

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is a joint doctoral programme?

The two joint PhD programmes offered by DOCTORATE, on behalf of several international degree-awarding universities, provide an integrated educational experience that offers the opportunity to be supervised by and work with international experts from the very beginning.

2. How do I choose a PhD programme?

Choosing a PhD programme can be challenging; it is a significant academic decision and investment that requires commitment and perseverance. Here are some tips to help you choose the best fit for your goals and preferences:

- Reflect on why you want a PhD, what you hope to gain from it, and whether it aligns with your professional aspirations.
- Consider the research environment.
- Take time to research, compare, and evaluate multiple opportunities carefully.
- Choose a subject that genuinely interests and motivates you, while also being practical.
- Seek advice from professors and other scholars in your field.

3. What qualities are needed for pursuing doctoral studies?

PhD students require tenacity, patience, persistence, and the ability to commit to (at least) three years of intensive work. Ultimately, choosing the right type of doctoral degree depends on your career goals, your passions, and your strategy to achieve them.

4. Why should I pursue a PhD?

Pursuing a PhD can be highly rewarding. It opens doors to academic and research opportunities, deepens your expertise in a specific field, and enhances your employability for senior-level roles. It is a chance to push the boundaries of knowledge and become an expert in your chosen area of study.

5. How do I choose the right PhD programme?

When choosing a PhD programme, consider your career goals, the research environment, and your personal interests. Take time to research and compare different programmes, seek advice from experts in your field, and ensure the programme aligns with your long-term objectives.

6. Is a PhD a challenging journey?

Yes, pursuing a PhD is demanding. It requires dedication, patience, and several years of hard work, including conducting original research and writing a dissertation. However, the journey can be extremely fulfilling.

7. What are the potential career opportunities after earning a PhD?

With a PhD, you may pursue a career in academia as a professor or researcher, work in research and development roles in various industries, or take on leadership positions in organisations. Your specific career path will depend on your field of study and personal interests.

8. Various questions related to PhD-applications

- **When can I apply for a doctoral study programme?**
At any time, once you've made a firm decision.
- **How long does it take to process my application?**
Approximately one month.
- **Can I start the PhD if I haven't yet completed my Master's degree?**
YES – you may begin the application process, but you must complete your Master's degree and submit all documents by 10 November at the latest.
- **I have an MBA. Do I meet the requirements for admission to a PhD?**
NO.
- **My English is good, but not fluent. Will this be a problem during the PhD?**
NO – you'll read a substantial amount of literature in your field and improve your English significantly during the first year of study.
- **Do I need to find a supervisor before applying?**
NO.
- **Are scholarships available for PhD students in Austria?**
YES – but candidates must search for scholarships independently and by their own.
- **Can I work for DOCTORATE during my PhD to reduce tuition fees?**
NO – but you may ask your supervisor if any opportunities are available at his/her partner institution.
- **Can I start the PhD programme in February?**
NO – the programme begins once a year, in autumn.
- **Can I use the title "Dr." instead of "PhD" after graduation?**
This depends on the regulations of your home country. In Austria and most EU countries,

"PhD" is used after the name (e.g. John Smith, PhD).

- **What are the tuition fees and how often must they be paid?**
Tuition fees may be subject to change every academic year, laid down by the Consortium. They must be paid during the whole study period. Please get the information about this regulation directly via email info.doctorate-ps.eu or via mobile.
- **How long may I take to complete my studies?**
A minimum of three years and a maximum of six years.
- **Do I need to find my own supervisor?**
NO – your supervisor is assigned by one of the partner universities based on your research field.
- **When will I be assigned a supervisor?**
Supervisors are typically assigned in December or January, following the start of teaching modules in November.
- **How often do the teaching modules take place? Every year?**
Teaching modules are offered only in the first year. In the second and third years, you will focus on your dissertation and publishing research.
- **Where do the teaching modules take place?**
At Eisenstadt, Campus 2, once a month (Fridays and Saturdays), according to the schedule.
- **How will I know which conferences I can attend?**
DOCTORATE regularly informs students about opportunities to attend conferences or publish research results and their findings. You are also encouraged to search independently.
- **What if I need to take a break from my studies, e.g. for health reasons?**
You may take a leave of absence for up to two semesters. Valid reasons include maternity/paternity leave, military service, pregnancy, childcare, care-taking duties, voluntary year, illness, injury or disablement which considerably impair your PhD study. Submit your request by 30 November (winter term) or 30 April (summer term). During your leave, tuition fees are waived, but you may not attend modules, take exams, or submit papers.
- **May I write my thesis in German?**
NO – all doctoral theses must be written in English.
- **I'm unsure if I meet the admission requirements. What should I do?**
Send all documents to DOCTORATE – they will be reviewed accordingly.
- **I've been assigned a partner university (e.g. Pula, Croatia). Do I need to travel there?**
Not necessarily. You may arrange online communication with your supervisor, but you may travel if you wish.
- **Can I choose the partner university I want to work with?**
NO – the Consortium assigns supervisors based on your research field.

- **I work abroad but could travel to Eisenstadt for the first-year modules. Will this work?**
Yes – with discipline and planning, it is manageable. Academic obligations are mainly during the first year (apart from scientific conferences and publications).
- **I have children and work part-time. Are there students in similar situations?**
Yes – many students balance family and full-time jobs. Strong organization and focus are essential.

9. Why apply for joint doctoral studies? What are the benefits?

A joint doctorate is a unique academic experience with both challenges and advantages. Each student's journey varies due to institutional and national differences. Highlights include:

- Part-time study options
- Doctoral studies, conducted entirely in English
- Supervision by internationally renowned professors from various research fields, supporting your research and publishing (together with candidate) scientific articles
- All academic modules completed in the first year
- Focus on dissertation and publications in the 2nd and 3rd years
- Large pool of international supervisors for ideal research alignment
- Individualised approach and small study groups
- Diverse (International) mix of students, professors and supervisors
- Students propose and pursue their own research topics
- Practice-oriented modules, linked to doctoral research
- Immediate application of research results
- International networking and exposure to multiple institutions
- Supportive international peer network
- Cross-cultural experience, broadening personal and academic horizons
- Collaborative supervision and learning
- Interdisciplinary opportunities
- A joint PhD diploma is signed by all participating universities and enhances your internationalization.
- Possible international mobility to all host partner institutions .
- You focus on your study and research; the consortium takes over the publication of your scientific findings and results.
- It expands your international network as you are having the chance to work with more people, having access to more career opportunities.
- You will have the chance to work/live in different environments, which is beneficial not just in professional (or academic) terms, but also in terms of personal experience.
- As the partner universities are in different countries, you may also can learn or improve your language skills.
- A doctorate is a personal challenge that enriches your personal development and growth, leading to increased self-confidence and employability.
- Gain research expertise, achieve professional progression, and expand your networks.

- Develop skills in planning, organization, and prioritization.
- Access a wide range of resources, such as libraries....

10. What are the top tips for succeeding in an international joint doctorate?

- Stay informed about programme academic requirements.
- Be disciplined and well-organised to meet deadlines.
- Communicate regularly with and get the valuable information from the DOCTORATE.
- Thoroughly read the joint degree agreement to understand your obligations.
- Keep in frequent contact with your supervisor(s) – communication is THE key.

One more recommendation: take some time off work to get to know your supervisor's partner institution — you might enjoy being immersed in a new country and culture.