

## Frequently Asked Questions concerning the PhD Program at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (KUG)\*

### What is the Doctoral School for the PhD Program?

At the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (KUG) there are two separate Doctoral Schools, one administering the PhD program, the other the artistic research program (Dr. art.). For the PhD program, there is a mandatory curriculum, and the by-laws of the Doctoral School in some cases concretize and elaborate the regulations laid down in the curriculum. A Coordinating Team, which according to the by-laws consists of the head of the Doctoral School, the head of the appropriate Curricular Commission, the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, the Vice Rector responsible for scholarly research, two representatives of the scientific faculty, and one student, is responsible for setting up regulations regarding the internal organization of the Doctoral School.

**Please make sure to read the curriculum!** (-> download from the website of the DS\_PhD)

### Which requirements do I have to comply with in order to be admitted to the PhD program?

Regarding formal requirements please read the **APPLICATION FORM** (-> download from the website of the DS\_PhD). In particular, the Dean of Studies will check whether you have successfully completed a suitable MA program.

### Who can act as my supervisor?

A supervisor needs to hold a chair (full professor) in one of the academic fields represented at KUG or have the status of Habilitation (post-doctoral qualification to lecture at universities). A list of potential supervisors including their respective fields of expertise can be found on the website of the DS\_PhD.

### What is the obligatory counseling Interview? (Obligatory Entrance Interview)

After you have discussed your research project with the desired supervisor, received confirmation that s/he is interested, and subsequently developed your research proposal as part of your application, you shall present it to your Doctoral Committee in the course of an Entrance Interview. The interview will be based on the documents you have submitted including two scholarly essays (e.g. MA thesis, published article, seminar paper), a list of university courses you have successfully completed, and, in particular, a five-page exposé plus abstract outlining your project. In order to provide a clear picture of your research project, this exposé shall address the following issues:

- A succinct summary/abstract with short description of your project (maximum of five sentences)
- outline of your project stating your research questions
- summary of existing research indicating relevant studies on your topic already published and the relevance of your study in relationship to current discourse in your field
- outline of the intended procedure: methods, order of required work steps
- your personal qualifications for a successful treatment of the chosen topic (for example specialization in your MA studies, other specific previous knowledge)
- short list of publications of relevant literature on the chosen subject

You will receive a copy of the minutes of this interview meeting. These will contain the details of the Dissertation Agreement which you and your committee will define and agree to as part of the entrance Interview process as well as an outline of KUG's open access strategy regarding PhD theses.

### Who is the Doctoral Committee?

The Doctoral Committee consists of your primary supervisor, a co-supervisor (usually from the KUG), an advisor (usually external) as well as the head of the Doctoral School. The external advisor will be chosen in agreement with supervisor and the Doctoral School. The Doctoral School's Coordinating Team will recommend the makeup of your Doctoral Committee to the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs who needs to

approve it. In well-founded cases an external instead of an internal expert may serve as co-supervisor.

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\* last update July, 2023

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### When can I start my studies?

If you submit all required documents in time and the presentation of your dissertation project is evaluated positively by the Doctoral Committee, you may start either in a winter or a summer semester. Regarding deadlines please refer to the **APPLICATION FORM** (-> download from the website of the PhD-Doctoral School)

### Which courses do I have to attend?

You have to successfully complete the following courses during your regular six-semester studies:

- each semester (= 6 x) the **COLLOQUIUM FOR DOCTORAL CANDIDATES** offered by your supervisor
- each semester (= 6 x) the **DOCTORAL FORUM** (To facilitate your scheduling it will always take place in calendar week 3 and 24 respectively.)
- **DOCTORAL FORUM – PRESENTATION**. Once per year (= 3 x) you will have to give a progress report on your research project as part of the doctoral forum.
- the course **PRESENTATION TECHNIQUES**. It will usually be offered once a year.
- the course **SCIENTIFIC ENGLISH**. It will usually be offered once a year. This course is required even if you are a native English speaker.
- the course **GENDER- UND DIVERSITÄTSKOMPETENZ**. It will usually be offered once a year.
- **Additional courses** can be prescribed individually within the Entrance Interview.

### What is expected of a presentation?

1<sup>st</sup> presentation at the doctoral forum

- **WHAT?** What is your object of study, what is the current state of research in this area of studies, and what are your research questions?
- **HOW?** Which methods are you going to employ in your research?
- **WHO?** Which personal prerequisites do you bring to your project and which preliminary studies have you carried out already?
- **WHY?** In which way will your work contribute to gaining new scholarly insights and substantial scientific progress?
- progress report:
  - What have you achieved since you entered the Doctoral Program?
  - Which difficulties or new considerations have you encountered?
  - Did you have to modify or readjust your original topic?

2<sup>nd</sup> presentation

- What progress have you achieved since your first presentation?
- Have new considerations come up which have led to a modifications of your topic, approaches, research plans, etc?

3<sup>rd</sup> presentation

- What are the results of your thesis?
- Looking back how has your thesis evolved?
- Have the chosen methods proven to be appropriate?
- To what extent have you been able to answer your research questions?
- in the case of research based on hypotheses: Have you been able to verify your hypotheses?
- in the case of explorative research: Which conclusions can be drawn from your study for further research?
- What are the fundamental new insights gained through your study for the relevant branch of science and possibly beyond?

### What is the interim evaluation?

After your first year of study, normally at the end of your second semester, you will need to summarize and present the progress of your work to your Doctoral Committee. They will discuss it with you in a personal interview and evaluate your achievements. If necessary, a re-focusing of your topic can be agreed upon. An excellent evaluation is a prerequisite for certain measures of financial and other support for doctoral candidates (see below). Well before this discussion you should submit a two to three-sided progress report to all members of your Doctoral Committee, which should include a description of your progress as well as information regarding potential modifications of your original topic. If possible

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the external member of the Committee shall be present in person, or otherwise via video conferencing.

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### What information on my PhD project do I have to submit?

Ongoing PhD projects are presented on the Doctoral School's website. For this purpose you must submit:

- your CV in English
- the exposé you submitted for the entrance interview, if necessary in revised form
- the abstract in English (1 page)
- the slides of your three presentations at the doctoral forum

Please send these documents to the office assistant of the DS\_PhD as soon as possible after they become available.

### How the program is set up: The 10 steps towards your PhD

- 1) talk with your desired supervisor and develop the project proposal
- 2) hand in all documents in electronic format to the office assistant of the Doctoral School
- 3) attend the Entrance Interview with your Doctoral Committee
- 4) if applicable, additional requirements such as attending certain courses or other obligations such as conference talks, paper publications etc. will be instituted
- 5) start your studies
- 6) take the required courses and work on your thesis
- 7) after the first year, submit a written progress report and discuss it with your Doctoral Committee in your interim evaluation
- 8) not later than three months before you intend to hand in the final version of your thesis, send a draft to the external advisor (and copies to the other members of your Doctoral Committee and to the office assistant of the Doctoral School)
- 9) after you have submitted the final version, the reviewers have a maximum of four months to write their reviews
- 10) final oral examination (Rigorosum)

### What does the oral examination consist of?

The "Rigorosum" is the oral examination at the end of the doctoral program. It lasts a total of 90 minutes and is comprised of two parts: first, the "Defense" (Defensio, Disputatio) of the dissertation which lasts between 30 and 60 minutes and consists of a short presentation providing summary of your results (15') followed by a discussion between you and your examiners lasting between 15 and 45 minutes. After that, there is a three-part subject examination lasting between 30 and 60 minutes on topics drawn from the entire scholarly field to which the dissertation is assigned. For the subject examination, you should arrange 1-2 topics with each of the three examiners in advance.

Time allocation between the defensio and the subject examinations sections may differ depending on the scholarly discipline and/or the examination committee. In general, however, the defensio should last no longer than 60 minutes and the three subject examinations together should last no less than 30 minutes.

### Can I take a temporary leave from the PhD program?

It is possible to take a temporary leave. While on leave you must maintain the status of enrolled student, so you will still have to pay tuition fees. Please note that while on leave you are not entitled to take courses, to take exams, to hand in academic works or have them evaluated. You will find an application form on the KUG website.

### What does KUG's open access policy imply for my dissertation?

We support endeavors to make scholarly publications and research findings freely available on the internet. Therefore, we require doctoral candidates to sign the following statement as part of the process of being admitted to the PhD program:

#### Open access policy for approved PhD theses

"The University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (KUG) supports open access to the

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results of scholarly research. Therefore, when submitting the PhD thesis at the Registrar's Office, candidates must sign the following statement which includes PhD theses completed in the KUG doctoral program:

I herewith grant the unlimited and free rights to the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (KUG) to archive the electronic version of my thesis (e.g., PhD dissertation, diploma thesis, MA thesis) according to current technical standards and to make it available online to all, free of charge and for an unlimited period. I am aware that in the case of data migration minor changes in form, length, and or presentation of the thesis may occur due to technical reasons that cannot be precluded from the outset and I have no objections to this: The following additional rules apply to PhD theses:

In the case of a blocking the use for a maximum of five years in accordance with §86 UG (Austrian Universities Act), KUG will not publish the thesis in electronic form until the determined time limit will have passed. Furthermore, KUG upon request will waive the publication of the electronic version, once it has been demonstrably released by a publishing company within five years after approval of the dissertation. The request has to be submitted to the University Library, Archive, and Musical Instruments Collection together with suitable evidence."

In case you want to make use of this blocking you should refrain from uploading a full-text version of your thesis in KUGonline, since we cannot block it on this platform.

## KUG Funding for PhD Students

### 1) First-year Scholarships

PhD students may apply for KUG a first-year scholarship only during their first year. The head of the Doctoral School will recommend suitable candidates to the Vice Rector in charge of scholarly research. The grant will be awarded for one semester. Candidates may submit their application to the head of the Doctoral School. The following principles apply:

- the candidate must be in the first or second semester of the PhD program
- the candidates's research project must meet the KUG research grant requirements in terms of topic and personal qualifications
- the candidate must not be receiving additional financial support from another institution (that is, no third-party funding, no other scholarship funds, no substantial self-earned income)

### Gender Dissertation Grants

The KunstUni Graz awards scholarships for artistic-scientific or scientific dissertations in music or theater with a particular focus on gender themes or with a gender-oriented focus on the development and exploration of the arts. The scholarships of € 606 per month are awarded for one academic year. If the first year is successfully completed, an extension is possible depending on the available financial resources. Information on the requirements and the application can be found at:

<https://genderforschung.kug.ac.at/gleichstellung/frauenfoerderung-und-gleichstellung/ausschriften-genderdoktoratsstipendien/>

### 2) Positions as University Assistants

For students beyond their first year in the PhD program, university assistant positions (up to three years) may be available. Students must apply for these positions. Among the relevant criteria are

- successful completion of the required courses
- convincing progress report at the doctoral forum
- excellent assessment by the Doctoral Committee in the course of the interim evaluation

### 3) Travel Allowances for Scholars in the Early Period of their Studies

The travel allowances of the scientific doctoral school are an instrument for the promotion of young researchers.

#### Who can apply?

PhD students at KUG.

#### What requirements must be met?

A prerequisite for the award of a travel allowance is an evaluation of being in "good standing" on the part of the doctoral candidate. This includes, among other things: good progress on the dissertation project; regular exchange with the supervisors; speedy completion of courses and presentations in the doctoral forum and the documentation obligations towards the WDS. The assessment of the good standing is the responsibility of the management of the doctoral school together with the supervisors.

#### In what period of time can an application be made?

In principle, applications can be made from the 1st to the end of the 8th semester. From the 4th semester onwards, applications will only be approved if the interim evaluation has been successfully completed by the end of the 3rd semester. From the 6th semester onwards, applications will only be approved if 2 presentations have already been successfully made at the doctoral forum by the end of the 5th semester.

#### Which means of transport can be used?

Bus and train are preferable. Flights are only financially supported from a lower limit of 750 km (as the crow flies from Graz or the student's home town, whereby the shorter distance is used).

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### **What amount can be requested?**

During the entire study period (1st to 8th semester) you can apply for a long trip (max. 2000 €). For smaller trips, applications can be made several times (total value spread over the entire course of study (also max. €2,000)).

### **Which trips are financially supported?**

Field research, research activities ( travel archives or research locations relevant to the dissertation topic), lectures at conferences (conference participation without an active contribution is only supported in exceptional cases). The application must always be accompanied by a justification for the need for the subsidy.

### **How can travel allowances be applied for?**

PhD students employed at KUG: Send the completed and signed form “Other travel allowances” (can be found on KUGinside) to the WDS officer

PhD students who are not employed at KUG: Send an informal request including all important information (type, duration, purpose of the trip, cost breakdown) by email to the WDS officer

It is not possible to apply for travel allowances from the WDS and the AIB at the same time. The first point of contact for PhD students is the WDS.

## **4) English Language Publication Grant**

PhD students who want to publish their thesis with an internationally acknowledged publishing house may apply for a grant to cover costs related to a revision of the approved dissertation or to English-language proof reading. Please submit an informal application to the office of the Doctoral School. Requirements include:

- the publishing house needs to be internationally acknowledged
- the publication must undergo a peer review process
- the book must be published in English

## **5) Best Practice Award for Paper Presentations at the doctoral forum**

At the end of each doctoral forum which is held every semester, a prize of € 250 for the best presentation will be awarded to one PhD student. Keeping in mind that the presentation must be prepared for a general university audience and not only for people in the student’s particular field the following principles apply:

- The basic questions (see above under “Presentations”) have been answered compellingly.
- Speaking freely rather than reading out a text is usually preferable.
- The presentation should be convincingly supported by media (i.e. Powerpoint, vivid illustrations and figures, audio-visual examples).
- The prize may be awarded to any particular student only once, after which, the student may be asked to serve on the selection committee at some point in the future.

The jury consists of those members of the Doctoral School’s Coordinating Team who are present during the doctoral forum, one PhD candidate who has already won the prize, and usually one more academic research selected from a research area not represented by members of the DS coordinating team . In order to enable the awarding of the prize immediately at the end of the DF event, the jury deliberates on the final decision during the breaks throughout the two days of the DF

At present, other funding is only possible as part of research projects financed by third-party funds.

**Please address any further questions concerning the PhD program to  
the office assistant of the Doctoral School**