

# Implementation guidelines to the PhD Curriculum

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# 1. Preamble

## **General introductory remarks**

The implementation guidelines to the Curriculum of the Vetmeduni PhD regulate the procedural details for the PhD Curriculum.

The implementation guidelines are issued by resolution of the PhD Curricular Commission and are released and published by the rectorate.

Both documents are linked with each other and need to be used concomitantly.

# 2. Objectives of the Vetmeduni PhD

Refer to **Curriculum of the Vetmeduni PhD**

# 3. Recruitment of PhD Candidates and admission to the PhD programme

**Detailed application documents for peer reviewed projects have to be presented by the primary PhD Advisor (PhD Curriculum 3.3.1.). They should include the following information:**

- PhD objectives and PhD work plan
- A description of the exact role of the PhD Candidate within the project. This is only applicable if the PhD project is part of a larger research programme
- First suggestions where potential results will be published (e.g. dissemination plan).

**Detailed application documents for non peer-reviewed projects have to be presented by the PhD Advisor (PhD Curriculum 3.3.1. ). They should include the following information:**

- Description of the planned research project of no more than 4 pages presenting the current state of research in the given research area; specifying the challenging nature of the research project and the expected scientific impact.
- PhD objectives and PhD work plan;
- A description of the exact role of the PhD Candidate within the project. This is only applicable if the PhD project is part of a larger research programme.
- First suggestions where potential results will be published (e.g. dissemination plan).

**Detailed requirements for all PhD applications(PhD Curriculum 3.3.1.):**

- Rationale of the PhD Advisor for selection of the specific PhD Candidate including curriculum vitae of the PhD Candidate.
- Suggestion how the PhD Advisory Committee will be constituted.

**Details on evaluation and admission (PhD Curriculum 3.3.1.3)**

New PhD Candidates can be admitted throughout the entire term according to Austrian University Law (at present UG2002 §61(1)).

At admission, the PhD candidate has to submit the Recommendations for Employment of PhD Candidate (Annex 3) and the PhD Supervision agreement (Annex 4).

## 4. General rules

Detailed arrangements are individually regulated within the PhD Supervision Agreement (Annex 4). PhD Candidates are regularly employed based on “Recommendations for employment of PhD Candidates” (Annex)

## 5. Conferment of the academic degree

## 6. Advisory bodies & organization of the PhD programme at the Vetmeduni Vienna

### **Details about the role and functions of the PhD Advisory Committee (Curriculum 6.3)**

The committee supports the PhD Candidate to develop a “Personal Career Development Plan”, which specifies the training needs, complementary skills and the scientific objectives of the thesis. The PhD Advisory Committee signs the PhD Supervision Agreement.

### **Functions of the PhD Advisory Committee**

The PhD Advisory Committee should

- support the PhD Candidate in research and training based on own qualification and institutional affiliation
- able to guarantee the required financial contribution
- qualified to adjust the PhD research project (with notification to the PhD Curricular Committee) taking into consideration the PhD Candidate’s progress

### **Composition of the PhD Advisory Committee**

- At least two (2) advisors with a habilitation or an equivalent scientific qualification have to be nominated.
- The first and second advisor should represent different affiliations (institutes). Additional supervisors can be nominated.
- Senior scientists without habilitation but specific expertise in the respective field (PhD) may be nominated as advisors for PhD research projects.
- The primary PhD Advisor has continuous interaction with the PhD student, guides the research project and monitors the immediate progress.
- The role of the PhD Advisors is clearly defined in the PhD Supervision Agreement (Annex)

### **Duties of the PhD Advisory Committee**

- Supervision of the PhD research project: individual guidance and monitoring of the PhD Candidate`s progress.
- The advisors support and enable the PhD Candidate to publish with first authorship in appropriate international peer reviewed journals
- The advisors have to participate in the PhD Advisory Committee`s meetings and evaluation of the annual progress reports. The protocol of the PhD Advisory Committee`s meetings (Annex) has to be signed by the advisors and the PhD Candidate and to be submitted to the PhD Curricular Committee.
- The PhD advisors support the PhD Candidate in course work selection and decide on approval of course work.
- The advisors support the writing of the PhD thesis.
- Both advisors have to evaluate the PhD thesis. The review comments of the primary PhD Advisor have to be submitted together with the PhD thesis.
- The advisors have to propose appropriate potential external reviewers for evaluation of the PhD thesis
- Both advisors participate in the Board of Examiners for the PhD defence
- Supervision ends with the PhD defence

### **Duties and rights of the PhD Candidate (according to UG2002 §59) (Curriculum 6.4)**

#### **Duties of PhD Candidates**

- In order to complete their thesis in due time, PhD Candidates are expected to dedicate themselves for three years fulltime to the PhD program. Otherwise an extended time schedule has to be agreed upon in advance.
- The PhD Candidates commit themselves to the rules of Good Scientific Practice (GSP) of the Vetmeduni Vienna.
- Active participation of the PhD Candidate in adequate courses, including a journal club and a seminar series is mandatory (refer to Chapter 7.1). Details and individual arrangements are part of the PhD Supervision Agreement.
- PhD Candidates will report their progress regularly to their PhD Advisory Committee as specified in the PhD Supervision Agreement.
- All data generated during the PhD research project are proprietary to the institute and have to be shared and archived according to [Good Scientific Practice \(GSP\)](#) and the institutions`s practice.

#### **Rights of PhD Candidates**

- adequate employment for three years (refer to “recommendations for employment of PhD students” in Annex
- adequate laboratory and desk space

- adequate course offer, including a journal club and a seminar series according to customs at the relevant institute(s)
- access to adequate material necessary for the defined project

**Details about the Interim Evaluation (Curriculum 6.4.1.)**

One important quality control element is the first year evaluation of both the PhD Candidate's performance and the progress of the PhD research project conducted by the PhD Advisory Committee. Based on the progress report and performance of the PhD Candidate, the PhD Advisory Committee has to decide unanimously that the student has the potential to successfully complete the PhD Programme within the given/foreseen time.

Positive evaluation results in the extension of the PhD Supervision Agreement. In case the agreement shall be terminated, the PhD Advisory Committee informs the PhD Curricular Committee. The PhD Curricular Committee in consultation with the Vice Rector for Study Affairs may decide upon termination of the PhD Supervision Agreement. On request of the PhD Candidate, a switch to the University's doctoral programme may be performed in accordance with the University's regulation (refer to Curriculum Doctor medicinae veterinariae).

# 7. Training

## 7.1. Course work

**Training and Teaching** within the PhD Curriculum comprises the following categories and competencies that have to be covered by the course work. Details are defined within the PhD Supervision Agreement on an individual basis.

Composition of the course work should be chosen according to Figure 1. Courses should comprise at least 7 ECTS equivalent within each of the categories “scientific literacy”, “technical skills/methods” and “transferable skills”, respectively. Additional courses counting at least 2 ECTS equivalent have to be selected as elective courses.

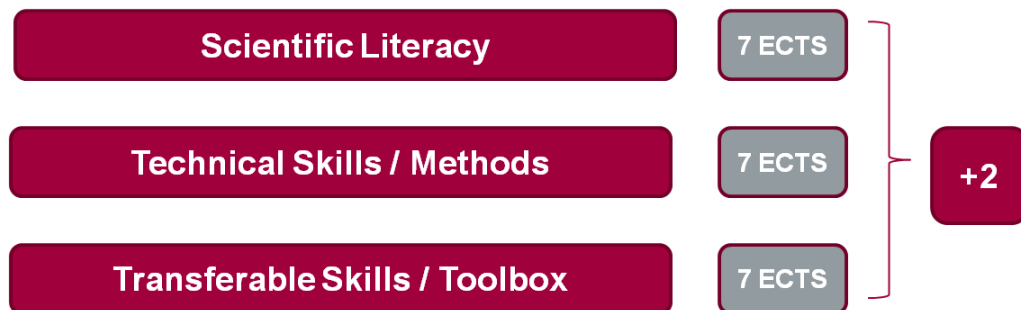


Figure 1: Composition of course work in the PhD Curriculum of the Vetmeduni Vienna

Courses should preferably be held in English language. If courses are not part of the University’s registered course offer, an informal certificate has to be provided (signature of the lecturer / trainer).

### **Examples of courses within each of the categories:**

#### **Scientific Literacy**

- Journal Club (3 ECTS in 3 years; attended throughout all semesters)
- Seminar series (3 ECTS in 3 years; attended throughout all semesters)
- Conferences (1 ECTS / active participation) – international conferences preferred

#### **Technical Skills / Methods\***

- Lab rotation (2 ECTS/week) – minimum requirement 6 ECTS)
- (alternatively: VetCORE Module (to be developed))
- Methods courses on Campus (2 ECTS)
- Methods course external (2 ECTS)



### **Transferable Skills / Toolbox\***

- Literature search & Search programs
- Presentation skills (preferable in English)
- Didactic (basic / advanced)
- Statistics (basic / advanced)
- GSP / GLP / QM Basics / Project Management/ Proposal Writing etc.

**\*ECTS equivalents will be calculated by the Studienabteilung (Vetmeduni student administration office) based on the duration of the respective courses.**

## **7.2. Teaching**

The primary PhD Advisor involves the PhD Candidate in the training of undergraduate students to an extent of a total of 2 ECTSequivalents.

## 8. PhD thesis

### Details about the structure of the PhD thesis (PhD Curriculum 8.1.):

#### Coversheet

- Title of thesis, name of PhD Candidate, affiliation, publications that are part of the cumulative thesis giving the impact factor of the respective journals

#### Acknowledgements

#### Contribution

- It is anticipated that many publications will have multiple authors. Hence it is essential to specify the contribution of the authors. Typical categories are: experimental design, experiments, data analysis including contribution of specific software, writing of the paper, contribution to materials

#### Declaration

- The PhD Candidate confirms that the rules of good Scientific Practice have been followed in all aspects.

#### Summary

#### General Introduction

- Overview over the current state of the research in the field including an explanation why the topic(s) of the PhD project was chosen. Clear hypotheses contextualising the intended research

#### Manuscripts

- Published manuscript(s) should be provided in the journal layout using the original pdf. Manuscripts in press are provided as accepted by the journal. All other manuscripts (submitted or in preparation) should follow the corresponding style.

#### Discussion & Conclusion

- The thesis should conclude with a discussion explaining the broader scientific implications of the results obtained during the PhD research project.

#### References

- Citations in the introduction and discussion should follow the recommendations as outlined in “Citing medicine: The NLM style guide for authors, editors, and publishers [Internet]. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Bethesda (MD): National Library of Medicine (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7276/>). In the reference list, references should be listed in alphabetical order (“citation-name system”).

All data used in the publications should be archived appropriately at the primary supervisor's institution. The according references need to be provided in the supplement of the thesis if not already listed in the corresponding publication.

### **Details about exemptions regarding the specification of the PhD thesis(PhD Curriculum 8.1.)**

In cases where publication of results is prohibited by reasons of confidentiality and/or IPR agreements, manuscripts that have not been submitted to journals are accepted for thesis submission. In such cases, two external reviewers have to assess the thesis. The PhD Curricular Committee has to approve any such exemption prior to submission. Manuscripts should follow the recommendations of the “Vancouver guidelines” [www.icmje.org/recommendations](http://www.icmje.org/recommendations)

### **Details about the process for assessment of the PhD thesis (PhD Curriculum 8.3)**

#### **Requirements towards the “Studienabteilung” (Vetmeduni student administration office) to start the assessment process**

The PhD thesis is submitted to the Vice Rector for Study Affairs (via Studienabteilung) together with the following documents:

- Statement of the primary PhD Advisor, that all data and documentation have been stored within the specific database
- List of attended course work according to the curriculum signed by the primary PhD Advisor
- List of reviewers (minimum 2) provided by the primary PhD Advisor including an endorsement for each of them and a ranking (a negative list may be provided optionally)
- Statement that there are no conflicts of interests among PhD Candidate, PhD Advisors and reviewers
- The PhD thesis stored on an electronic storage device in pdf format (not protected) for plagiarism check.
- One hard copy (spiral-bound) of the PhD thesis AND the PhD thesis stored on an electronic storage device to be sent to the external reviewer
- One hard copy (spiral-bound) of the PhD thesis OR the PhD thesis stored on an electronic storage device for the secondary PhD Advisor (based on individual arrangement with the advisor)

The review process is started after the PhD Curricular Commission has nominated the potential reviewers. The process is coordinated by the Vice Rector for Study Affairs via the “the Studienabteilung” on behalf of the PhD Curricular Committee, asking for the review of the primary and secondary PhD Advisor (secondary supervisor) and to obtain at least one additional, external, review based on the list of recommended reviewers. All reviewers will provide an individual concluding assessment and a final grade (1-5).

The PhD Curricular Committee then approves the reviews and gives a recommendation to the Vice Rector for Study Affairs to admit the PhD Candidate for the PhD defence.

## 9. Defence

### **Details upon application for admission to the defence (PhD Curriculum 9.1.)**

Upon application for the defence, the following additional documents are required:

- For proof of successful attendance of the courses and seminars according to the individual study programme a list of courses and lectures has to be provided.

Confirmation is either provided by official certificates or by individual signature of lecturers.

The first PhD Advisor additionally confirms fulfillment of the contractual obligations with regard to the course work (according to PhD Supervision Agreement)

## 10. Annex

### **Annex 1**

Distribution of ECTS credits:

Course work (planned individually for each student by the PhD Advisory Committee)  
23 ECTS; Teaching assistance 2 ECTS; PhD research project 155 ECTS

### **Annex 2**

PhD\_Application (Form)

### **Annex 3**

Recommendations for Employment of PhD Candidates

### **Annex 4**

PhD\_supervision\_agreement (Form)

### **Annex 5**

PhD\_committee\_meeting (Form for Interim Evaluation)

### **Annex 6**

PhD\_defence (examination protocol)

### **Annex 7 (LINK)**

Satzungsteil 5 (Studienrechtliche Bestimmungen) for information only: for the original document in current version refer to Mitteilungsblatt (<http://www.vetmeduni.ac.at> -> [Info -> Mitteilungsblatt](#))

### **Annex 8 (LINK)**

Satzungsteil 11 (Geschäftsordnung der Kollegialorgane) for information only: for the original document in current version refer to Mitteilungsblatt ([www.vetmeduni.ac.at](http://www.vetmeduni.ac.at) -> [Info -> Mitteilungsblatt](#))

### **Annex 9 (LINK)**

PhD Curriculum NEW([www.vetmeduni.ac.at](http://www.vetmeduni.ac.at) -> [Info -> Mitteilungsblatt](#))

### **Annex 10 (LINK)**

PhD Programme (Version 25.3.2010)([www.vetmeduni.ac.at](http://www.vetmeduni.ac.at) -> [Info -> Mitteilungsblatt](#))