

UK 796/405
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CURRICULUM FOR THE
DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN
MEDICAL SCIENCES.



(in English)

Contents

§ 1 Qualification Profile	3
§ 2 Admissions	3
§ 3 Structure and Outline	3
§ 4 Core Subjects	4
§ 5 Elective Subjects	5
§ 6 Courses	5
§ 7 Dissertation	5
§ 8 Examination Regulations	6
§ 9 Academic Degree	7
§ 10 Legal Validity	7

§ 1 Qualification Profile

Graduates are qualified to:

- Independently plan, design, adapt, and implement an internationally recognized research project,
- Present the research findings to the broader scientific community in accordance with national and international publication standards and for internationally recognized journals,
- Present and discuss research findings at international conferences,
- Effectively present research findings to a public audience,
- Conduct subject-related discussions with other scientists and academics in English

The graduates will be able to understand and implement ethical guidelines and conduct the research according to Good Clinical Practices.

§ 2 Admissions

(1) In accordance with § 54 para. 1 UG, the English-language doctoral program in Medical Sciences has been allocated to the category of medical studies.

(2) Admissions requirements include:

- 1. A Diploma/Master's degree in Medicine or Dentistry, or a Diploma/Master's degree in a subject area in engineering / natural sciences, or a subject-related Diploma/Master's degree in a corresponding Master's degree program in Austria or abroad considered equivalent and comparable in content and scope to the above-mentioned Diploma/Master's degree program. The Rectorate will render a final decision regarding degree equivalency.
- 2. The availability of a dissertation topic, a dissertation concept, and an agreement signed by an academic faculty member to supervise a dissertation.

(3) Individuals who fulfil the admission requirements in accordance with § 2 para. 1 no. 1 are required to choose a dissertation supervisor from a pool of registered supervisors at the JKU's Faculty of Medicine in order to prepare a dissertation concept together with the dissertation supervisor.

(4) Prior to admission to the doctoral degree program, the applicant must submit a written dissertation concept informing the Rectorate about the selected dissertation supervisor and the dissertation topic as well as a recommendation issued by the chair of the Doctoral School.

§ 3 Structure and Outline

(1) The doctoral degree program consists of a single study period of a minimum of six semesters (180 ECTS credits) and requires the successful completion of the following:

(2) The recommended schedule is shown in annex 1.

Subjects	ECTS Credits
Core subjects	34
Doctoral dissertation	130
Doctoral viva	10
Elective courses	6
Total	180

(3) Doctoral Schools

The doctoral degree program is structured in form of interdisciplinary Doctoral Schools.

1. Scientific and Academic Faculty at a Doctoral School

Members of a Doctoral School (Faculty) are qualified university instructors (holding a *venia legendi* certification or comparable educational qualifications), who are scientifically active in the respective field, and who are permitted to supervise dissertations.

The Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs appoints new Doctoral School members based on recommendations by the Chair of the Doctoral School. University instructors from other universities may also become Doctoral School members. If the criteria as listed above are no longer met, membership will expire after a three-year period.

2. Chair and Deputy Chair of the School

The faculty elects a Chair and a Deputy Chair. The Chair is responsible for internal coordination at the School and represents the School at the university and in public.

3. Establishing Doctoral Schools

Requests to establish a thematic Doctoral School can be submitted to the Vice-Rector for Medicine and must comply with research areas as outlined in the JKU Faculty of Medicine's development plan.

The requests must include information about:

- Name/title of the School
- Chair and deputy chair
- Qualification profile for supervisors
- International and national networks of the supervisors
- Existing potential (faculty, resources, past achievements)
- Doctoral dissertation projects, including techniques used and literature
- Project funding i.a.

An evaluation board consisting of the Vice-Rector for Medicine, Vice-Rector for Research, Dean of Studies at the Faculty of Medicine, Dean of Research at the Faculty of Medicine, and the Speaker of the Curricular Commission for Medicine will render a final decision regarding approval of the School. The Chair of the School is required to submit annual reports to the Vice-Rector for Medicine and the Dean of Studies at the Faculty of Medicine.

§ 4 Core Subjects

(1) The program has been designed to provide students with comprehensive training in the fields of the respective dissertation topic area and acquire general professional scientific skills. Graduates can pursue careers in various areas of medicine, industry, and public health. Students in the doctoral program are required to successfully pass the following courses:

Code	Name	ECTS
405SUDI19	Dissertation Topic	17
405FUSC19	Fundamentals of scientific research and general skills	17

(2) All courses will be held in English.

(3) A minimum of 50% of all required courses are to be completed at the JKU. Dissertation presentations and interim reports must be completed at the JKU Faculty of Medicine.

(4) At the start of the program, the student and dissertation supervisor must sign an agreement containing the following information:

- Names of the dissertation supervisor and the doctoral candidate
- Dissertation topic
- A preliminary schedule and timeline including pivotal accomplishments and required resources for the dissertation
- The rights and obligations of both the supervisor and doctoral candidate

The dissertation agreement must be signed by both the supervisor and doctoral candidates and submitted to the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs by the end of the first semester.

(5) According to § 7 para. 6, at least once a year the candidate must present his/her interim report at a formal meeting with the Dissertation Committee. The Dissertation Committee will provide written comments pertaining to the candidate's work thus far. The dissertation supervisor, a Dissertation Committee member, the doctoral candidate or the Dean of Studies at the Faculty of Medicine may request a special meeting of the Dissertation Committee.

§ 5 Elective Subjects

Students may complete elective courses totaling 6 ECTS credits at any of the JKU faculties. Students must, however, select a minimum of 3 ECTS credits from the pool of gender-related courses.

§ 6 Courses

Detailed course descriptions are available in the JKU Course catalog (studienhandbuch.jku.at).

§ 7 Dissertation

(1) The dissertation submitted by doctoral candidates will prove the candidate's ability to independently and successfully address and solve a scientific topic and prove an understanding of how to integrate findings in accordance to current expertise. The dissertation must be independent, original work confirmed by the doctoral candidate and stated in a preamble as part of the dissertation.

(2) A cumulative dissertation consisting of, for example, an introduction and several publications, is acceptable if approved by the supervisor.

(3) Students are permitted to submit a paper featuring several candidates, whereby each doctoral candidate's work must be clearly defined and each participating doctoral candidate must write her/his own doctoral dissertation. The dissertation must be submitted in English. A dissertation abstract must be submitted in both English and German.

(4) During the program, the dissertation supervisor and Dissertation Committee will provide support and academic advising to the doctoral candidate. The supervisor's responsibility ends after the student passes the final oral examination.

(5) Supervisors are qualified university instructors (holding a *venia legendi* certification or comparable educational qualifications) in accordance with § 103 of the 2002 Austrian Universities Act.

(6) For each dissertation, the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs will designate a three-person Dissertation Committee headed by the supervisor. One member must be from an external institute, division or clinical division where the work is to be performed. Committee members (co-supervisors) must hold a doctoral degree or higher. These members will provide support and academic advising to the student in research topic area.

(7) The finished dissertation is to be submitted to the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs via the Dean of Studies at the Faculty of Medicine. The Vice-Rector will nominate two reviewers. Eligible reviewers are scientists holding a teaching qualification (*venia legendi*) or comparable educational qualifications in the dissertation's subject area, providing he/she is affiliated with another JKU faculty or to a university other than the JKU. The dissertation supervisor and members of the Dissertation Committee are not permitted to serve as dissertation reviewers. The dissertation must be graded within a four-month period.

(8) The doctoral candidate and the Dissertation Committee may access the dissertation reviews and grade.

§ 8 Examination Regulations

(1) The general regulations are outlined in the JKU course catalog.

(2) The doctoral program is successfully completed by passing the final public comprehensive oral examination (doctoral viva) in front of a committee (10 ECTS credits). Requirements to be admitted to the doctoral viva include successfully passing all required courses, holding and successfully passing a presentation in front of the dissertation committee, and earning a passing dissertation grade.

(3) The doctoral viva includes

- dissertation topics, including current expertise pertaining to the respective scientific topic;
- the area of specialization as part of the dissertation topic.

(4) The examination will be conducted in English. The candidate must begin with a brief dissertation presentation, including defending the research findings (*defensio dissertationis*). The oral examination will be held publicly and should last no longer than 90 minutes.

(5) During the doctoral viva, an examination board consisting of a chairperson and three examiners will test the doctoral candidate's comprehensive knowledge. The examiners will be assigned by the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs based on their professional expertise in the dissertation topic area. Examiners must hold educational qualifications (*venia legendi*) or comparable qualifications in the dissertation field and may not have any kind of conflict of interest. The dissertation supervisor may not serve as a doctoral viva committee member. The student must submit a precise and conclusive request to the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs stating his/her reasons of objecting to an examiner and to request a replacement. The Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs can nominate another examiner instead of a previously nominated examiner. The four examiners must represent at least three organizational units.

(6) The doctoral program is considered successfully completed providing the candidate has successfully passed

- all required courses
- the doctoral dissertation; and
- the doctoral viva on the dissertation topic

All areas are required in order to conduct an evaluation.

§ 9 Academic Degree

Graduates of the doctoral degree program are awarded one of the following academic degrees:

(1) the academic degree “Doctor of Medical Science” (Latin: “Doctor scientiae medicae”), abbreviated “Dr. scient. med.” providing the required course work has been successfully completed and the doctoral thesis and the doctoral viva have been given a passing grade.

(2) the academic degree “Doctor of Philosophy”, abbreviated “PhD“, providing the candidate has successfully completed the required course work, the doctoral dissertation and the doctoral viva have received a passing grade, and the following additional requirements have been fulfilled:

- Availability of one, first author publication by the student during the course of the dissertation topic and published in an international peer-reviewed “high-quality” journal (ISI ranking);
- Composing a dissertation as part of a translational research project.

The PhD title is to follow the surname, i.e. for graduates of basic medical studies, the degree is Dr.med.univ., PhD. In English: MD/PhD.

§ 10 Legal Validity

The curriculum is in effect beginning October 1, 2019.

Annex 1: Global map of study subjects - doctoral program in medical sciences

1 st Semester (WS)		2 nd Semester (SS)		3 rd Semester (WS)		4 th Semester (SS)		5 th Semester (WS)		6 th Semester (SS)	
JKU Linz		JKU Linz		JKU Linz		JKU Linz		JKU Linz		JKU Linz	
Subject/Module	ECTS	Subject/Module	ECTS	Subject/Module	ECTS	Subject/Module	ECTS	Subject/Module	ECTS	Subject/Module	ECTS
Fundamentals of Scientific Research and General Skills	2	Fundamentals of Scientific Research and General Skills	3	Fundamentals of Scientific Research and General Skills	3	Fundamentals of Scientific Research and General Skills	3	Fundamentals of Scientific Research and General Skills	3	Fundamentals of Scientific Research and General Skills	3
Dissertation Topic	0,5	Dissertation Topic	1	Dissertation Topic	2	Dissertation Topic	1	Dissertation Topic	1,5	Dissertation Topic	11
Elective courses	2	Elective courses	2	Doctoral dissertation	25	Elective courses	2	Doctoral dissertation	25	Doctoral dissertation	15
Doctoral dissertation	25	Doctoral dissertation	25			Doctoral dissertation	25				
29,5		31		30		31		29,5		29	