzburg Centre of European Union Studies* or the inter-university doctoral school of the cooperative focus area Science & Art). Vacant positions in these entities are also publicly advertised.

Self-funding

Another option is to write a dissertation without being employed at the University. The following financial support is available:

A study grant for dissertation studies, similar to the terms for BA and MA programmes. For details see www.stipendium.at.

Scholarships and grants awarded by various organisations; the requirements and extent of funding can vary widely. International scholarships are also worth considering; in this case, the Austrian Database for Scholarships & Research Grants operated by the OeAD might offer help: <http://www.grants.at/>.

Grants

Doctoral students – whether employed at the University or not – can apply for funding to cover the costs incurred by working on their dissertation (purchase of working materials, research trips, etc.):

- The **use of resources of the department** (e.g. special equipment, labs etc.) requires the authorisation by the head of department. If specific departmental resources are needed for the dissertation (e.g. archive material, technical equipment), the approval of the head of department must be obtained (see supervision agreement).
- The **University** awards **scholarship** to finance expenses that were made in the context of a final thesis (dissertations included) and that exceed the usual scope. This includes, for example, travel and accommodation costs for data collection, costs for special literature or materials, etc.
- **Funding scholarships** are grants for a limited period (usually 4 months) that are linked to a specific income level. [Studies → Grants and Scholarships → PLUS coordinated grants and scholarships → [Funding scholarships](#)]. Once a year, towards

the end of the summer semester, there is a call for applications, published in the University Gazette (“Mitteilungsblatt”). There are two deadlines for application, one end of June, one end of October.

- The **International Relations Office** grants subsidies for attending conferences (etc.) to doctoral students who are not employed at the University. Please address your application to the Head of the International Relations Department, Peter Mayr (peter.mayr@plus.ac.at) and go to the university's website for further information [PLUS goes: international → Service for Students → Go Abroad → Study Placements → University Exchange Programme at a Partner University → [Grant for attending conferences etc. during dissertation studies](#)].
- Student and faculty representatives of the **Austrian Student's Union** (“ÖH”) offer advice on funding and in some circumstances own funding possibilities (the students' representation of the Faculty of Social Science, for example, offers funding for conference participation, Summer Schools, etc.). For more information, please visit <https://www.oeh-salzburg.at/oeh-salzburg/fakultaetsvertretungen/fakultaetsvertretung-der-gesellschaftswissenschaftlichen-fakultaet/> (website only available in German).
- Extended **stays abroad** are sometimes sensible or even necessary as part of a doctoral programme, and there are offers of financial support for these stays as well. For more information, please visit the website of the [International Relations Department](#).

The use of the **University Library** and its facilities is unrestricted. Doctoral students enjoy a special status that allows them to borrow books for longer periods than usual. This requires an application to either the Main Library or the specific sub-library, including the consent of the primary supervisor.

Legal framework and responsibilities

The legal framework for studies at the Paris Lodron University Salzburg consists of the Austrian Universities Act 2002 (UG 2002), the university's statutes (both as amended) and the respective curriculum (study plan). For the doctoral programme in question, the study plan is the „Curriculum für das Doktoratsstudium Gesellschaftswissenschaften der Paris Lodron-Universität Salzburg“ as published in the bulletin on 28 June 2022 (German version only): <https://www.plus.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Curriculum-Dokorat-Gesellschaftswissenschaften-Version-2022.pdf>

The following institutions, individuals and committees are concerned with administrative agendas of the doctoral programme:

- **Admissions Department** (Kapitelgasse 4)

<https://www.plus.ac.at/studium/studienabteilung/?lang=en>

email: studium@plus.ac.at

Information regarding application and admission, as well as submission of the admissions form.

- **Examinations Office** (Unipark Nonntal, Erzabt Klotz Straße 1)

Gertraud Dander (Tel. 8044-4010; email: gertraud.dander@plus.ac.at)

Registration of the dissertation, submission of the examination pass, registration for the defence of the dissertation, issue of the notification of award.

- **Doctoral Committee**

Advisory board, consists of professors of various departments of the faculty, advises the Dean in all decisions.⁸

- **Curricular Commission**

The Curricular Commission is responsible for issuing or amending study programmes (curricula) and consists of representatives for professors, non-professorial academic staff, and students.

- **Chairperson Curricular Commission** (as of März 2024)

Prof. Dr Kornelia Hahn

Prof. Dr Christine Lohmeier (deputy)

Charlotte Spencer-Smith M.A.I.S (deputy)

Advice on the curriculum for doctoral studies, compilation of the doctoral programme, recognition of courses, approval of the examination pass.

- **Dean** (Faculty office, Unipark Nonntal, Erzabt Klotz Straße 1)

Prof. Dr. Martin Knoll (Dean)

Associate Prof. Dr Ricarda Drüeke (Deputy Dean)

Associate Prof. Dr Eric Miklin (Deputy Dean)

Studies admission and decision regarding the approval of the dissertation project (disposition), approval of supervisors, evaluation of special achievements, determination of external assessors and the determination of the examination committee

⁸ In contrast to the Curricular Commission, which has equal representation, each department is represented by one member in the doctoral committee. These individuals are appointed by the Dean upon a recommendation of each faculty. The committee is completed by two students, the chairperson of the curricular committee and the Dean as the person in charge. The commission advises the Dean on matters relating to the doctoral programme, particularly on the admission to the doctoral programme, the admission of a dissertation project, the appointment of supervisors, the selection of assessors and the appointment of the examination committee for the dissertation defence.

for the defence of the dissertation.

- **Vice-Rector for Education and Student Experience**

Associate Prof. Dr Michaela Rückl

Supreme decision body for the admission and for all legal matters.

An information event is held in every academic year for first-year students. The invitation is sent personally by email.