## Guide to PhD Studies at the Faculty of Science Masaryk University in Brno

Welcome!





#### **About this Guide**

Dear colleagues,

Doctoral Students, Supervisors, Heads and members of Doctoral Boards, Mentors,

This document, developed within the frame of implementing the <u>Human Resources Strategy for Researchers at SCI MUNI</u> (<u>HRS4R, HR Award</u>), aims to provide a basic orientation, overview, and guidance for all parties involved in PhD studies at the SCI MUNI.

It primarily focuses on STUDENT's needs and duties. However, it also outlines where and how other parties, such as Supervisor, Doctoral Board, Administrative Support, are/should/need to be involved.

Detailed information is available online – please follow the [www] links in this document. Important details are also introduced to students during the **PhD day** (an event organized every September).



We hope you will find this Guide useful, and we wish you SUCCESSFUL STUDIES!

Luděk Bláha, Vice-Dean for PhD studies, Faculty of Science MU on behalf of all co-authors and contributors

#### **Essentials**

#### Everyone involved in PhD studies at SCI MUNI should be aware of following essentials

- What are the **general SCI MUNI requirements** for the successful PhD?
- What are the **formal regulations** (namely "Studijní a zkušební řád" in Czech)?
- What is the **Study programme**?
- What is the Individual Study Plan (ISP) and the Milestones set by for your study?
- Where to find answers to most common questions (Q&A)?

#### **Key Roles and Responsibilities**



STUDENT is responsible for his/her career. This includes active work and successful progress during PhD studies; fulfilment of the goals and milestones outlined in the ISP and described in detail as semestral activities and tasks; positive communication with other parties involved, such as Supervisor, Doctoral Board and Administration. [www]



SUPERVISOR is responsible for guiding the student in several aspects. A Supervisor is an expert in the field in question but is not responsible for the student's topic. A Supervisor is available for discussions, provides advice, responds to all communication within a reasonable timeframe, evaluates student's progress and fulfillment of the study plan regularly etc. Supervisor is also responsible for advancing own skills in mentoring and other skills. [www]



DOCTORAL BOARD is responsible for the quality of a doctoral programme and assesses students' study plan fulfillment on annual basis. Head of the Doctoral Board assures that necessary information is available to students and supervisors. This particularly includes requirements for final theoretical exams and PhD thesis, requirements of the ISP, expected timeframe and milestones. [www]



ADMINISTRATION in the Dean's office is responsible for assuring compliance of the admission and study processes with formal requirements. Administration supports admissions, enrollment to studies and semesters, assists with special issues such as interruption of studies due to health or family reasons, and keeps all records using the IS.MUNI.CZ system. [www]



MENTOR is an experienced researcher offering one-on-one guidance and experience sharing to students who seek further support in their academic life, professional development, and research community networking.

All parties involved are responsible for active mutual communication and cooperation.

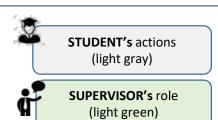
#### **How to Use This Guide**

Colours are used to highlight relevance for different parties.

Detailed information is always accessible online → click on: [www]

Headings (dark brownish)

**ALL** - General information (white)

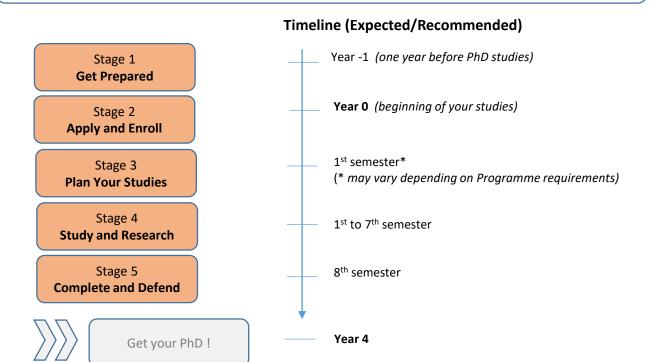




ADMINISTRATOR at the Dean's office (yellowish)

#### **Table of Contents**

The guide is organized into 5 sections that reflect the main stages of the PhD study process.



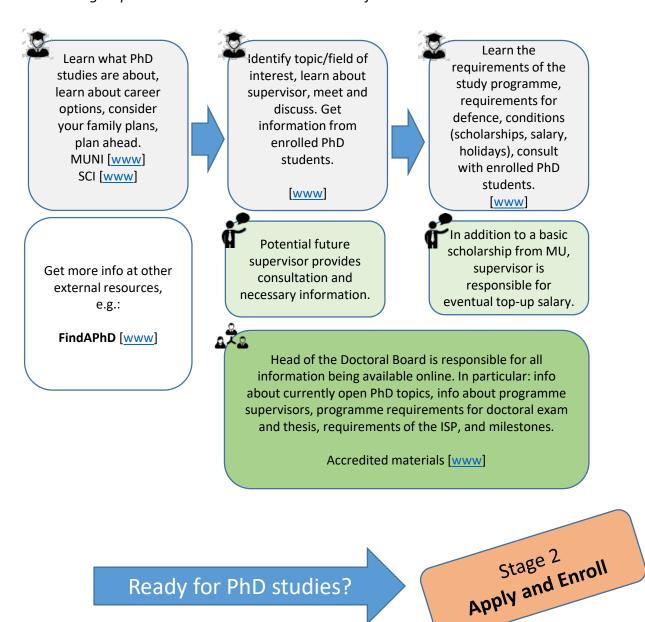
## Stage 1 **Get Prepared**

#### Are you a student interested in PhD?

Act several months in advance before starting PhD studies! You should learn what is PhD about, what to expect after PhD, what are your career options (e.g. [www])

#### **Prospective students:**

Following steps shall be considered 6-12 months before actual admission deadline ...



## Stage 2 **Apply and Enroll**

#### Ready to study PhD at SCI MUNI?

Formal procedures are required during and after the admission process. This includes several steps during the assessment of your application, and if successful, your enrollment ("zápis do studia" in Czech).

Prepare application for PhD study.

Programmes have different requirements

described in IS.MUNI.CZ

[www]

Be ready for successful interview (in person or online) during the assessment of your application.



Input from your prospective Supervisor may be needed (e.g. letter).

Administrators help with application formalities.

[www]

Administrators send invitation to the interview via the IS MUNI system.

Doctoral Boards organize entrance examinations. Dean makes final decisions.

Wait for the letter of notification with the entrance examination result. If accepted for the studies, prepare required documents for the admission.

Czech or Slovak

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**Other Nations** 



Have Mgr/Ing diploma.

Have additional documents if required for the enrollment by the Programme.

[www]

Provide documents in English for recognition of your previous studies; apply for Visa if relevant; arrange in advance your accommodation etc. [www]

Recognition of your previous foreign education or official nostrification - duration may vary (days to months). [www]

Enroll:
go to the Dean's
office in person
to official
enrollment to
PhD studies.
[www]

Dean's office administrators confirm your enrollment. All set?

Stage 3

Plan Your

Studies

An official admission notification is provided.

## Stage 3 Plan Your Studies

#### **Prepare Your Individual Study Plan**

Doctoral Board approves the

student's ISP.

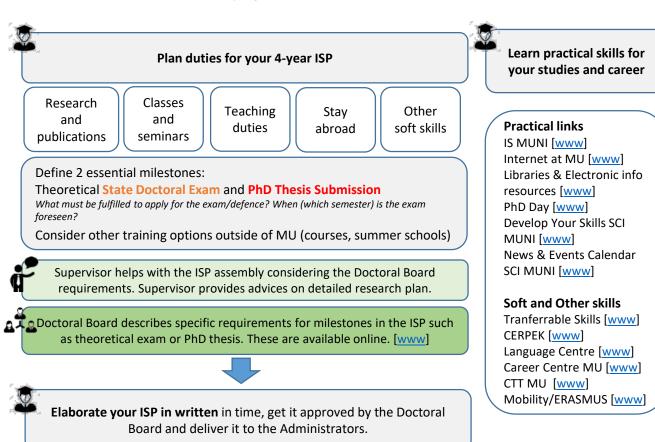
The ISP is an essential and binding document for your studies. It should be **carefully elaborated and discussed** between your and your supervisor. It also has to be approved by the Doctoral Board. A later modification of the ISP is possible only in exceptional and substantiated situations.

The ISP organizes various activities and (in agreement with general requirements set by the Programme) sets specific milestones for your research, expected publications, presentations at conferences, theoretical classes, and seminars, teaching duties (i.e. getting experience for potential academic career), stay abroad, other soft and transferable skills, etc.

To assure success in completion of your PhD studies within 4-years frame, the research part of the ISP should be elaborated as a separate **formalized research project** (including State of the art of a given field, Objectives, Methods and approaches, Timeline, Expected publications, and their foreseen content).

Your performance and compliance with the ISP are reviewed every semester and academic year during your studies.

Instructions on ISP for each doctoral programme are available here: [www]



Dean's office registers the

student's ISP.

Do you have your ISP?

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Stage 4
Study and
Research

## Stage 4 Study and Research

#### What is the flow of PhD studies?

The studies are divided into **semesters** and **academic years**. Each ISP describes **milestones** to be gradually fulfilled.

Before each semester, you need to describe your planned semestral activities and expected outcomes ("semestrální náplň" in Czech) in cooperation with your Supervisor. You also enroll in the ECTS-credited classes or activities via IS.MUNI.CZ. At the end of each semester, you are required to prepare a report on what has (has not) been achieved. Your Supervisor must approve your progress to allow you to continue your studies in the next semester.

Doctoral Board annually reviews the performance of all students, their alignment with the defined milestones and approves the continuation of studies in the next academic year.

#### **BEFORE Each Semester**

Get your previous work done and approved, enroll to the next semester.

Describe your plan for specific semester in IS MUNI.

Register for classes and other activities (with ECTS) in IS MUNI.

Administrators check compliance and allow the enrollment to the next semester.

Supervisor should be consulted for planning; checks and approves the plan.

Administrators provide support with the registration to classes.

#### **DURING the Semester**

Study, explore, learn, do your research, write publications (it may take up to 1,5 year to get it published), attend conferences, consult with your supervisor, find a mentor, discuss with your colleagues, undertake your stay abroad etc.

**ONCE DURING THE STUDIES** 

#### **END of the Semester**

Pass your exams, seminars and get the credits.

Report your progress in IS MUNI.

Supervisor approves your progress and continuation to the next semester.

# **ACADEMIC YEAR / ANNUALY**

SEMESTRAL WORK

#### Assessment of your annual progress

(together with Supervisor and Doctoral Board)

The form of the assessment depends on the Doctoral Board (e.g. joint seminar with presentations, discussion with the Doctoral Board members).

Supervisor comments and provides advices.

Doctoral
Board
evaluation
and
approval is
recorded in
IS MUNI.

### State Doctoral Exam

Apply for the exam as planned in your ISP.

Admins check pre-requisites.

Doctoral
Board sets the
requirements,
committee
and examines
theoretical
skills.

7 semesters over?

Stage 5
Complete
and Defend

## Stage 5 Complete and Defend

#### Final stages of your studies - your PhD thesis submission and defence

You are almost there! Your goal is to present your research as a PhD thesis. It should convince the Reviewers and the Examination Board that (i) your research is at the fore-front in the field, (ii) you are an expert on all aspects in your thesis, (iii) you are creative and independent researcher deserving the award of Doctor of Philosophy – PhD.

Start working on the finalization at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup>/start of the 8<sup>th</sup> semester. It may take up to 3 months to submission and additional 2-3 months to defence.

**CONTENT:** Write your thesis. It will be public online through MUNI Archive [www].

The IP sensitive and

The IP sensitive and copyright protected sections in your thesis may be hidden - plan ahead and consult(\*).

Supervisor helps with preparation and has to approve your final thesis.

Doctoral Board to be consulted if the thesis fulfills criteria.

(\*)Dean's office may help with formalities.

**FORMAT AND** 

**STYLE:** Follow recommendations. [www]

Check previously defended theses in Archive [www].

#### **SUBMIT**

Upload your final thesis to IS.MUNI.CZ, prepare the application for defence with all annexes, submit in person to Dean's office [www].

Supervisor approves thesis in IS.MUNI, checks for plagiarism; prepares recommendation letter.

Formal acceptance by Dean's office admin

Doctoral Board nominates reviewers, proposes members of the Examination Board, sets the date for thesis defence.

With support from the Dean's admin office

PRESENT AND PUBLICALLY DEFEND YOUR PHD THESIS

Address comments from Reviewers and the Examination Board members.

Examination Board evaluates and informs about the outcome.

**CELEBRATE** with your friends, family, supervisors, etc.

Official graduation ceremony











First released: June 2019

Current version: v03 – September 2020

The up-to-date version of this guide can be found here: <a href="https://www.sci.muni.cz/en/students/phd/phd-studies">https://www.sci.muni.cz/en/students/phd/phd-studies</a>