With the end of the OLD doctoral programme (end of summer semester 2017), the NEW doctoral programme will be binding for all doctoral students at the Faculty of Social Sciences. In this NEW doctoral programme, supervision procedures are much more clearly defined than in the OLD doctoral programme. With this leaflet, the Directorate of Doctoral Studies for Social Sciences (DSPL 40) aims at providing doctoral thesis supervisors with information about the responsibilities and procedures pertaining to the supervision of doctoral theses.

It is the responsibility and objective of the University of Vienna to ensure a high-quality doctoral education. Supervision plays a central role in the doctoral programme. The appointment of doctoral advisory boards and the compulsory public presentation at the Faculty emphasise the collective responsibility of the relevant department. Nevertheless, doctoral thesis supervisors play a key role. They advise, support and supervise the doctoral candidates in successfully completing their doctoral project.

A major task of the thesis supervisor is selecting suitable doctoral candidates and providing for suitable conditions of supervision which are documented in the doctoral thesis agreement. The confirmation of the supervision is at the discretion of the supervising academic and is obtained, if

1. a scientific research question has been defined,
2. the doctoral candidate is sufficiently qualified,
3. the doctoral candidate can be supervised by academics of the University of Vienna, and if
4. sufficient resources (time, funding, material) are available that appear to make the completion of the doctoral project realistic.

**Time schedule of the process**
(see also PhD Process on the website of the Centre for Doctoral Studies)

- For the public presentation at the Faculty, the doctoral candidate needs to submit a confirmation of supervision, signed by the supervisor (see form Registration of the topic of the doctoral thesis and the supervisors). In addition, the candidate has to submit a research proposal that s/he has to present at the public presentation at the faculty (FÖP). Prior to the public presentation, the supervisor provides advice on the research topic, methods and material of the doctoral project. S/he also gives instructions on how to formulate the research proposal and provides feedback on the final proposal including an assessment whether it is ready for submission and for the public presentation. The supervisor should only sign the registration for the public presentation when the research proposal fulfils the usual quality standards and has a realistic chance of success.
- The supervisor should be present at the public presentation but is not obliged to.
- If the doctoral candidate does not pass the public presentation, the supervisor provides feedback and supports him/her in revising the research proposal in accordance with the recommendations of the doctoral advisory board.
- Following the successful completion of the public presentation, the supervisor and the doctoral candidate conclude and sign the doctoral thesis agreement. This agreement may also specify seminars that the candidate has to attend, papers s/he has to publish and other requirements. We strongly recommend that supervisor and candidate discuss
already at this point whether the doctoral thesis will take the form of a monograph or of a thesis by publication. This has to be specified in the doctoral thesis agreement. In case this decision is reconsidered and changed at a later time, during the doctoral project, this has to be documented in the next progress report.

- During the implementation phase, it is the supervisor’s task to monitor the progress of the doctoral project (as specified in the doctoral thesis agreement) and provide counselling on the candidate’s further professionalization, professional orientation and career development.

- In addition, the supervisor has to contribute to the annual progress reports that have to include the following:
  
  o the doctoral candidate’s description of the progress made in the doctoral project along with a written statement by the supervisor (including his/her signature);
  
  o if necessary: written documentation of any changes to the doctoral thesis agreement (e.g. change from a monograph to a thesis by publication and vice versa);
  
  o in case of a thesis taking the form of a monograph: agreement on the chapters that still have to be written, if necessary also pertaining to their extent; suggestions and considerations regarding their publication with appropriate publishing houses or as individual publications;
  
  o for a thesis by publication: agreement/changes regarding the number, extent and quality of publications in peer-reviewed academic journals/edited volumes.

- Submission of the doctoral thesis:
  
  o In the case of a thesis by publication: written statement by the thesis supervisor before submission with regard to the Guidelines for Cumulative Dissertations. A template for the written statement is available in appendix 2 to the Guidelines for Cumulative Dissertations. This written statement is sent to the reviewers along with the doctoral thesis.
  
  o In the case of a monograph or thesis by publication: discussion of criteria for the assessment of a doctoral thesis, which is sent to the reviewers as well.
  
  o Discussion of and suggestion of three experts as reviewers.