
RESEARCH MANAGEMENT AT LMU

JOB PROFILE: COORDINATOR OF A DOCTORAL PROGRAM

In recent years research management has developed into an occupation that includes various job profiles. This paper deals with the job profile of the coordinator of a structured doctoral program.

The essential role of the coordinator lies in coordinating, organizing and helping to shape the establishment, implementation and further development of a doctoral program, while fulfilling the needs of different interest groups.

The present description of the job profile represents an attempt to make the role, duties and identity of the coordinators more transparent and better known, thus contributing to the professionalization of the job.

The job profile should serve as a reference point for coordinators in defining their professional role and their individual range of tasks, and support them in developing a shared professional identity. In addition, for those new to the field of research management, it provides general information about the range of activities involved. For representatives from administration, professional development and providers of third-party funds, it provides ideas for the development of their range of offers. Professors can apply the information in their proposals for third-party funds, the definition of job profiles or the recruitment of staff.

The description of the job profile is deliberately open because the different profiles of the doctoral programs make it impossible to define a completely standardized profile and job description for coordinators.

The proportion of a position devoted to coordination activities can vary.

TERMS The most common term for the activity described below is “coordination”. And the role or the job is that of “academic coordinator”. Less frequently used terms include “manager”, “program manager” and “managing director”.

Generally, the range of activities of the coordinators goes well beyond the pure coordination of activities.

QUALIFICATIONS AND OUTLOOK Coordinators usually hold a master’s degree, generally in the field of the doctoral program. They generally have at least basic knowledge of the field and, depending on the job profile, they may also hold a doctoral degree.

In their jobs, coordinators don’t only rely on the skills, knowledge and qualifications that they have acquired during their careers thus far. Instead, they also acquire other general and specific knowledge and skills in the fields of activity mentioned below (generally by learning the ropes themselves, asking questions, and if appropriate courses are available, by attending training courses and events).

Since the job of coordinator is not yet an established profession, there are as yet no defined career paths.

PROFESSIONAL ROLE The job profile is decisively shaped by its interface function because coordinators generally operate at several interfaces simultaneously: between doctoral candidates and supervisors, between research and administration, between the doctoral program and the university management, and between the university and providers of third-party funds. The role therefore requires a pronounced understanding of the different interest groups and a high level of mediation competence.

Coordinators often take up their work once a program has been created and to a large extent develop their field of activities independently, identify processes and responsibilities and carry out essential work in establishing and developing the program.

The responsibilities and decision-making power of the coordinators vary considerably and depend on the particular program and staffing structure.

KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES Specific knowledge and competencies are essential for the job of a coordinator. Some of these are prerequisites for applicants of coordinator jobs; whereas others must partly be acquired in the framework of the job.

An essential prerequisite for the job of coordinator is **an understanding of the academic system and the university culture**. Other essential competencies include **experience in project or research management**. Further skills also include:

Communication competence

Intercultural competence — Languages (German, English, and other languages, if applicable) — Communication skills (oral and written) — Communication skills (horizontal, vertical) — Mediation skills — Advisory skills

Style of work

Independent and structured way of working — Efficiency — Flexibility — Creativity — Willingness to shape — Pragmatism — Ability to set boundaries — Ability to work under pressure — Self-assuredness

Social competence

Reliability — Team work skills — Assertiveness — Lateral leadership skills — Tolerance — Openness — Trustworthiness — Representative competence

Skills set

Basic financial competence — IT knowledge (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, data management, data security)

In addition, the following are also required within the scope of the job: Familiarity with specific administrative processes — Specialist administrative knowledge — Knowledge of university legislation — Knowledge of website administration — Specialist knowledge of research funding and sponsorship — Intercultural coaching skills — Advanced qualifications in research management

OPERATIONS The activities listed below are not carried out by all coordinators, but represent the maximum scope of possible activities. The actual arrangement depends on the structure of the particular program. Some coordinators are supported by their own secretariat, assistants, or in rare cases, by other staff members.

Communication

Communication with a range of partners: Applicants — Doctoral candidates — Professors — University management — Administration — Funding bodies — (inter)national university and non-university partners — Disseminators — Media — Public

Recruitment

Scheduling and organization of the selection process — Formulation of selection criteria — Call for applications (text and announcement) — Conception and maintenance of an online tool — Advising applicants — Formal checks of applications — Specialist recommendations for pre-sorting — Participation and documentation of selection interviews — Supervision of joint doctorate agreements, if applicable — Support of foreign students in particular in admission, enrollment, and bureaucratic issues — Recruitment process — Information and advice on the supervision agreement (in terms of content and law)

Event management

Organization of various types of events (curricular lectures, conferences, workshops, symposia, guest lectures, celebratory events, retreats, excursions, summer schools, intensive seminars, on-site evaluations, committee meetings) — Support in designing the curriculum — Conception of event formats — Acquisition of lecturers — Logistics (rooms, technology, catering, accommodation, travel organization, updating the course management system, if applicable, instructing assistants, follow-up work) — Public relations — Settlement of accounts — Documentation

Finances

Acquisition of funds (supplementary funding, extension of financing, sponsoring) — Budget planning — Consideration of, and if necessary, alignment of the budgetary specifications and the guidelines of providers of third-party funds — Expenditure reports — Documentation and reporting — Budget monitoring — Accounting (independent accounting, if applicable) — Processing of travel expenses

Documentation and evaluation

Reporting (finances, activities, people, statistics) to providers of third-party funds/administration/university management — Creation and preparation of statistics — Taking minutes — Conception and implementation of internal evaluations (events, program) — Support of external evaluations — Translation of evaluation results into quality assurance/optimization — Certification — Archiving

Support for doctoral candidates

Support until admission to the program (see above) — Introduction to the program (regarding content and organization) — Comprehensive support of international doctoral candidates (German language courses, accommodation search, residency permits etc.) — Consultation hours — Advice on maternity leave and parental leave — Coaching — Advice on problems — Mediation — Advice on grants — Advice and organization of stays abroad — Support of supervision relations — Advice on doctoral degree regulations — Support of event organization and planning — Support in examination phase — Assistance in publication

Public relations

Networking — Representing the program — Writing announcements and advertisement texts — Newsletters — Design and maintenance of the website and portals — Social media — Design and distribution of promotional articles — Representing the program at events inside and outside the university — Public events — Establishing and maintaining PR contacts — Alumni activities

Program development

Planning the further development of the program — Formulating objectives and outlook — Quality assurance and optimization — Restructuring measures — Preparation of negotiations in the faculty/faculty association or with the university management — Acquisition of third-party funds: renewal or new proposals — Identification of funding sources — Development and modification of regulations, statutes and bylaws — Initiation and development of cooperations and corresponding contracts

Overall, the job profile of a coordinator is multifaceted, offering a broad scope for creativity and extensive possibilities for personal and professional development.

Contact

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coordination](http://www.en.graduatecenter.lmu.de/coordination)