Guidelines for Doctoral Candidates at the KTF

1. Admission PhD / Doctoral Program (Dr.theol.)

Admission to a PhD or doctoral program at the University of Vienna is managed **centrally** by the *Doctoral Studies Center*. Information and forms can be found here:

🔗 **https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/doctoralphd-programmes/theology**

Documents to be submitted are:

⬩ Description of the intended doctoral project, ⬩ Letter of motivation, ⬩ Academic curriculum vitae, ⬩ Indication of willingness to supervise a doctoral candidate **by a supervisor**.

🔗 https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/doctoralphd-programmes/theology/admission

The **willingness to supervise** must be signed **by the supervisor** ("mentor") on a form. The supervisor has to be a member of the KTF.

➢ https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/z_doktorat/Dokumente/Zulassung/4_Betreuungsbereitschaft_Formular.pdf

It is possible that certain additional examination requirements may have to be met in connection with admission. If non-theologians are admitted to the PhD, up to 60 ECTS may be required. The supervisors are involved in determining the requirements by submitting a proposal to the Doctoral Program Director (DSPL).

! **Check carefully** the information on the approval decree to ensure that you know what must be completed *before* and *after* the FÖP, as **no changes** are possible once the appeal deadline has passed!

2. Registration for and Completion of the FÖP

🔗 https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/en/organising-your-studies/phd-doctoral-programme/#c532484

The dates of the FÖP (= *Public Presentation at the Faculty*) can be found on the SSC homepage. The number of participants per date is limited and it may happen that a date is fully booked before the registration deadline.

! The dissertation project must be presented publicly **by the end of the first year of study**, according to the relevant university regulations.
Make sure that you inform your supervisor that the FÖP must be completed within this period (otherwise a doctoral thesis agreement and full membership of the VDTR will not be possible).
However, there may be unintentional delays due to admission requirements to be fulfilled before the FÖP.

If the candidate has been admitted with the requirement to complete additional examinations or courses (see letter of admission), it is stated there whether and which requirements must be completed **before** the FÖP.
To register for the FÖP, there is also a "*Registration form of the dissertation topic*" to be completed in advance with the supervisor and signed by the supervisor or, if applicable, also by the additional supervisor:

➢ https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/s_ktf/2019/Im_Studium/SL.D11_Registration_of_the_topic_of_the_doctoral_thesis_and_the_supervisors.pdf

! The approximately **13-15-pages** exposé (in **German or English**), which must be submitted to the SSC with the application for the FÖP **at least three weeks** prior to the official FÖP date, must meet certain requirements (see link), and it is a matter of course that the supervisor(s) should also have discussed the exposé with the doctoral candidate prior to submission.

➢ https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/s_ktf/2019/Im_Studium/Guidelines_for_the_Expose_engl.pdf

💡*Please pay attention to this*: The exposé should not exceed 15 pages, have **page numbers** and also an informal **cover sheet** with working title, dissertation subject and name [also of the supervisor(s)].

When submitting exposés, in addition to content-related criteria, attention must of course also be paid to the external formalities (see link above), especially the academic conventions. There are **faculty-wide citation guidelines** as a model for this. These citation guidelines in German and English are intended to also help doctoral students, in cooperation with the VDTR, to become familiar with academic writing and citation (on the basis of these guidelines) through regularly offered tutorials.

➢ **English:**
https://lit-ktf.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/p_liturgiewissenschaft/korr_3_Guidelines_CITAVI_2024.pdf

After a successful FÖP (in **German and/or English**), not only the dissertation topic but also the supervisor (and, if applicable, the additional supervisor) is approved on the previously submitted registration form. This makes the confirmation of supervision **legally binding**.

The DSPL decides on the approval of the dissertation project in consultation with the Doctoral Advisory Board on the base of the exposé and the discussion afterwards. The doctoral candidate and (additional) supervisor will be informed of the decision by e-mail.

3. Doctoral Thesis Agreement (DThA)

After successful presentation and approval of the topic and the supervisor (and additional supervisor, if applicable), a DThA (in German or English) **with exactly 20 ECTS** must be agreed with the supervisor (and additional supervisor) in a **timely manner**. For the new doctoral program in Catholic Theology and the PhD program, the new more flexible "*Faculty Guidelines for the Curriculum*" must be observed with immediate effect in the DThA (see also Appendices, p. 6):

➢ https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/s_ktf/Dokumente/DR_FTH/FACULTY_GUIDELINES_FOR_THE_CURRICULUM.pdf

❗ For the Catholic doctorate (Dr.theol.), the *specialization discipline* must also be specified **in written form** in the DThA.

4. Annual Progress Report

After the completion of the dissertation agreement, doctoral candidates **are obliged** to submit an annual report (in German or English) in which the progress of the work is documented (compiled together with the supervisor, and additional supervisor, if applicable) and the DThA can be supplemented and updated. Transcripts of records are no longer necessary; the examination pass is to be completed up to 20 ECTS which is sufficient (see also Appendices, p. 6 the box at the bottom).

❗ The annual reports must be submitted to the SSC annually **without being asked**, either directly or via the supervisor (by sending the scanned document by e-mail) and must also be signed by the supervisor (and additional supervisor, if applicable) with a brief statement. *Missed reports may have negative consequences at the end of the doctoral program*.

5. Integration of Doctoral Students into the VDTR

The University and the KTF strongly recommend that doctoral students register with the VDTR *after successfully completing* their FÖP and DThA (limited membership is already possible before the FÖP). Through the various events offered by the VDTR (e.g. *Open Research Day*, etc.), doctoral students can receive support in the dissertation process, network interdisciplinarily and internationally, gain the necessary ECTS outside their dissertation discipline and also receive financial support for congress or archive trips if they regularly participate in the academic offerings.

Further information at:

◩ **https://vdtr.univie.ac.at/en**

6. Completion of the Doctoral Thesis

a) Appointment of the Reviewers of the Thesis

The assessment of your thesis will be done by two reviewers. The reviewers have to be appointed. In consultation with your supervisor you have to suggest **two** possible reviewers. Please note, that your supervisor may not be one of the two reviewers. The reviewers can be requested **at the earliest six months before** uploading the thesis in HoPla (= plagiarism check). The doctoral candidate must also co-sign the form.

Application for the appointment of the reviewers:

https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/en/graduation/paperthesis/doctoral-thesis/#c532738

Form "Assignment of a thesis to reviewers"[1]:

➢ https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/s_ktf/2019/Im_Studium/SL.D3_Assignment_of_a_thesis_to_reviewers.pdf

The reviewers have to be able to fully understand the language of the thesis (German, English, possibly also Italian, French or Turkish), but must be able to write their reviews in **German or English** (at least 4 pages). Please pay attention to this when proposing the two reviewers.

b) Submission of the Doctoral Thesis

The prerequisite for submitting the thesis is an approved application for the appointment of a reviewer. The steps *prior to submission*, the *submission procedure* and the *submission of the dissertation in printed form* can be found at:

➢ https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/en/graduation/paperthesis/doctoral-thesis
➢ Statutory Order Regarding Formal Requirements when Submitting Scientific Theses

c) Uploading the Thesis to "HoPla" for Plagiarism Checking[2]

Before submitting the print version, the digital version of the thesis has to be submitted via u:space only. To do this, please go there to "Graduation" and select "Plagiarism Check". You will be guided through the upload process (there is also an information video [in German]). Only after a successful plagiarism check (the result will be communicated by email from the SSC), do submit the print version, which **must be absolutely identical** to the uploaded version. The **three** hardcover copies of the thesis must be submitted to the SSC **within 10 working days** of submitting the electronic version.[3]

d) Assessment of the Thesis

The thesis checked for plagiarism is sent to the reviewers for assessment. The assessment must take place within a **maximum of four months** after submission. Once **both** reviews have been received by the SSC, the doctoral candidate will be informed of the assessment of the thesis and the reviews will be forwarded.

7. Registration for the Final Examination

https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/studienabschluss/phd-doktoratsstudien

Doctorate (Dr.theol.): The final examination is a public overall examination consisting of three parts: defense, examination in the dissertation discipline and examination in the specialization discipline

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[1] **CV, list of publications, contact details** etc. of possible **external** reviewers must be sent to the SSC by the supervisor or doctoral candidate when the application is submitted.

[2] If the thesis is submitted *during the vacations* or *during lecture-free periods*, there may well be **delays** in the plagiarism check by HoPla! Therefore, have the finished thesis uploaded **in good time beforehand**.

[3] If reviewers or supervisors require a hard copy of the thesis, additional copies may need to be submitted.

(= the chosen further discipline). A numerical grade (1–5) is given for each of these parts. If one part is not passed, the entire examination is deemed to have been failed and must be repeated in all parts. _**PhD**_: The final examination is a public _defense_ for which the examination senate awards a numerical grade (1–5).

a) Requirements for Registering for the Final Examination

Registration for the final examination is only possible once all requirements are met:

⬩ Positive assessment of the doctoral thesis by both reviewers, ⬩ approved examination pass (with **20 ECTS**).

If all requirements are met, a form can be used to register for the final oral examination:

➢ _**Doctorate (Dr.theol.)**_:
https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/s_ktf/2019/Anmeldung_Abschlusspruefung_Doktoratsstudium_der_Katholischen_Theologie

➢ _**PhD**_:
https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/s_ktf/2019/Studienabschluss_HP_neu/SL.P4_Registration_for_doctoral_thesis_defense.pdf

b) Approval of the Examination Committee and Date of the Final Examination

The approval of the examination committee is the responsibility of the DSPL in consultation with the supervisor (or additional supervisor). The reviewers may also be invited to the final examination and are entitled to vote.

❗ There should be **at least 10 days**[4] between receiving the two reviews and the final examination (this can only be shortened in justified exceptional cases)
The final examination should be conducted during lecture-free periods only <u>in exceptional cases</u>![5]

💡**Tip:** It is essential to allow sufficient time between submission of the thesis and defense or "rigorosum" (usually **max. 5 months**)!

c) Final Examination

The final examination is generally **open to the public** – except for the examination committee's deliberation on the grading.

❗ The final examination can only be conducted (without any exceptions) in **German and/or English**.

There are guidelines for conducting the final examination:

➢ Orientation aid for the "Rigorosum" (Dr.theol.):
https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/s_ktf/2019/Studienabschluss_HP_neu/GUIDELINES_FOR_THE_RIGOROSUM.pdf

➢ Orientation aid for the Defensio/Defense (PhD):
https://ssc-kaththeologie.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/s_ktf/2019/Studienabschluss_HP_neu/GUIDELINES_FOR_THE_DEFENSE_PhD.pdf

❗ Please note that, according to the Curriculum, your dissertation should actually be completed **within 3 years**[6] (from the admission). But it is often unavoidable that there may be delays (admission requirements, employment, language courses, illness etc.). However, in the post-pandemic period, the standard period of study should not be exceeded too much!

Vienna, March 9, 2025

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[4] This 10-day period is intended to allow the doctoral candidate to study/analyze the reviews and consider how to respond to their possible points of criticism in the defense. The time is also used to _publicly_ announce the examination date, which is required by law.

[5] As it is often difficult to put together an examination committee during lecture-free periods and the public aspect is limited.

[6] According to § 4 of the Curriculum (as of August 2022)!

APPENDICES

To the FÖP (for your general information)

SHORT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE ORIENTATION OF THE
<u>DOCTORAL ADVISORY BOARD</u>

I.   The exposé is with regard to formalities and academic conventions (e.g. stringency of citation in the footnotes and in the bibliography)**:**
[Please mark with a cross where applicable; if necessary, name any gaps in brief]

☐ Good to excellent.

☐ Sufficient (candidate should undertake additional training).

☐ Significantly in need of correction (candidate must undergo further training).

II.   The state of research on the topic seems to me:
[Please mark with a cross where applicable; if necessary, name any gaps in brief]]

☐ Very clearly presented.

☐ Sufficiently well presented.

☐ Needs to be extended; in my opinion, gaps relate to the following areas: …

III.   Research questions and the resulting methodology(ies), structure and schedule of the work I consider to be:
[Please mark with a cross where applicable; name any deficiencies]

☐ Exemplary developed.

☐ Sufficiently developed.

☐ Significantly in need of correction/amendment, especially in the following areas: …

IV.   In my opinion, the project can therefore
[Please mark with a cross where applicable; specify any requirements]

☐ Be approved without requirements.

☐ Not to be approved.

☐ Only be approved with the following requirements: …

FACULTY CURRICULUM GUIDELINES
DOCTORAL DEGREE IN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY / PhD in THEOLOGICAL STUDIES (CATHOLIC)
(Based on the approval of the *Doctoral Studies Committee* of 2 December 2024)

ACADEMIC PREREQUISITES according to the CURRICULUM
! (= **20 ECTS**, freely negotiable, of which **10–12** ECTS[7] should be from **I** and **8–10** ECTS from **II**)

I: SPECIALIZATION IN THE DISSERTATION / THEOLOGICAL MINOR DISCIPLINE

1. DP-relevant (Research) Seminars in the discipline of the dissertation project (**DP**) (max. 12 ECTS[7])
2. DP-relevant (Research) Seminars in the theological minor discipline (for Dr.theol.) (max. 6 ECTS[7])

II: PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC AND / OR TEACHING ACTIVITIES

3. Academic publications (max. 8 ECTS)
   - Review of an academic publication (2–3 ECTS)
   - Article in an academic journal or anthology (2–4 ECTS)
   - (Co-)editing of an anthology (max. 4 ECTS)
     [Valuation depending on realistic assessment of workload and the supervisor's proposal]

4. International congresses (documentation through confirmation of participation) (max. 6 ECTS)
   - Participation in such a conference (one day 1 ECTS / several days 2 ECTS)
   - Participation and presentation of the DP or a lecture (max. 4 ECTS)
   - Keynote lecture (4–5 ECTS)

5. Participation in VDTR activities (documentation by VDTR) (max. 8 ECTS)
   - Participation & moderation or reflection at the *Open Research Day* (1 ECTS)
   - Participation & presentation at the *Open Research Day* (2 ECTS)
   - Participation & moderation or reflection at the *Master Class* (2 ECTS)
   - Participation & presentation at the *Master Class* (2–3 ECTS)
   - Peer Activities, Lecture Series, Workshops, presentation of the exposé or partial results of the DP at the VDTR Doctoral Workshop, etc. (1–3 ECTS)
     [Valuation depending on realistic assessment of workload by VDTR]

6. Participation in a tutorial for training in academic writing (in cooperation with the VDTR) (1 ECTS)

7. Seminars offered specifically for doctoral students (e.g. "Issues and Topics of Current Theological Research", "Biography and Theology") (5–6 ECTS)

8. Active participation in *BeST Vienna* as a stand advisor (1 ECTS)

9. Independent teaching or relevant contribution to a course or completion of a seminar/course in university teaching didactics (max. 6 ECTS).
   [Valuation depending on realistic assessment of workload]

The fulfillment of these requirements is monitored by the DSPL with respect to the issuing of the credits, after the FÖP, but especially according to the *Doctoral Thesis Agreement* (DA).

The aim of the DP is at least one **academic publication**.

If there is no commitment from any publisher to publish the dissertation, its **online accessibility** should be guaranteed in any case.

! **Examination Pass**: The Examination Pass must be completed in accordance with this guideline to the extent of 20 ECTS that are to be used to fulfill the degree program. More than 20 ECTS are not provided for in the Curriculum and are therefore not to be listed in the Examination Pass. The approved Examination Pass is a prerequisite for registering for the final examination.

The submission of a list of achievements (*Transcript of Records*) attached to the *Annual Progress Report* **is no longer** required with immediate effect!

(*Older/earlier Examination Passes that have already been approved remain valid.*)

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[7] In justified cases, the DSPL can also recognize **more** ECTS from section **I**.