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GRADUATECENTERLMU

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ORGANISATION OF DOCTORAL STUDIES AT LMU MUNICH

The GraduateCenter[LMU] would like to help to optimise the general conditions for doctoral studies at LMU Munich. These recommendations should, in particular, help to arrange the supervisory relationships between the professors and the doctoral candidates in a more transparent and results-oriented way, by giving indications of what the participants may expect from one another.

Many of the points listed are already standard at LMU Munich; some aspects have only gained in importance during the further development of the process of doctoral education in the last few years.

The recommendations are formulated in such a way that they do justice to the broad spectrum of subjects at LMU Munich with its manifold subject traditions. The relevance of the individual aspects varies depending on the department.

DOCTORAL CANDIDATE

(1)   Before deciding to do a doctorate, the prospective doctoral candidate should critically question his*her motivation for pursuing a doctoral degree and carefully consider whether he*she is willing to devote himself*herself seriously and on a high academic level to a doctoral project.

(2)   The doctoral candidate should inform himself*herself about the potential supervisors and verify whether the supervisors are able to give him*her adequate specialist supervision and advice on his*her planned doctoral project.

(3)   Before beginning work on the project, the doctoral candidate should talk to the supervisor about possible career objectives inside and outside of academia and consider, together with the supervisor, whether a doctorate is the appropriate form of further qualification for the candidate.

(4)   Doctoral candidates who intend to work on their doctoral projects part-time should inform the supervisor how many hours per week they will spend on the project.

(5)   The doctoral candidate should be familiar with the doctoral degree regulations that apply to him*her. In case of a language barrier, the doctoral candidate should have the content of the doctoral degree regulations explained to him*her.

(6)   The supervision should ideally be carried out by a team of supervisors[1].

(7)   The supervisor(s) and the doctoral candidate should conclude a supervision agreement[2], which includes or clarifies the following points:

  − Information on the supervisor(s) and the doctoral candidate

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[1] A team of supervisors is composed of an official supervisor and one or more other supervisors. The official supervisor bears the main responsibility for the supervision; the other supervisors have an advisory function. The team of supervisors supervises the academic work, but is also the point of contact for all aspects of the individual career planning of the doctoral candidate. The team of supervisors and the doctoral candidate meet at regular intervals (e.g. every 6 to 12 months).

[2] See attached draft.

- The working title of the dissertation
- Objectives with regard to the period of time in which the dissertation is to be produced
- Creation of a work schedule and timetable
- Frequency, preparation, format and documentation of the supervisory meetings
- Information about how often and in what setting the doctoral candidate is to present his*her doctoral project or the progress of his*her work (e.g. once a year within the framework of a colloquium)
- Undertaking to adhere to the principles of good academic practice[3]

(8)   The doctoral candidate should be in regular contact with the supervisor(s).

(9)   The doctoral candidate should, independently or after consultation with the supervisor(s), attend in-depth speciality courses and courses for interdisciplinary qualifications and should document his*her participation in these courses.

(10)   The doctoral candidate should adhere to the work schedule and timetable and, as agreed in this schedule, should report on the progress of work and submit interim results, chapters etc. as scheduled.

(11)   The doctoral candidate should inform the supervisor(s) promptly about deviations from the work schedule and timetable, giving reasons for the deviations.

(12)   The doctoral candidate should present the results of his*her research at regular intervals (e.g. once a year in the doctoral candidates' colloquium).

(13)   He*she should deal with criticism and advice from the supervisor(s) constructively.

(14)   He*she should deal responsibly with the materials and resources which are made available to him*her for the execution of the doctoral project.

(15)   The doctoral candidate should discuss the schedule for the completion of his*her work and the final examination in good time with the supervisor(s).

SUPERVISOR

(1)   Before accepting a doctoral candidate, the supervisor should carry out an in-depth advisory discussion with the doctoral candidate. The following issues should be addressed in this talk:
- the doctoral candidate's motivation for doing a doctorate
- the prospects and risks of an academic career
- the question whether, after completing a doctorate, age, overqualification and lack of professional experience could be a hindrance for employment outside academia

(2)   The supervisor should responsibly verify the suitability of the candidate for the work of the respective research topic.

(3)   He*she should not take on more doctoral candidates than he*she can adequately supervise.

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[3] The Regulation of LMU München for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice can be downloaded at the following address: https://cms-cdn.lmu.de/media/lmu/downloads/regulation-safeguarding-good-scientific-practice-3.pdf

(4)   Furthermore, the supervisor should also ensure that the research topic is chosen in such a way that it can be completed within a reasonable period of time (usually three to four years, in the case of part-time doctorates in a correspondingly longer period of time).

(5)   The supervisor should see that the doctoral candidate is familiar with the applicable doctoral degree regulations. In case of a language barrier, he*she should ensure that the content of the doctoral degree regulations is explained to the doctoral candidate.

(6)   The supervision should ideally be carried out by a team of supervisors[4].

(7)   The supervisor(s) and the doctoral candidate should conclude a supervision agreement[5], which includes or clarifies the following points:

   − Information on the supervisor(s) and the doctoral candidate
   − The working title of the dissertation
   − Objectives with regard to the period of time in which the dissertation is to be produced
   − Creation of a work schedule and timetable
   − Frequency, preparation, format and documentation of the supervisory meetings
   − Information about how often and in what setting the doctoral candidate is to present his*her doctoral project or the progress of his*her work (e.g. once a year within the framework of a colloquium)
   − Undertaking to adhere to the principles of good academic practice

(8)   The supervisor should support the doctoral candidate in achieving financial security for his*her doctorate by informing him*her about jobs, grants, projects, subsidies etc., giving advice to him*her about applications for grants etc., and writing or communicating required recommendations or expert opinions.

(9)   If the doctoral candidate's place of work is located at the university, the supervisor should ensure that the necessary resources are made available (equipment, computer, internet access, budget for travel expenses and equipment etc.).

(10)   Depending on the department in which the doctorate is to be carried out, the necessary access to laboratories, archives etc. should be secured before work is begun on the doctoral project.

(11)   If the doctoral candidate is employed as an academic staff member at the department, it should be guaranteed that the resulting research and teaching obligations do not unreasonably delay the work of the doctoral project.

(12)   Should the doctoral candidate assume a teaching role at the university, the supervisor should ensure that the doctoral candidate receives appropriate training.

(13)   The supervisor(s) should be in regular contact with the doctoral candidate and should take sufficient time to give the doctoral candidate expert advice and support with regard to the work of the doctoral project and to discuss the results of his*her research constructively with him*her.

(14)   The supervisor(s) should foster the academic independence of the doctoral candidate. In addition, the supervisor(s) should help the doctoral candidate to gain access to the national and international academic community by (depending on the customs of the particular

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[4] See footnote 1.
[5] See attached draft.

subject) involving him*her in work groups and academic networks, encouraging him*her to participate in meetings, conferences or summer schools, helping him*her with the preparation of talks and giving him*her hints about publication options and support in the publication process.

(15) Furthermore, the supervisor(s) should support the doctoral candidate in orientation with regard to his*her further career and discuss his*her professional development and transferable skills training (there should possibly be a written agreement about which courses should be attended and what transferable skills training should be carried out). The supervisor(s) should advise the doctoral candidate about training offered at the department or by any other institutions at LMU Munich (GraduateCenter[LMU], PROFiL, in-house training etc.).

(16) Before a long period of absence the supervisor(s) should inform the doctoral candidate how he*she can be contacted during this time.

(17) The supervisor(s) should discuss the procedure for the final examination or oral defence of the dissertation with the doctoral candidate.

(18) The appraisal of the submitted work should be carried out neutrally and quickly.

Supervision agreement[1]

The contents of this agreement are to be decided in accordance with the relevant applicable doctoral degree regulations.

The supervision agreement is concluded between the following persons:

.... (Doctoral candidate)

.... (Official supervisor)

.... (Other supervisor, if applicable)

.... (Other supervisor, if applicable)

The doctoral candidate is intending to write a dissertation with the working title: .... at the .... [Faculty] of Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (LMU Munich).

The planned period in which the dissertation is to be completed:

from .... (start of the dissertation) to .... (expected completion date).

(1) In consultation with the official supervisor, the doctoral candidate draws up a work schedule and timetable. The doctoral candidate undertakes to inform the supervisor promptly of any significant changes to the schedule.

(2) Every ……. (e.g. six) months the doctoral candidate submits a short report (approx. one page in length) to the supervisors. This report includes the stages of the work completed during the period under report, the progress made with regards to the content of the dissertation and, if applicable, the candidate's participation in courses, conferences, guest lectures, doctoral candidates' days and events for further interdisciplinary training. In accordance with the work schedule and timetable, the doctoral candidate also submits interim results (e.g. chapters, draft publications etc.).

(3) Shortly after the short report has been submitted a meeting involving, if possible, all the supervisors takes place to discuss the progress of the work and to review the timetable and work schedule and, if necessary, to adjust and further develop them.

(4) The subject matter of this discussion is noted by the doctoral candidate in brief, informative minutes (approx. one page in length). These minutes are countersigned by all parties and distributed to all the supervisors.

(5) Every ……. (e.g. twelve) months the doctoral candidate reports on the progress of his*her work (e.g. in a colloquium, within the scope of a summer school etc.).

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[1] *Note: The supervision agreement should be adapted to the conventions of the particular subject and the individual circumstances. Terms such as "The doctoral candidate" can be replaced by names.*

(6)   The undersigned undertake to adhere to the principles of good academic practice.[2]

Signatures

.... (Date, Doctoral candidate)

.... (Date, Official supervisor)

.... (Date, Other supervisor)

.... (Date, Other supervisor)

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[2] The Regulation of LMU München for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice can be downloaded at the following address: https://cms-cdn.lmu.de/media/lmu/downloads/regulation-safeguarding-good-scientific-practice-3.pdf