

Curriculum for the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy

(Doktoratsstudium der Philosophie)
Curriculum 2024



Please note: The English version of this document is a courtesy translation. Only the German version is legally binding.

The humanities and cultural studies doctoral programme “Philosophy” is legally based on the Universities Act 2002 (UG) and on the statutes of the University of Graz.

The following curriculum for the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy was approved by the Senate of the University of Graz in a meeting dated 26 June 2024 in accordance with § 25 (1) 10a of the Universities Act 2002.

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§ 1 Subject, Qualification Profile and Relevance of the Degree Programme

(1) Subject of the degree programme

The Doctoral Programme of Philosophy enables doctoral students with a master's degree (or equivalent degree) to conduct independent and innovative scientific work in the form of a doctoral thesis. In doing so, doctoral students are introduced to humanities research on an international level by independently obtaining new scientific knowledge.

(2) Qualification profile and competences

Students of the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy acquire a high degree of qualification in the research areas of the humanities through their studies and in particular by writing a doctoral thesis. By addressing current scientific questions, doctoral students gain the ability to work independently and thus contribute to the progress of scientific findings on an international level. By regularly presenting and discussing the research results, important qualifications are acquired for the scientific, didactic and generally comprehensible communication of specialist knowledge, as these same abilities are also important for fields outside of research.

(3) Relevance of the degree programme for academia and the labour market

The graduates of the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy qualify as young academics for university and non-university research and are thus able to contribute to the development of knowledge in society while reflecting on the interaction with society and the economy. The ability to communicate expertise and experience in project management are key skills both within and outside of research activities.

§ 2 Admission

(1) Admission requirements for the degree programme

Admission requirements for the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy are:

1. The completion of a master's degree programme comprising at least 60 ECTS credit points or a diploma degree programme comprising at least 240 ECTS credit points or an equivalent degree programme at a recognised domestic or foreign post-secondary educational institution in the field of humanities or in a field that is meaningfully related to the humanities.
2. Fulfilment of the qualitative admission requirements according to paragraph (3).
3. Sufficient proficiency in German or English for successful completion of studies in accordance with paragraph (4).
4. If the requirements according to paragraphs (1) to (3) are not met and cannot be achieved by means of supplementary examinations according to paragraph (2), admission to the degree programme is not possible.

(2) Supplementary examinations

In order to compensate for significant differences in subject matter compared with degree programmes mentioned in paragraph (1) 1 or to compensate for significant differences in subject matter necessary for the doctoral project, doctoral students may be required to take supplementary examinations.

(3) Qualitative admission requirements

Admission to the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy requires that a doctoral student fulfils the qualitative admission requirements listed below. The selection committee of the Doctoral School for Humanities Research validates the fulfilment of these requirements as part of the admission procedure:

1. Applicants must submit an exposé stating the provisional subject of the planned doctoral thesis in compliance with academic quality standards and good scientific practice.
2. The doctoral project must be assigned to an examination subject available at the Faculty of Humanities.
3. Applicants must show excellent prior academic knowledge in the subject area of the doctoral thesis.
4. Applicants must submit a letter of motivation and a provisional schedule indicating realistic preplanning of the doctoral project. The goals of the intended doctoral programme must be outlined plausibly and clearly.

(4) Language

1. As a prerequisite for admission to the degree programme, proof of knowledge of German or English is generally required for successful completion of the degree programme. The form of proof is to be specified in a regulation issued by the Rectorate.
2. Notwithstanding, the following language certificates must be provided for the subject foci / doctoral thesis subjects listed in the table below:

Subject focus / doctoral subject	Language
Subject focus: Ancient History and Classical Antiquities, Archaeology, German Language and Literature, Humanities, Classical Philology, Art History	Proficiency in German in accordance with (1)
Subject focus Romance Studies	Proficiency in German or English in accordance with (1) or proof of language proficiency at language level C1 according to the CEFRL in a Romance language
Subject focus Slavic Studies	Proficiency in German or English in accordance with (1) or proof of language proficiency at language level C1 according to the CEFRL in a Slavic language
Subject focus English Studies	Proficiency in English in accordance with (1)

(5) Selection committee

1. The selection committee consists of four people. These include the proposed supervisor of the thesis, two members of the Doctoral School with expertise relevant to the subject focus of the doctoral thesis (according to § 2 (1) a of the Founding Declaration of the Doctoral School for Humanities Research) and the chairperson of the doctoral curricular committee. If one of these people holds two of the functions listed, their deputy must also join the selection committee as their substitute.
2. The selection committee uses the criteria in paragraphs (1) to (3) to assess if the applicant has previously completed a degree programme suitable for the doctoral programme for which the application was made, and whether qualitative admission requirements have been met. On this basis, the selection committee decides by majority vote on admission and any supplementary examinations for the applicant to take and makes a recommendation to the Rectorate. If the doctoral project requires the use of financial or material resources from an academic unit, admission may only be recommended if the head of this unit has been informed of this and does not prohibit the doctoral project on the grounds of a significant impairment of teaching and research operations. If the application is rejected or the selection committee requires supplementary examinations to be completed by the applicant, the committee must justify why admission requirements were not met or not fully met.

- The selection committee must make a decision on admission within 8 weeks after submission of all required documents. The selection committee's decision must be recorded in writing.

(6) Application documents

The following application documents must be submitted by the applicant when applying for admission:

- Form: Application for Admission to Doctoral Programme and Doctoral School
- Academic CV with proof (degree certificates) of completed previous degree programmes / research or subject foci
- Exposé for the doctoral project [2–3 pages] including a description of the underlying theories and methods
- Letter of motivation (statement of purpose) [1–2 pages]
- Signed supervision agreement
- Proof of the required language proficiency
- Proof of further academic achievements (if available)
- Proof of academic / scientific or subject-specific activities (if available)
- If applicable, list of financial or material resources required from an academic unit at the University of Graz
- If applicable, application for cumulative / compilation doctoral thesis

§ 3 Structure of the Degree Programme

(1) Duration and structure

The doctoral programme has a minimum study duration of six semesters and is subdivided into a curricular section with a required course workload, the doctoral thesis and the doctoral examination:

Modules	ECTS
Module A: Subject-relevant courses	15
Module B: Advanced courses	14
<i>Total</i>	29
Doctoral thesis	140
Doctoral examination	11

(2) Subjects

- The subject area in which the doctoral thesis is to be written must be an examination subject listed at the Faculty of Humanities.
- The chosen subject must be announced when applying for admission to the doctoral programme.
- The chosen subject must correspond to the doctoral thesis subject.

§ 4 Modules

(1) Modules and Examinations

The modules of the doctoral programme are described in more detail below along with their module title, course type, ECTS credit points and semester course hours (KStd).

		Course type	ECTS	KStd
Module A	Subject-relevant courses		15	6
	<i>Courses worth 10 ECTS credit points must be completed within A.1 to A.6.</i>			
A.1	Subject-relevant course 1	SE	6	2
A.2	Subject-relevant course 2	SE	6	2
A.3	Subject-relevant course 3	VO	4	2
A.4	Subject-relevant course 4	VO	4	2
A.5	Subject-relevant course 5	KS	4	2
A.6	Subject-relevant course 6	KS	4	2
A.7	Doctoral colloquium	DQ	5	2
Module B	Advanced courses		14	6
	<i>Courses worth 14 ECTS credit points must be completed within B.1 to B.6.</i>			
B.1	Advanced course 1	SE	6	2
B.2	Advanced course 2	SE	6	2
B.3	Advanced course 3	VO	4	2
B.4	Advanced course 4	VO	4	2
B.5	Advanced course 5	KS	4	2
B.6	Advanced course 6	KS	4	2

1. In order to ensure that the doctoral student has the required interdisciplinary methodological and content-related skills for the doctoral thesis, advanced courses can be chosen from the course catalogue of the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy or from any other doctoral programme at the University of Graz. In particular, doctoral students are explicitly recommended to take courses from the field of women's and gender studies within the framework of the Doctoral Programme of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, courses on the history and philosophy of science as well as on statistics and empirical methods.
2. Subject-relevant courses must be assigned to the specified doctoral thesis subject.
3. A doctoral colloquium (A.7) is a continuous assessment course held in the form of a conference involving at least two habilitated individuals or individuals with whom a Qualification Agreement has been concluded after a selection process in accordance with § 99 (5) Universities Act 2002 (UG), for joint discussion of the work to be written on the basis of short presentations.

(2) Number of possible participants in courses and ranking criteria

1. For educational-didactic and spatial reasons, for example due to the number of devices / amount of equipment available, or for safety reasons, the number of participants for the individual types of courses can be limited as follows:

Course type	Number of participants
Lecture (VO)	No restriction
Doctoral colloquium (DQ)	12
Seminar (SE)	25
Course (KS)	35

2. For the courses from other doctoral programmes, the number of participants is taken from the curricula from which the respective course is taken. If the specified maximum number of participants is exceeded, the doctoral students will be admitted to the courses according to the EVSO ranking procedure, as defined in the Senate's guide to the allocation of courses with a limited number of participants, as amended.
3. In addition to the electronic course registration, doctoral students must be present in the first course unit / in the preliminary discussion of the course in which the final allocation takes place. Students who are absent without excuse will only be considered after all doctoral students present have been placed.

(3) Academic achievements

1. Following a consultation with the supervisor of the doctoral thesis and with the approval of the chairperson of the curricular committee, courses of up to 24 ECTS credit points may be replaced by other academic achievements.
2. Such academic achievements include:
 - a. Lecture or poster presentation at an academic conference
 - b. Contribution accepted for publication or already published in an academic journal or collected edition. The publication of the master's or diploma thesis is excluded and does not count as an additional academic achievement.
 - c. (Co-)Publication of a collected edition.
3. This does not apply for the doctoral colloquium (Module A.7).
4. Any parts of the doctoral thesis that have been published in an academic journal or a collected edition, or have been accepted for publication, cannot be recognised as substitute academic achievements for courses. Similarly, any academic achievements that have already been recognised as substitute academic achievements cannot be part of the doctoral thesis.
5. The responsible curricular committee issues guidelines on the number of ECTS credit points per type of substitute academic achievements and publishes them on the faculty's website.

§ 5 Doctoral Thesis

(1) Requirements

1. A doctoral thesis must be written in order to complete the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy. With the doctoral thesis, the doctoral student must demonstrate, beyond the scope of a master's / diploma thesis, that she / he has acquired the ability to independently solve problems in current academic research and has obtained new research results. The doctoral thesis must be an independent, original academic paper that has been independently prepared and written by the doctoral student.
2. In their doctoral thesis, the doctoral student is required to set out and present new academic findings in the context of the current state of academic research in the relevant field. The conducted research must be documented, and the results presented in a comprehensible form. The style of the doctoral thesis should follow the usual standards in the field. In the case of research collaborations, the doctoral student's individual contribution must be clearly differentiated from others, and each doctoral student involved must write their own doctoral thesis.

3. In exceptional cases, the doctoral thesis may also be written based on publications that have already been published or accepted for publication (cumulative / compilation doctoral thesis). However, a prerequisite for a cumulative / compilation doctoral thesis is the approval of the selection committee already during the admission process to the doctoral programme. Approval is only granted in the following cases:
 - a. If the doctoral thesis is written as part of a contractual research project with international participation based on the results of this project as a cumulative doctoral thesis in accordance with the requirements of the project application.
 - b. If the doctoral thesis is written within the framework of an international supervision contract with another university (Cotutelle) and a cumulative doctoral thesis is necessary or advantageous for participation in the degree programmes of the partner institution.
 - c. If the doctoral thesis is written within the framework of an interdisciplinary research project with the participation of other faculties and a cumulative doctoral thesis is necessary or advantageous for participation in the degree programmes of the other subject.
 - d. If, in the subject area of the doctoral thesis, a cumulative doctoral thesis is considered the standard in international comparison.
4. The publication of parts of the doctoral thesis in academic publications / collected editions is permissible even before the doctoral thesis has been evaluated. This must be appropriately indicated in the doctoral thesis.

(2) Cumulative / compilation doctoral thesis

When writing a cumulative or compilation doctoral thesis, the doctoral thesis must include an introduction to the research problem along with the associated publications as well as a summary of the results achieved. In an introductory and a summarising chapter (3), it must be made sufficiently clear what relevance the doctoral thesis results have in the context of the respective research field and how they are to be classified within it. In any case, the criteria for a cumulative doctoral thesis are:

1. A cumulative doctoral thesis must include at least four publications. At least two of these publications must have been previously published or have been accepted for publication in academic journals with a referee system, although the selection committee may stipulate a higher minimum number of publications to be included when accepting the doctoral student depending on the subject area of the doctoral thesis. At least two of the included publications must not have been written in co-authorship. A possible previous publication of the master's or diploma thesis cannot be taken into account for this purpose.
2. In the case of co-authorship of these publications, the doctoral student must have contributed at least substantially to the research work (at least 30% of the publication). The doctoral student's own contribution to the respective publications must be clearly stated and this information must be confirmed by the co-authors. The percentages of own contributions must also be made known to the evaluators. In this case too, the selection committee may determine a higher minimum on a subject-specific basis when admitting the doctoral student. A possible previous publication of the master's or diploma thesis cannot be taken into account for this purpose.
3. In principle, a cumulative doctoral thesis pursues the same goal as a monographic one, namely to demonstrate the doctoral student's ability to engage with scientific questions independently. Therefore, a cumulative doctoral thesis consists of a series of thematically related academic publications on a specific research question, which represents the independent original work of the doctoral student. In addition, a detailed introductory chapter must be written that clearly outlines the problem, the research objectives of the thesis, the scientific relevance of the topic, current state-of-the-art research and the methodological approaches. Following the publications, a summary of the most important findings must be prepared and conclusions must be drawn.

(3) Subject of the doctoral thesis

1. The doctoral thesis must be assigned to one of the examination subjects of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Graz and must be announced as part of the admission procedure.
2. The curricular committee compiles a list of currently available examination subjects and publishes it on the faculty's website.
3. It is possible to change the doctoral thesis subject during the degree programme up until the doctoral thesis is submitted. Any change of the doctoral thesis subject must be communicated to the selection committee in writing, stating the reasons for the change. A change of the doctoral thesis subject is only possible with the permission of the selection committee and the approval of the organ of the law regulating university studies.

(4) Supervision

1. Only academic staff who meet the requirements of § 39 of the Excerpt of Statutes: Provisions under the Law Regulating University Studies may act as supervisors.
2. It is possible to additionally appoint a second supervisor. The doctoral student has the right to select this person.
3. The dean of studies may, at the request of the doctoral student, authorise a third supervisor.
4. The first supervisor must be a member of the University of Graz. The other supervisors may also come from other universities or recognised domestic or foreign post-secondary educational institutions.
5. The first supervisor must be an expert in the subject area of the doctoral thesis and must be announced as part of the admission procedure. All other supervisors may specialise in subject areas other than the doctoral thesis subject.

(5) Evaluation

1. The completed doctoral thesis must be submitted to the (vice) dean of studies responsible for the relevant subject area. At the suggestion of the doctoral student, the dean must appoint two evaluators who meet the requirements of § 39 of the Excerpt of Statutes: Provisions under the Law Regulating University Studies.
2. The first supervisor may be an evaluator unless there is a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest definitely exists if the first supervisor is a co-author of one or more publications in a cumulative doctoral thesis.
3. If possible, evaluators should also belong to other universities or recognised domestic or foreign post-secondary educational institutions.
4. Evaluators must never be co-authors of publications in a cumulative doctoral thesis.
5. All evaluators must prepare an assessment report for the entire doctoral thesis. The acceptance of one or more publications in peer-reviewed journals does not predetermine the assessments of the evaluators.
6. In particular due to the interdisciplinary nature of a doctoral thesis, the (vice) dean of studies may also ask for a third assessment.
7. Assessment reports must be written independently from each other, and each report has equal weight in the evaluation of the doctoral thesis.

§ 6 Doctoral Examination

- (1) The doctoral examination is an oral examination lasting 90 minutes.
- (2) The doctoral examination consists of two parts: Part 1 is a public presentation and defence of the doctoral thesis taking into account the expert opinions provided by the evaluators in the context of a general discussion. This part lasts a maximum of 60 minutes. Of these 60 minutes, a maximum of 30 minutes is allocated to the presentation of the doctoral thesis. Part 2 is an oral examination on the broader subject area of the doctoral thesis. This part lasts a maximum of 30 minutes.

The (vice) dean of studies appoints the members of the examining committee for the doctoral examination on the recommendation of the doctoral student. The committee must consist of 4 members. In any case, one of the evaluators and the first supervisor must be members of the examining committee. Any other evaluators as well as the second supervisor do not have to be members of the examining committee.

- (3) The examining committee must agree on a grade to be awarded for the doctoral examination, which also takes into account the overall impression of the examination.

§ 7 Comprehensive Assessment

- (1) It is necessary to determine a comprehensive assessment of the doctoral programme. This grade comprises
 - a. the arithmetic mean grade of the module assessments from the curricular section of the doctoral programme according to § 4,
 - b. the arithmetic mean grade of the assessment of the doctoral thesis, and
 - c. the grade of the doctoral examination.
- (2) The comprehensive assessment is to read “pass” if each of the three parts is positively assessed, otherwise it is to read “fail”. The grade is listed as “pass with distinction” if the doctoral thesis was assessed as “excellent” (1), and at least two of the assessments are “excellent” (1) and a third grade is not worse than “good” (2).

§ 8 Academic Degree

Graduates of the doctoral programme are awarded the academic degree “Doctor of Philosophy”, abbreviated to “Dr. phil.”.

§ 9 Entry into Force and Transitional Regulations

- (1) This curriculum comes into force on 1 October 2024 (Curriculum 2014).
- (2) Students of the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy who are subject to the curriculum of the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy in the version 2017 when the version 2024 of the curriculum comes into force on 1 October 2024, are entitled to continue and complete their studies in accordance with the provisions of the curriculum 2017 until 30 September 2029. If the degree programme is not completed by this date, doctoral students automatically become subject to the currently ongoing curriculum on 1 October 2029. Students studying in the expiring curriculum are entitled to switch to the currently ongoing curriculum at any time during the admission period.

The chairperson of the Senate:
Ehrke-Rabel

Annex II: Equivalency List

List of equivalent courses when switching from the expiring curriculum in the version 17W to the currently ongoing curriculum in the version 2024 of the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy

On the left side of the table, courses and examinations from the currently ongoing curriculum are listed. On the right side of the table, the corresponding equivalent exams from the expiring curriculum of the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy are listed, which they can be recognised for when switching to the currently ongoing curriculum.

Currently ongoing curriculum in version 24W					Expiring curriculum in version 17W				
	Course/examination name	Course type	ECTS	KStd.		Course/examination name	Course type	ECTS	KStd.
A.1 – A.6	Subject-relevant course(s)	SE, VO, KS	In the amount of ECTS completed, total max. 10			Required courses	SE, VO, KS, KV, AG, PV, VU		
A.7	Doctoral colloquium	DQ	5	2		Required doctoral colloquium	DQ	6	2
B.1 – B.6	Advanced course(s)	SE, VO, KS	In the amount of ECTS completed, total max. 14			Required courses or elective courses	SE, VO, KS, KV, AG, PV, VU		

List of equivalent courses when remaining in the expiring curriculum in version 17W and taking examinations from the currently ongoing curriculum in version 2024 of the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy

On the left side of the table, the courses and examinations from the expiring curriculum of the Doctoral Programme of Philosophy are listed. On the right side of the table, the courses and examinations from this curriculum are listed, which can be taken instead of the examinations originally prescribed in the curriculum for doctoral students who remain in the expiring curriculum if the examinations prescribed in the expiring curriculum are no longer offered.

Expiring curriculum in version 17W					Currently ongoing curriculum in version 2024				
	Course/examination name	Course type	ECTS	KStd		Course/examination name	Course type	ECTS	KStd
	Required doctoral colloquium	DQ	6	2	A.7	Doctoral colloquium	DQ	5	2
	Required courses	SE, VO, KS, KV, AG, PV, VU			A.1 A.2 A.3 A.4 and/or A.5 and/or A.6	Subject-relevant course 1 and/or Subject-relevant course 2 and/or Subject-relevant course 3 and/or Subject-relevant course 4 and/or Subject-relevant course 5 and/or Subject-relevant course 6	SE SE VO VO KS KS		
	Elective courses	SE, VO, KS, KV, AG, PV, VU			B.1 B.2 B.3 B.4 and/or B.5 and/or B.6	Advanced course 1 and/or Advanced course 2 and/or Advanced course 3 and/or Advanced course 4 and/or Advanced course 5 and/or Advanced course 6	SE SE VO VO KS KS		