

## Guidelines No. 1/2021 of Research Office of the MU Rector's Office Principles and Recommendations for Effective and Quality Doctoral Studies at Masaryk University

(as amended with effect from 1 November 2021)

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### 1. Introduction

Doctoral studies are perceived as an intensive individual training of young scientists - experts (so-called early-stage researchers), who contribute significantly to the scientific performance of the university and are able to generate new knowledge independently in the academic and applied spheres after graduation.

At Masaryk University (MU), doctoral studies are considered an important stage in the life of a budding scientist, in which the University plays a key role. Therefore, the University has decided to create this document in order to define the framework of access to doctoral studies at MU, and thus to increase its efficiency and quality. The impetus for its preparation was:

- MU Strategic Plan, Goal 2.4 *Establish higher standards in doctoral studies across disciplines with an emphasis on the quality of scientific results of doctoral students, gaining international experience in the course of doctoral studies, and adherence to the study calendar,*
- Action Plan 2021, Action 2.4.3 *Discussion and drafting of recommendations and principles for individual elements of doctoral studies (e.g. preparation and evaluation of individual study plans, international dimension of doctoral studies, completion of studies, development of competences of supervisors etc.), and*
- the requirement to develop a PhD strategy in preparation for the so-called HR Award.

These guidelines consist of a set of general principles, the implementation of which should gradually become a goal for MU, and a series of recommendations for individual actors in doctoral studies, which are based on these general principles, and which can lead to more effective and better-quality doctoral studies at Masaryk University. The content of the material is based on the document *Principles of*

*Innovative Doctoral Training*<sup>1</sup> and other related international documents<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, the ideas of the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*<sup>3</sup> are reflected in the texts. Inspiration has also been drawn from documents of a similar nature prepared (in addition to classical legislative provisions) by leading University departments, which are well aware of the fact that with defined principles and recommendations for doctoral studies and its individual actors, the University becomes more legible and purposeful both towards the surroundings and towards itself.

The material was approved by the University management on 25 May 2021. The MU Internal Evaluation Board agreed with the content of the document on 22 June 2021 and recommended the implementation of the proposed actions at MU faculties. The material was further discussed with the representatives of students of doctoral study programmes in the MU Academic Senate on 17 September 2021 and presented to the Rector's College on 21 September 2021. After the presentation of the document to the individual actors of doctoral studies at MU faculties, a discussion should be held at the central level of the University on which recommendations should be reflected in the internal regulations of MU (e.g. Strategic Plan, Study and Examination Regulations, MU Statutes, etc.) and which could be fully within the competence of individual faculties.

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<sup>1</sup> [Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Using the Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training as a Tool for Guiding Reforms of Doctoral Education in Europe; Exploration of the implementation of the Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training in Europe Final Report; Bologna seminar Doctoral programmes for the European knowledge society; Doctoral education – Taking Salzburg forward; Salzburg II Recommendations](#)

<sup>3</sup> [European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#)

## 2. Principles for Effective and Quality Doctoral Studies at Masaryk University

These principles represent a general framework for the direction of Masaryk University in the development of the concept of doctoral studies, based on internationally recognised principles of a quality and innovative doctorate.

### Masaryk University

- Ensures a high-quality, internationally open **admissions** for doctoral studies in order to attract high-quality, talented and motivated applicants capable of successfully completing their studies; to this end, it **informs** applicants in detail and promotes doctoral studies in an attractive way in an international forum.
- Sets the general **requirements** for doctoral studies, including the appropriate length of studies, and the **direction** of future developments in this field; it also perceives and implements trends and successful strategies from other institutions; it sees **high-quality research** as an essential element of doctoral studies.
- **Negotiates** the conditions for doctoral studies **at legislative level** and must be guided by these conditions in the preparation and implementation of doctoral study programmes and related matters.
- Contributes to the **financing** of the various actors involved in doctoral studies, their research, training, mobility, development activities and material needs, and provides the **facilities** for the implementation of doctoral studies.
- Ensures a quality research environment and **working conditions in science**, including recruitment, remuneration, contractual relations and reconciliation of work and family life; these areas are constantly reviewed and defined in internal regulations.
- Provides a system for **evaluating doctoral study programmes**, evaluates the findings and follows up on them in order to improve the results; the evaluation of the quality of studies should be based on international or national disciplinary comparisons and should respect the specificities of the different scientific fields.
- Uses a system of **professional development and evaluation of supervisors**, formulates qualification requirements, rights and duties of supervisors, and recognises the ability of supervisors to supervise doctoral students with quality, which is reflected in the career progression of supervisors.
- Establishes an internal system for **monitoring and evaluating the studies** of individual doctoral students based on national accreditation standards and internationally valid criteria.
- Sees **internationalisation** as a tool for developing the quality of doctoral studies and the scientific capacity of the institution and promotes the creation of an internationally attractive environment.
- Emphasises international, interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral<sup>4</sup> **networking** within doctoral studies.
- Provides an **additional support structure of information and advice** for use during doctoral studies, including a body to deal with suggestions or possible complaints from doctoral students about the functioning of doctoral studies.
- Promotes the possibility of obtaining **feedback** for the dissertation project from experts other than the supervisor or members of the Doctoral Board/Committee.
- Supports the establishment of a **doctoral school** at central or faculty level; at central level, it organises mainly training in the development of transferable skills, with a view to exploiting the potential of

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<sup>4</sup> It is about bridging academia and industry/public administration/business/energy/services/healthcare etc., e.g., in the framework of collaborative PhDs, but also in various research collaborations.

graduates to solve practical problems or to be employed in the labour market outside academia; it also provides courses for supervisors; it supports formal and informal networking among doctoral students and takes patronage over activities that involve networking and the creation of a sense of belonging.

- Raises **awareness of doctoral studies** among prospective students and the wider public, and is important in this respect to establish cooperation with other institutions or organisations.
- Monitors the **graduate's post-study employment** and uses the information to further improve the quality of doctoral studies.

### 3. Recommendations for the Management of Faculties of Masaryk University

The following recommendations offer MU faculty management members procedures for individual stages of doctoral student education based on the requirements of MU internal regulations (which are marked **in bold** below) and grounded on current internationally recognised principles and recommendations of quality doctoral studies.

#### Admission of Doctoral Students

Admission to doctoral study programmes is carried out in accordance with Sections 48 to 50 of [Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions](#), and Articles 19 to 27 of the [MU Statutes](#):

- Open international admission procedures are held.
  - The content is prepared in the world language of the field or bilingually.
  - The quality of the content and language of the admissions website is ensured.
  - Studies and the related admission procedure for the study programme are promoted in high quality, preferably international, web platforms or periodicals.
- **The requirements for applicants are defined in advance and published well in advance on the faculty's or study programme's website.**
  - Activities are organized to raise awareness of doctoral studies at the University.
- The study programme has clearly defined and published the basic rights and obligations of the doctoral student and supervisor and other conditions of studies (in particular the financial security of students during their studies and the conditions for compulsory internships abroad), which applicants can familiarize themselves with in advance.
- **The composition of the Doctoral Board and Doctoral Committees, as well as a list of supervisors and an anonymized list of students supervised by individual supervisors, together with the planned research focuses of the dissertations are published on the faculty and MU websites.**
  - It is advisable to publish the professional profiles of potential supervisors and, as far as possible, also of the members of the Doctoral Board, preferably including scientific interests, publications, grants, etc.
- A transparent and pre-published evaluation system is used to assess the quality of applicants in the admission procedure.
  - **The format and outline content of the interview** (e.g. quality of the dissertation project, if required, language skills, expertise, etc.) **and the criteria for its evaluation are published well in advance.**
- Motivated and focused candidates with the potential for high-quality research and for completing their studies optimally within the standard study period are selected for the purpose of studies.
- Decisions on admission and, in particular, decisions on non-admission to studies must be properly and sufficiently justified, and applicants must be treated equally, transparently and predictably.
- Candidates are only admitted to supervisors who can provide quality guidance to doctoral students with the expectation of successful completion of their studies in due time.

- The supervisor shall participate in the admission procedure of the doctoral student whom they should subsequently supervise, if they have not met them before.
- The supervisor is an expert in the scientific field and has the time and financial capacity to supervise the doctoral student throughout their studies.

### **Progress of Studies and its Monitoring**

Studies in doctoral study programmes are carried out in accordance with the [MU Study and Examination Regulations](#):

- **Studies in a doctoral study programme are conducted according to an individual study plan (ISP) under the guidance of one supervisor.**
  - The supervisor guides the doctoral student in their studies, research, publication and teaching activities. They are also responsible for the student's evaluation, which entails related administrative duties. They also provide feedback on the student's career and professional development.
  - An exception for the appointment of two supervisors is the study of a doctoral student under dual supervision (so-called cotutelle/shared PhD/joint PhD/double PhD), where one of the supervisors at MU acts in coordination with the other supervisor at the cooperating institution at which the doctoral student is also studying. The entire collaboration is covered by an agreement between the student, the two institutions and the two supervisors.
  - Other experts in a given scientific field (also called consultants, specialists), both from MU and from other national or foreign institutions, may be involved in the doctoral student's research activities (e.g. collaborative Ph.D.).
  - Doctoral students can choose other advisors for any area outside their doctoral studies, according to their needs.
- **The requirements for the student, the course of studies and for its successful completion are duly formulated by the Doctoral Board and publicly available on the faculty's or study programme's website.**
- Emphasis is placed on adequate financial support for the doctoral student and their study-related activities, which includes adequate funding for personal resources (scholarships) and research, support for mobility and personal and professional development.
- Supervisors at their departments involve doctoral students in specific research projects related to the research focus or the topic of their dissertation, and support them with full-time work within the limits of their possibilities.
- **The student participates in the selection and formulation of the research focus/ topic of the dissertation.**
- The research focus/topic of the dissertation is primarily based on original research and aims at high-quality results, corresponding to the standards of the given scientific field primarily in international comparison.
- The research focus/topic of the dissertation is chosen to lead to the acquisition of knowledge, experience and skills appropriate to the profile of a graduate of the given study programme.
- During the first year of studies, the final wording of the research focus/dissertation topic of each student in a doctoral study programme is determined.

- No later than the end of the second term, **the ISP for the entire period of studies will be approved by the supervisor and the Doctoral Board.**
- The student will become familiar with the study milestones defined by the faculty for its doctoral programmes.
- The Doctoral Board may allow rotation of doctoral students through departments/laboratories where the nature of the programme of studies and/or research permits.
- The Doctoral Board may stipulate that final confirmation of the supervisor who will continue to supervise the doctoral student will take place before the end of the second term.
  
- **The supervisor and the Doctoral Board shall regularly evaluate the fulfilment of the Term content ISP requirements of their doctoral students via the application in the MU IS and inform them clearly of the results and outcomes of the evaluation.**
  
- Doctoral students have the opportunity to comment on the course of studies and have the right to feedback from the supervisor and the Doctoral Board.
  - Communication takes place during regular meetings and also via the ISP application in IS MU.
  - In the case of unsatisfactory results, the supervisor addresses this with the doctoral student and, where appropriate, the Doctoral Board, and together they try to negotiate a remedy.
  
- The Doctoral Board supports the organization of public and professional lectures where doctoral students could regularly present the results of their research work during their studies.
  
- Doctoral students go abroad for stays and internships.
  
- Cross-sectoral cooperation with the application sphere is being developed, i.e. industry, trade, public administration, energy, services, health care, etc.
  
- Studies are designed to enable the development of the student's analytical and synthetic skills, independent leadership, the ability to discuss specific and general problems, critical thinking, the ability to work in international teams, presentation skills, etc.; an integral part of this is also the emphasis on the doctoral student's identification with the rules of good research practice and orientation in the ethical aspects of research (building the moral integrity of the young scientist/expert).

#### **Completion of Studies (Doctoral State Examination and Dissertation Thesis Defence)**

- The management of the faculty ensures that doctoral students complete their studies in doctoral programmes in a timely and successful manner and are successful in finding employment in the labour market, and implements these goals primarily by adopting faculty measures and strategies prepared on the basis of internationally recognized good practice and regular evaluation of knowledge on doctoral studies acquired at the faculty level.
  - It focuses on the effectiveness and quality of individual elements of doctoral studies and on the readiness of its actors to meet the above-mentioned objectives. In particular, it focuses on the following areas
    - the process of selecting quality and motivated applicants in the admission procedures,
    - verifying and further developing the erudition of the members of the Doctoral Boards or Committees and the quality of the activities carried out by these bodies,

- expertise, scientific and research qualities and pedagogical competences of supervisors.
- As part of the graduation process, emphasis is placed on evaluating the originality of the results and the quality of the research work of doctoral students.
  - The course of the Doctoral State Examination and Dissertation Thesis Defence is clearly defined and publicly accessible on the faculty's or study programme's website.
  - Doctoral students are evaluated with emphasis on the following basic parameters for successful graduation:
    - originality of results and contribution to the field,
    - the quality of the data obtained and the method of data analysis where the data are used in the dissertation research,
    - the qualitative level of the dissertation corresponds to the standards in the field,
    - the methodological level,
    - detailed knowledge of individual dissertation problems and a deep understanding of their area of studies,
    - publication or the prospect of publication of results,
    - the student's ability to critically evaluate and publicly defend their contribution to the defended dissertation (in case of co-authorship),
    - the quality of the public debate during the presentation of the dissertation.



## 4. Recommendations for Guarantors and Doctoral Boards of Doctoral Study Programmes

These recommendations for the education of doctoral students are addressed to the chairs and members of the Doctoral Boards of doctoral study programmes at MU, they are based on the requirements of MU internal regulations (which are marked **in bold** below) and current internationally recognised principles and principles of quality doctoral studies.

### The Role of the Doctoral Board within the Study Agenda

In accordance with Article 27 and possibly Article 30 of the [MU Study and Examination Regulations](#), the Doctoral Board:

- **Establishes more detailed conditions for full-time and combined study modes** (if the distinction is not addressed within the framework of accreditation); the faculty publishes these conditions on its website.
- Contributes to the definition and implementation of the faculty-wide requirements for doctoral students and supervises their fulfilment; the requirements are published on the website and mainly concern:
  - study progression and related doctoral study milestones,
  - minimum financial security for doctoral students during their studies,
  - publication activities of doctoral students,
  - their mobility abroad and international cooperation (including conditions for the implementation of compulsory internships abroad),
  - **development of doctoral students' pedagogical competences and their participation in teaching,**
  - **preparation and defence of their dissertation.**
- **Proposes to the Dean the members and chairs of the Admission Committees and specifies the requirements for the entrance examinations.**
  - Supervises that motivated and focused candidates with the potential for quality research activity are selected and graduate optimally within the standard period of studies.
  - Ensures that applicants are only accepted by supervisors who will supervise doctoral students with quality and with the expectation of successful completion of their studies in due time.
  - Checks that all the necessary information is published in advance and properly, **including the announced research focuses/dissertation topics and the list of potential supervisors** (if possible including their professional profiles).
  - Ensures that the admission procedure is transparent and predictable and that individual applicants are treated equally.
- **Determines the student's supervisor, respecting the student's right to choose the supervisor and the topic of the dissertation.**
  - Proposes to the Dean the appointment of supervisors and their removal.
- **Initiates, discusses and coordinates the programme of lecture courses, seminars and other study requirements.**
  - Takes care of the professional and personal development of its doctoral students.
  - Supports the organisation of public and professional lectures where doctoral students could regularly present the results of their research work during their studies.

- At the beginning of each doctoral student's studies, the Doctoral Board will see to it that the collaboration between the different actors is properly defined.
  - **Approves the planned research focus of the dissertations of its doctoral students.**
  - No later than the end of the second term of the newly admitted doctoral students' studies, the Doctoral Board **approves students' individual study plans** for the entire period (after their supervisors have approved them).
  - **Assesses whether students' individual study plans are consistent with the characteristics of the doctoral programme.**
  - Oversees the publication of the study milestones that faculty defines for its doctoral programmes.
  - May allow rotation of doctoral students across departments/laboratories prior to finalisation of the research focus/topic of the dissertation where the nature of the degree programme and/or research permits.
  - May stipulate that final confirmation of the supervisor who will continue to supervise the doctoral student will take place during the doctoral student's studies, but no later than the end of the second term.
  
- **At least at annual intervals, the Doctoral Board discusses and evaluates with the supervisor the course of studies of each doctoral student.**
  - The evaluation is based on a discussion between the supervisor and the Doctoral Board (or the Doctoral Committee or other advisory bodies established by the Doctoral Board) and the doctoral student.
  - **The results of the meeting are entered into the ISP Approval and Evaluation agenda in IS MU.**
  - In the case of unsatisfactory results, the supervisor addresses this fact with the doctoral student and, if necessary, with the Doctoral Board, and together they try to negotiate a remedy.
  - **May propose to the Dean the withdrawal of scholarships from doctoral students who are not satisfactorily fulfilling their ISP.**
  - **May propose to the Dean to terminate the studies of doctoral students who do not fulfill their ISP.**
  
- Ensures that doctoral students complete their studies in a timely and successful manner and are successful in the labour market.
  - Monitors and regularly evaluates the course of studies of doctoral students in the doctoral study programme, the length of their studies and the reasons that affect these monitored parameters, and reflects the findings in its activities related to the further conceptual development of the programme.
  
- Ensures the quality and transparency of the Doctoral State Examination and Dissertation Thesis Defence.
  - **Proposes to the Dean the chairperson and members of the Doctoral State Examination Board and their removal.**
  - **Proposes to the Dean the chairperson, Board members and reviewers for the Dissertation Thesis Defence and their removal.**
  - **Proposes to the Dean the dates of the Doctoral State Examination and the Dissertation Thesis Defence.**
  - Oversees that doctoral students are evaluated according to pre-defined and published requirements/parameters for successful graduation.

- **Proposes to the Dean the establishment and staffing of Doctoral Committees**, if relevant to the programme.

### **The Role of the Doctoral Board in Quality Assurance and Development of the DSP**

- In accordance with the [Masaryk University Degree Programme Quality Approval, Management and Evaluation Regulations](#), the Doctoral Board within the framework of quality assurance processes:
  - **continuously monitors and evaluates teaching in the relevant study programme,**
  - **evaluates the professional level of the study programme in accordance with the current level of scientific knowledge,**
  - **discusses the intention to extend, modify and renew the authorisation to carry out a study programme, as well as the intention to cancel a study programme on the initiative of the faculty,**
  - **discusses a self-evaluation report on the fulfilment of requirements arising from the MU Study Programme Quality Standards as part of the internal evaluation of the study programme once every five years,**
  - **annually evaluates the curriculum development plan.**
- It carries out regular evaluations of supervisors, taking into account in particular:
  - the research erudition of the supervisor,
  - the success rate and length of studies of their doctoral students,
  - their approach to the students they guide,
  - their communication with their doctoral students,
  - the involvement of their doctoral students in the supervisor's research grants,
  - feedback from doctoral students to their supervisors.
- Supports the participation of supervisors in educational activities as part of their professional and personal development, promotes the sharing of experiences and rules of good practice in doctoral studies among its individual actors and reflects this area in the evaluation of supervisors in order to improve the efficiency and quality of doctoral studies.
- The Doctoral Board or Doctoral Committee organises regular meetings of doctoral students to present their results; members of the Doctoral Board/Committee participate in the meetings within the limits of their possibilities or according to the rules of the specific doctoral study programme.
- In order to improve the quality of the doctoral programme, it recommends that supervisors systematically monitor the future employment of their graduates.
 

The identified information is taken into account, for example, in planning the development of the study programme, including possible adjustment of the graduate profile/content of the study programme, monitoring the quality of supervisors, promotion of doctoral studies abroad (doctoral graduates as ambassadors of the University's reputation).

### **Doctoral Committees**

If Doctoral Committees are established, the Dean, in accordance with Article 27 of the [MU Study and Examination Regulations](#), entrusts them, on the proposal of the Doctoral Board, to carry out some or all of the activities listed in the list in relation to the relevant curriculum with a specialisation.

- **Proposes to the Dean the members and chairs of the Admission Committees and specifies the requirements for the entrance examinations.**

- **Determines the student's supervisor, respecting the student's right to choose the supervisor and the topic of the dissertation.**
- **Initiates, discusses and coordinates the programme of lecture courses, seminars and other study requirements.**
- **Assesses whether students' individual study plans are consistent with the characteristics of the doctoral programme.**
- **At least at annual intervals, it discusses and evaluates with the supervisor the course of studies of each doctoral student.**
  - The results of the meeting are entered into the ISP Approval and Evaluation agenda in IS MU.
- **Proposes to the Dean the chairperson and members of the Doctoral State Examination Board and their removal.**
- **Proposes to the Dean the chairperson, Board members and reviewers for the Dissertation Thesis Defence and their removal.**
- **Proposes to the Dean the dates of the Doctoral State Examination and the Dissertation Thesis Defence.**

## 5. Recommendations for Supervisors of Students of Doctoral Study Programmes

The following recommendations aim to inform supervisors of practices that can lead not only to improved supervision of their doctoral students, but also to the personal and professional development of the supervisors themselves. The texts are based on the requirements of MU internal regulations (which are marked **in bold** below) and are derived from current internationally recognised principles and principles of quality doctoral studies.

### Supervisor

- Sees their doctoral student as a partner in research, always keeping in mind that it is the role and responsibility of the supervisor to introduce the student to the scientific community and help them find their way.
  - Treats the doctoral student with consideration and respect, evaluates them fairly, and is willing to provide advice and constructive criticism.
- Critically assesses their time, financial and capacity capabilities in order to ensure real quality supervision of doctoral students in the context of their other job responsibilities.
- Works on their professional growth, including in the area of supervising doctoral students, and the quality of their work with doctoral students is evaluated by the Doctoral Board.
  - Takes student leadership as part of their own development.
  - Participates in educational activities offered by the University in this context.
  - Shares their experience with their colleagues (supervision, mentoring).
- Is an expert in their field, is active in research, and keeps abreast of professional and career information resources in order to be competent to supervise doctoral students.

### The Role of the Supervisor in Supervising a Doctoral Student

Following the provisions of Articles 28 and 30 of the [MU Study and Examination Regulations](#), the supervisor:

- Is looking for motivated and driven applicants who have a strong will and potential to complete their studies with high quality results and ideally within the standard period of studies.
  - Has published their supervisor's professional profile including research interests, publications, grants, current students and previous doctoral graduates.
  - Advertises the doctoral topic in a way that reflects international scientific trends and is in line with current grants and the strategy of the home department.
  - In selecting applicants for admission to the doctoral programme, the supervisor participates in a transparent, preferably international, selection process.
- At the beginning of studies, the supervisor will agree with the doctoral student on the way of mutual cooperation.
  - **Together with the student, the supervisor will prepare the planned research focus of student's dissertation.**
  - Establishes a schedule of regular consultations.
  - Will ensure that the key study milestones defined by the faculty for its doctoral programmes are reflected in the doctoral student's Individual Study Plan (ISP).

- **Together with the student, the supervisor compiles their ISP and approves it in the ISP Approval and Evaluation agenda in IS MU by the end of the second term at the latest.**
- **Approves the student's proposal for the Term content ISP for the first term.**
- Will agree with the doctoral student the implementation of their other duties (e.g. teaching duties-assistance in teaching, preparation of a plan for a future internship abroad, etc.).
- Meets sufficiently frequently and regularly with the student at intervals agreed at the start of the course and in accordance with the requirements arising from the ISP.
  - The first meetings with the doctoral student take place as soon as possible after their admission to studies.
- Communicates regularly with the doctoral student and advises them in the most appropriate way, taking into account the location of the supervisor and the student and the study mode.
- Will ensure that the doctoral student's dissertation research:
  - fell within the expertise of the supervisor
  - and was realistic, i.e. it was designed to be completed with available resources and preferably within standard period of studies.
- Adheres to the timetable established for student guidance and monitoring and consistently requires compliance with the ISP.
  - **Regularly approves and evaluates individual Term contents ISP and makes a record of this in the Information System MU (ISP Approval and Evaluation agenda in IS MU).**
  - Contributes to the early and successful completion of their student's studies by supporting them throughout their studies and in various aspects of their studies, including proactively addressing facts that could lead to an unreasonable prolongation or unsuccessful completion of their studies or to problematic graduate employment.
- In the case of unsatisfactory students' results, the supervisor discusses this fact with the doctoral student and the Doctoral Board, and together they try to find a solution.
  - Unsatisfactory results are reflected objectively, i.e. taking into account the specific reasons and circumstances of the failure, in the evaluation of the doctoral student's performance in the Term content ISP.
  - **If the evaluation of studies by the supervisor and the Doctoral Board shows that the fulfilment of the ISP is seriously violated, the student participates in a meeting of the Doctoral Board with the student and possibly other parties. In the event that the meeting indicates a failure to meet the obligations of the ISP, the Doctoral Board may propose to the Dean the termination of the doctoral student's studies.**
- Regularly participates in meetings of doctoral students organized by the Doctoral Board (or Doctoral Committee), especially when their results are presented by the supervisor's doctoral student.
- Supports the student's professional development.
  - Provides feedback to the student on their analysis of their learning and development needs and on their chosen learning activities within and outside the University.
  - Understands the importance of developmental activities for their doctoral student's career and allows them the opportunity to pursue them to a reasonable extent.
- Supports the student in their international activities.

- Offers the student support in arranging a compulsory internship abroad, or other types of foreign stays, conferences, workshops, etc. (e.g. networking and funding opportunities).
- Assists in getting the doctoral student involved in grant projects, including international ones.
- Will arrange adequate compensation for themselves in the event of a prolonged planned absence when they are unable to fulfil their duties as supervisor and will discuss everything properly with the student.
- Follows the agreed rules of communication with the doctoral student and provides constructive feedback on materials sent by the student in the preparation of the dissertation, etc.
- Supports the timely submission of the dissertation (or even the dissertation thesis, if required by the Doctoral Board).
  - **In the event that the student, after discussion with their supervisor, has submitted an application for the Dissertation Thesis Defence, the supervisor will submit their opinion on the dissertation to the Dissertation Thesis Defence Board.**
- Provides the Doctoral Board with assistance in nominating dissertation reviewers and members of the Doctoral State Examination Board and Dissertation Thesis Defence Board.
- Discusses with the doctoral student the possibilities of their employment after graduation and follows the career path of a successful graduate.
  - Information obtained by monitoring the career paths of successful graduates can be taken into account, for example, in planning the development of the study programme, including possible adjustments to the graduate profile/content of the study programme, quality assurance of supervisors, promotion of doctoral studies abroad (doctoral graduates as ambassadors of the University's reputation).
  - Supports the graduate in going abroad for postdoctoral positions.

#### **Other Principles of Work of Supervisors of Doctoral Students**

- Discusses with the student the standards of academic conduct, ethical considerations, plagiarism and the risks associated with research work.
  - Provides feedback on the proposed dissertation research project, information sources and research related to the student's dissertation, and the standard expected in the discipline.
  - Notifies the doctoral student of the need for a review of the dissertation research by the [Research Ethics Committee](#) and any other legal implications, including intellectual property, if the student's research requires it.
- Connects the doctoral student with other experts (internal or external) if the doctoral student's dissertation research extends beyond the supervisor's expertise.

## 6. Recommendations for Students of Doctoral Study Programmes

The following recommendations aim to inform doctoral students of Masaryk University about procedures that can lead not only to the improvement of their studies and research at MU, but also to their personal and professional development. The texts are based on the requirements of MU internal regulations (which are marked **in bold** below) and are based on current internationally recognised principles and principles of quality doctoral studies.

### Doctoral Student

- Understands that they are perceived as early-stage researchers and accordingly take responsibility for planning their studies and setting intermediate goals, while also being responsible for their future career.
  - Works conscientiously, autonomously and independently, and is able to direct their own activities with the input of their supervisor.
- Accepts and follows the requirements for the activities of researchers and the general principles<sup>5</sup>, which include freedom of research, ethical principles, professional responsibility and access, contractual and legal obligations, accountability, sound research practices and the dissemination and exploitation of results.

### The Role of the Doctoral Student in Studies and Research

Pursuant to Article 30 and in accordance with Articles 27 and 28 of the [MU Study and Examination Regulations](#), the doctoral student:

- Becomes familiar with the internal regulations and rules of the University before starting their studies and has an overview of the places and persons who are important for their information during their studies.
- At the beginning of studies, the student agrees with the supervisor on how to cooperate with each other.
  - **Will agree with their supervisor on the planned research focus of their dissertation.**
  - Establishes a schedule of regular consultations.
  - **Will draw up their Individual Study Plan (ISP) together with their supervisor, which will be approved by the supervisor and the Doctoral Board** by the end of the second term at the latest; if necessary, ethical issues will be resolved.
  - Takes into account the study milestones defined by the faculty for its doctoral programmes and reflects them in the design of their ISP.
  - **Will design the Term content ISP for the first term and have it approved by the supervisor.**
  - Becomes familiar with the principles of occupational health and safety and principles of fire protection.
  - Will get acquainted with the conditions of their functioning within the teaching activity at the University.
  - Consults with the supervisor as needed and relevant to their further intentions, such as collaboration with other scientists or students, mentoring from other colleagues, etc.
- Is actively interested in the field of their chosen field beyond the scope of their study duties, while taking care of their professional and personal development.

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<sup>5</sup> [European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#)



- Participates in activities offered by the University.
  - Actively seeks opportunities for their development outside Masaryk University.
  - In connection with the research focus of their dissertation, the student is interested in the possibilities of interdisciplinary collaboration with other colleagues and students.
  - Is looking for funding and grant opportunities in connection with their doctoral studies (e.g. support for their dissertation project, international mobility, etc.).
  - Participates in stays abroad, and internships.
- Communicates regularly with their supervisor and fulfils the pre-agreed requirements by the deadline they set together.
    - Comes to the consultation with the supervisor prepared and with a clear goal.
    - Proceeds independently and on time according to the agreed schedule in the preparation of their dissertation and regularly consults with their supervisor.
    - Respects the supervisor's other job responsibilities and schedules consultations and meetings with the supervisor in a timely manner and in advance.
- **Fulfils the conditions of studies set out in the ISP and adheres to the timetable set out in it.**
    - At the end of each term, the student provides feedback on the progress of their studies and the preparation of their dissertation in the Term content ISP in the ISP Approval and Evaluation agenda in IS MU.
    - Reflects any additional requirements of the supervisor or Doctoral Board set out within the conditions of studies defined by the ISP.
- The doctoral student fulfils their study and research obligations and works on their personal development so that they complete their studies successfully and on time and are properly prepared for their future professional career.
    - Shall inform the supervisor in a timely manner if facts arise that may affect the continuation of their research or overall studies.
    - Addresses problematic issues promptly and also reflects them in feedback within the term content ISP.
- In case of unsatisfactory results of their studies, they discuss this fact with the supervisor or the Doctoral Board and together try to find a solution.
    - If the supervisor and/or the Doctoral Board, in their evaluation of the Term content ISP, state that the doctoral student's performance is unsatisfactory, the doctoral student reflects the requirements for improvement and, under the guidance of the supervisor, cooperates to correct the problematic situation.
- The student seeks opportunities to present their research to a variety of audiences, whether it be other doctoral students and/or a wider professional audience.
- In the event of a complaint, the doctoral student has the option of contacting an impartial person or body.

Šárka Pospíšilová  
Vice-Rector for Research and Doctoral Studies

Brno 21. 10. 2021