Handbook for Doctoral Researchers

**Vienna
Doctoral
Schools**

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1. Welcome from the Directors

It is exciting to embark on a doctoral research project in philosophy: you have the opportunity to immerse yourself in a fascinating topic and to make an original, expert contribution to its development.

You have chosen an excellent environment in which to pursue your work. Our large and internationally renowned department is distinguished by the breadth and depth of its philosophical expertise. Reflecting this diversity, the Vienna Doctoral School of Philosophy (VDP) fosters a plurality of traditions, methods, and forms of thought. It offers a structured doctoral program designed to foster successful early-career research. Our faculty members are committed to close (co-)supervision and a flexible curriculum to meet the specific needs of each individual.

As a member of the VDP, you will be embedded in a large and vibrant community of doctoral researchers. We encourage you to make the most of this opportunity by working with your peers and participating regularly in our activities. Your contribution will help to foster a productive and supportive working environment for the pursuit of excellent philosophical research.

It is important to acknowledge that the doctoral journey can be daunting, confusing, and frustrating at times. It is perfectly normal to feel this way, and while each researcher's experience is unique, it is likely that others have faced many of the challenges you will. Therefore, we encourage you to use the VDP community – your supervisors,

us, and each other – as an extended support network to help you navigate your doctoral journey.

The VDP aims to support its doctoral students at every stage of the process, from developing a promising research proposal to disseminating results and finding a postdoctoral position. As a first step, this handbook aims to bring together in one place the practical information you will need during your doctoral research. It is designed to help you manage your teaching, learning, and research commitments effectively and, ultimately, to complete your dissertation successfully and on time. We hope you find it useful.

Prof. Benjamin Schnieder *Director*	Prof. Angela Kallhoff *Vice Director*	Raphael Aybar *Coordinator*

2. Doctoral Program

Our three-year PhD program is organized around a number of compulsory activities and non-compulsory training. You may find it helpful to discuss how to prioritize them with your supervisor and colleagues.

Overviews are available at

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/phd-program/

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/phd-process/

Our StudienServiceCenter (SSC) administers the compulsory activities (coursework, recognition of examinations, Exposé & FÖP, submission and defense of the dissertation).

doktoratsstudium.philosophie@univie.ac.at

2.1. Research Proposal (Exposé)
First-Year Activity

Within the first year of doctoral study, researchers should (among other things) prepare a written research proposal/exposé, which will be the base for a public presentation at the department. The purpose of the proposal is to give a good impression of the research to be expected, determine the goals, lend the project some context, and provide a roadmap for its successful and timely completion. General information is available at

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/phd-process/entry-phase/research-proposal/

Modalities of Exposé in Philosophy:

Decide which type of exposé is most appropriate for you and your project, taking into account the advice of your supervisor.

Modality 1

Submit **a long research proposal** (approximately 3,000-5,000 words) that includes the following items:

- Description of the topic of the dissertation project, including a clear research question
- Outline of the state of the research
- Explanation of the chosen research methods
- Relevant literature
- Choice of supervisors
- Time and work schedule, possibly financial budget and overview of resources

Modality 2

Submit a **brief research proposal** (approximately 1,000 words) that includes a condensed version of the items listed in modality 1 **and a piece of research** (no longer than 5,000 words). The research paper must

- be a self-contained piece of academic research written during the first year of studies
- be thematically related to the research proposal
- Illustrate the type of work to be undertaken in the research phase of the PhD.

2.2. Faculty Presentation (FÖP)
First-Year Activity

Before the end of the first year, a doctoral researcher must give a public presentation based on the research proposal: the so-called FÖP (**F**akultäts**ö**ffentliche **P**räsentation). In some cases, the timeframe may vary (e.g. for part-time/self-funded researchers).

The FÖP allows Director of Doctoral Studies to approve the continuation of your doctoral studies for the next three years. The FÖP is an opportunity to present your research projects to other members of the department, receive feedback, and engage in constructive discussion of key aspects.

Formal requirements:

- Max. 10 minutes presentation
- 20 minutes discussion/questions
- Presentations can be in English or German

For registration details and preparation tips, please visit:

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/phd-process/entry-phase/public-presentation/

https://ssc-phil.univie.ac.at/en/degree-programmes/doctoral-programme/public-presentation-and-defence/

Recommendations:

- Attend at least one FÖP session before presenting.
- Practice for the FÖP by presenting at the Work-in-Progress Series:
  https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/phd-pro-gram/doctoral-training/wip-series/
- Prepare your exposé and public presentation in doctoral seminars.
- Work closely with your advisors/dissertation committees to prepare and practice for the public presentation.

2.3. Doctoral Thesis Agreement
First-Year Activity

After the public presentation, a dissertation agreement is made between the doctoral student, the supervisor(s), and the University (signed by the Director of Doctoral Studies on behalf of the Studienpräses). This agreement formalizes the obligations and responsibilities of each party. More information is available at

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/phd-process/entry-phase/doctoral-thesis-agreement/

Recommendations:

- Register a second supervisor in your doctoral thesis agreement.
- Arrange a thesis advisory committee for your project.

2.4. Monographs and Cumulative Dissertations

Doctoral students must decide whether their work will take the form of a monograph or a cumulative thesis (i.e., a collection of papers). This should be discussed with supervisors/dissertation advisory committees and decided by the second year. (In some cases, timescales may vary, e.g., where researchers are part-time/self-funded).

It is a good idea to begin drafting dissertation chapters as soon as possible, with the goal of completing the entire dissertation by the end of the third year. If a fourth year is available, it may be used for final editing and preparation for the defense.

If you are preparing a cumulative dissertation, please read the VDP guidelines on cumulative dissertations in philosophy available on our moodle.

2.5. Coursework and Recognition of Examinations

The doctoral program in philosophy at the University of Vienna also includes a continuing education component in the form of doctoral seminars, participation in conferences and summer schools in the amount of 24 ECTS points. At least 15 of the 24 ECTS points have to be obtained in doctoral seminars.

Students may enroll in doctoral seminars from the beginning of their studies, e.g. to prepare their Exposé and FÖP.

The purpose of the doctoral seminars is twofold: first, to broaden philosophical expertise; and second, to practice presenting and discussing original ideas.

Information about the curriculum, including how to register for the seminars, is available at

https://ufind.univie.ac.at/en/vvz.html

Scroll down to '43 - Doctoral Program in Philosophy and Education' and select '43.01 Philosophy'. Click on each course listed for full details. It is also possible to register for courses in 18 - Directorate of Studies 18 - Philosophy (Bachelor's and Master's level).

2.6. Annual Reports
Second- and Third-Year Activity

Doctoral students are required to submit a progress report each year after passing the FÖP. Annual progress reports serve two purposes:

First, they take stock of the progress made during each year of the doctoral program. This may sound trivial, but it helps both doctoral candidates and their supervisors to keep track of their doctoral projects and to avoid pitfalls that, in retrospect, could have been easily avoided (e.g., unrealistic timetables, procrastination, etc.).

Second, the annual reports can document changes that become necessary or even desirable during the course of the doctoral studies that could not have been foreseen when the dissertation agreement was signed. For example, if the

original plan involved some specific data collection, this aspect may become impossible because access to special archives or data sets has been denied. Or new opportunities may arise, such as a new conference or workshop on the topic of the dissertation project. These changes to the dissertation agreement must be documented in the annual reports. It is important to emphasize that it is ultimately up to the Director of the Doctoral Studies to accept these changes. Further information can be found at

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/phd-process/research-phase/annual-progress-reports/

2.7. Thesis Submission and Defense
Third Year Activity

Doctoral researchers are asked to nominate individuals to serve as examiners for their dissertation. Please note that reviewers cannot be supervisors or members of the thesis advisory committee and must be external to the University of Vienna. It is a good idea to identify potential examiners already in your second or third year. Please discuss this with your supervisor(s)/dissertation advisory committee.

More information about the thesis submission and review process can be found at

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/phd-process/final-phase/completion-and-public-defense/

More information about the defense is available at

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/phd-process/final-phase/defense/

3. Supervision and Career Development

3.1. Co-Supervision

It is often a good idea to have two supervisors. Please note that supervisors cannot serve as examiners for the final dissertation.

Doctoral researchers are expected to work closely with their supervisor(s) throughout their doctoral studies. It is strongly recommended to have a supervisory meeting at least once a month. Beyond that, it is largely up to the individuals involved to decide how best to work together. Once agreed, working arrangements should be kept under review and adjusted as necessary.

The Code of Good Practice sets out the core responsibilities of supervisors and doctoral students (see §4 above). The Doctoral Thesis Agreement further strengthens these arrangements (see §9 below).

The Code of Good Practice is available at

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/admission/vdp-membership/code-of-good-practice/

If you have any problems with your supervisory arrangements, please contact the VDP Coordinator to arrange a confidential one-to-one conversation (vd.philosophy@univie.ac.at).

Further information on co-supervision is available at

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/phd-program/co-su-pervision/

3.2. Thesis Advisory Committees

In addition to the immediate supervisory team, doctoral researchers are encouraged to collaborate with other scholars within and outside the department. Please consider establishing a broader thesis advisory committee to help guide your research.

Further information is available at

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/phd-program/co-su-pervision/thesis-advisory-committee/

3.3. Doctoral Training

The full range of VDP training activities can be found at

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/phd-program/doc-toral-training/

The university-wide training for doctoral researchers is available at

https://forschung.univie.ac.at/en/services/events-train-ings/doctoral-candidates/

Researchers can also identify training needs using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework:

https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-devel-opment/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-frame-work/developing-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework

3.4. VDP Funding

The VDP supports its members with funded positions, grants to participate in academic conferences, organize academic events, visit research institutions, and prepare their dissertations. More information can be found on the VDP Moodle and at this link:

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/funding/

3.5. Teaching

It is an excellent idea to gain teaching experience during the PhD, and this will be important for a career in academic philosophy. VDP researchers employed as university assistants are required to teach a certain amount of undergraduate courses. Other doctoral researchers are invited to apply for teaching opportunities. It is important to balance teaching and research commitments carefully.

Before teaching for the first time at the University of Vienna, it is necessary to complete the basic qualification:

https://ctl.univie.ac.at/angebote-fuer-leh-rende/hochschuldidaktische-qualifizierung/basisquali-fizierung/basic-qualification-course-in-english-language/

The Center for Teaching and Learning provides further information and support, including coaching for staff new to teaching:

https://ctl.univie.ac.at/en/qualifizierung/coaching-for-staff-new-to-teaching/

All other questions concerning teaching at the Department of Philosophy should be addressed to the Director of Undergraduate and Master Studies, Uni.-Prof. Max Kölbel (max.koelbel@univie.ac.at).

3.6. Publications

VDP researchers are encouraged to publish the results of their research. Ideally, this involves submitting articles for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals. It may also involve submitting a monograph for publication as a book upon completion of doctoral research. The development of a research career in philosophy revolves centrally around publication.

The peer-review process often takes a long time. So it may be a good idea to start submitting research articles already during the doctoral studies, if substantial and publishable results have been obtained. But one should avoid premature publication of material – so it is essential to consult the supervisor/advisory committee for advice on this matter. You may even want to develop a publication strategy.

Apart from your own timing, another essential aspect of publishing is the target venue. Publication venues vary

widely in scope, prestige, acceptance rate, and turnaround time. If you are considering submitting a paper, it is recommended that you discuss this with your supervisor to receive advice on where to submit. In any case, please be careful to avoid predatory publishers.

Some further information on publishing is available on the library's website:

https://bibliothek.univie.ac.at/forschungsunterstu-etzung/en/publikation.html

Further information on the University of Vienna's Open Access activities, including funding opportunities for Open Access publications, can be found at

https://openaccess.univie.ac.at/en/

There is also a section on predatory publishers to watch out for:

https://openaccess.univie.ac.at/en/about-open-access/predatory-publishers/

4. Organization of the School

The Vienna Doctoral School of Philosophy (VDP) is governed by a Steering Committee, which includes our Directors, Coordinator, and representatives of faculty, non-faculty, and doctoral researchers' representatives.

Steering Committee:
https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/members/steering-committee/

Doctoral Student Assembly:
All VDP researchers are members of the VDP Doctoral Researchers' Assembly, which meets at least once per semester.

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/members/steering-committee/other-decision-making-structures/

5. Contacts and Resources

5.1. Points of Call (Harassment, Discrimination)

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/members/conflicts-harassment-and-discrimination-points-of-contact/

5.2. Other Research Activities

VDP researchers are encouraged to participate in broader research activities throughout their doctoral studies. These may include reading groups, work-in-progress seminars, and other (formal or informal) discussion forums.

Details of existing research networks in the department are linked from the VDP website:

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/events/

See also the departmental web page:

https://philosophie.univie.ac.at/en/research/

Doctoral researchers are welcome to set up their own networks. Please send details to the VDP Coordinator (vd.philosophy@univie.ac.at) so that they can be shared with the rest of the research community.

5.3. Key Contacts

VDP Coordinator:

vd.philosophy@univie.ac.at

raphael.aybar@univie.ac.at

SPL43 - Study Service Center Philosophy:

https://ssc-phil.univie.ac.at/en/ssc-services-contact/contact-form/

Director of Doctoral Studies/ VDP:

benjamin.schnieder@univie.ac.at

Vice-Director of Doctoral Studies/ VDP:

angela.kallhoff@univie.ac.at

Director of Undergraduate/ master's Studies:

max.koelbel@univie.ac.at

Department of Philosophy Main Administrative Office, Mag. Markus Rield:

philosophie@univie.ac.at

Faculty of Philosophy and Education Main Administrative Office:

dekanat.philbild@univie.ac.at

Room bookings (except seminar room 3A):

lehre.philosophie@univie.ac.at

Room bookings (seminar room 3A only):

philosophie@univie.ac.at

Department of Philosophy IT helpdesk (for IT equipment/ phone):

edv.philosophie@univie.ac.at

The University of Vienna's IT helpdesk (for u:account):

helpdesk.zid@univie.ac.at

The University of Vienna's Doctoral Center:

info.doktorat@univie.ac.at

The University of Vienna's Doctoral Admissions Team:

doktorat.zulassung@univie.ac.at

5.4. Wider Resources

Key webpages:

VDP:

https://vd-philosophy.univie.ac.at/

Department of Philosophy:

https://philosophie.univie.ac.at/en/

Faculty of Philosophy and Education:

https://philbild.univie.ac.at/en/

Philosophy Studies Service Center – doctoral pages:

https://ssc-phil.univie.ac.at/en/degree-programs/doctoral-program/

Philosophy IT Helpdesk:

https://philosophie.univie.ac.at/institut/it-philosophie/

University IT Helpdesk:

 https://zid.univie.ac.at/zid-helpdesk/

University of Vienna Center for Doctoral Studies:

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/

University of Vienna International Office:

https://international.univie.ac.at/en/

Intranet for university employees:

https://wiki.univie.ac.at/

Library:

https://bibliothek.univie.ac.at/en/

Useful guides (warning – these may not always be fully up to date!)

Step-by-step guide for doctoral research (German only):

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_up-load/z_doktorat/Doku-mente/Broschueren/Schritt_fuer_Schritt_durchs_Doktorat.pdf

Orientation guide for international doctoral researchers:

https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_up-load/z_doktorat/Dokumente/Broschueren/Orienta-tion_Guide_for_international_PhDs.pdf

International philosophy networks/ resources

Philos-L:

https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/philosophy/philos-l/

PhilEvents:

https://philevents.org/

PhilPeople:

https://philpeople.org/

PhilPapers:

https://philpapers.org/

PhilJobs:

https://philjobs.org/

Careers beyond academic philosophy:

www.letsphi.com

University of Vienna Center for Doctoral Studies newsletter (sign-up page):

https://massmailer.univie.ac.at/site/forschungsser-vice/dokzen/subscribe/article/132.html

Euraxess recruitment portal for research jobs in Europe:

https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/