

FAQs



Doctoral studies at ABU

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1 Artistic-Scholarly or Scholarly Doctorate

As a first step, you must decide whether your doctoral project is suitable for an artistic-scholarly doctorate or a scholarly doctorate. Please read the following information:

The aim of an **artistic-scholarly** doctoral programme is to realize a research project in which artistic and scholarly methods are related to each other and the result of the research can be understood and communicated on both levels. It is important to note that Anton Bruckner University does not support artistic portfolio doctorates that are primarily based on a series of art projects or performances. It is essential that the research project uses one's own art practice as a central focus. Research questions arise from art, the knowledge and experience of the artist and lead back to it. Artistic research often involves interdisciplinary work, but is fundamentally research for art, through art and with the means of art.

With the artistic-scholarly doctorate one earns a Doktor artium (Dr. art.).

The **scholarly** doctoral programme imparts and promotes theoretical understanding and methodological skills at the postgraduate level. The aim of the scholarly doctoral programme is to educate the next generation by teaching the ability to work independently in a scholarly way that goes beyond the academic pre-professional training. Graduates are familiar with the current state of research in their field. They can critically analyse various issues at the intersection of science and art and are able to develop new research questions and work on them in a methodically sound way.

With this programme graduates are conferred a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

2 Development of a Dissertation Topic

In order to apply for our doctoral programme, you must, among other things, submit an initial research exposé for the planned dissertation project which presents your topic, your research questions, your methods and an initial collection of literature.

Here in the section “useful documents” will find tips on how to approach this exposé:

<https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/research/doctoral-studies/admission>

1. Initial Contact with Potential Supervisors at ABU

How exactly do I go about finding suitable supervision?

1. Before you contact a potential first supervisor, please write a first description of your project idea (maximum 1 page, including a provisional bibliography). After you have created a first draft of your doctoral topic, we recommend that you contact potential first supervisors at Bruckner University from your specialised field to discuss the exposé with them and to find out whether they might be interested in supervising your project. It is advisable to initiate this process a few months before the application deadline. We recommend coordinating all further preparatory steps with the potential supervisors.

2. Start with a thorough search to identify first supervisors whose areas of specialisation and research focus match your doctoral project. Pay attention to their publications and current research projects.

3. As soon as you have identified potential first supervisors, contact them by email. Enclose a first draft of your doctoral thesis topic with your enquiry to present your research project. The exposé is often further developed with the potential first supervisor.

4. Once you have been accepted by a first supervisor, contact your desired second supervisor with the exposé and an enquiry. The potential first supervisor will often support you in making contact, but the responsibility lies with you as the applicant.

Ask both supervisors for an informal written confirmation of supervision, which will be required for your application.

If you have difficulties finding a suitable supervisor, please contact the Head of Doctoral Studies, who may be able to help you.

Who is eligible to be a supervisor? What needs to be considered?

Generally, each doctoral candidate has two supervisors.

In the framework of the **artistic-scholarly doctorate**, first supervisors from ABU must have an artistic or scholarly teaching authorisation; second supervisors must be members of a recognised post-secondary domestic or foreign educational institution with an artistic or scholarly teaching authorisation. In all cases, one supervisor must have an artistic teaching authorisation and the other a scholarly teaching authorisation.

In the case of a **scholarly doctorate**, first supervisors from the ABU must have scholarly teaching authorisation; second supervisors must be members of a recognised post-secondary domestic or foreign educational institution with scholarly teaching authorisation.

Teaching authorisation means that the supervisors have a professorship, associate professorship or habilitation. If in doubt, please ask us in advance whether the person you would like to have as a supervisor is available.

In exceptional cases, we also allow third-party supervision, which can also come from another university or post-secondary domestic or foreign educational institution. However, third-party supervision is only permitted in exceptional cases and must be authorised by the relevant Vice-Rectorate.

Preparation of the Exposé

Based on your first draft of the doctoral project, you develop the exposé for the application. In the admission part of our website you will find a checklist for the application exposé for doctoral studies at ABU and also the research exposé guidelines (section useful documents).

<https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/research/doctoral-studies/admission>

3 Application Documents

Submit your application for the doctoral programme via the online portal, which you can find here:

<https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/research/doctoral-studies/admission>

Make sure that you upload all the required documents, including the supervision commitments.

Do I need proof of language skills?

If doctoral students decide to write their dissertation in English an adequate command of the English language is required. We therefore recommend that applicants are proficient in English to level C1 as set out in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. It is not necessary to provide written evidence with your application. However, the Admissions Board may ask you to submit evidence of language skills after consideration of your exposé and the oral admission exam.

What format is required for the Master's thesis?

We accept various formats of Master's theses, from purely artistic (which must be documented in the form of scores, audio or video recordings) to purely academic Master's theses from all recognised international colleges and universities.

If a Master's thesis does not contain any written documentation in the form of booklets or reflections, for example, the selection team welcomes the inclusion of other documents such as academic articles or other such materials that demonstrate the applicant's language qualifications required for a doctoral thesis.

In which language must the Master's thesis to be submitted be written?

For written Master's theses, we generally expect a German or English version. If it is written in another language, at least part of the thesis must be submitted to the doctoral committee in German or English.

A translation can be prepared by yourself and it is sufficient if you translate what you consider to be a significant part of the thesis that gives us an insight into your writing style and the manner in which you deal with an academic topic (approximately 10 pages).

We recommend the software DeepL to assist you with the translation:

[deepl.com](https://www.deepl.com)

Are there guidelines for the letter of motivation?

No.

What is the formal application process?

The first step is to register in the online applicant portal:

https://bonline.bruckneruni.at/bonline/ABU_BEWERBUNG.init

After registering, you will receive a link that you can use to upload the required application documents. Make sure that you submit all the required documents in full and by the deadline.

Your application will then be reviewed by the Dean and the Doctoral Committee of ABU. If your application is assessed favourably, you will be invited to a personal interview at the ABU. Following a successful interview and positive assessment, you will be admitted to the doctoral programme at ABU.

The final step is formal enrolment at ABU. You are then officially registered as a doctoral candidate at the university and can begin your studies.

What needs to be considered for the admission process after a successful application?

The Student Services will contact you.

<https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/admissions/contact/student-services>

Deadlines and required documents must be strictly observed, otherwise enrolment will not be possible and, in the worst case, the study place will be forfeited.

4 General Questions about the Degree Programme

In which language are the courses held?

The introductory courses are held in English and, if needed, also in German. English is used, among other reasons, to prepare students for an international research presence. Which of the two languages is the dominant one depends on the needs of the doctoral students. In any case, students can easily switch from one language to the other within the course if they wish.

Do the courses take place online or on site?

Most of the compulsory courses for the doctoral programme take place on site at ABU in Linz. Additional seminars are usually offered in a hybrid format or entirely online.

What courses can I expect during my doctoral studies?

Within the framework of the doctoral programme, students have to complete doctoral seminars, lectures, doctoral colloquiums and method seminars as well as extra achievements or projects, totalling 30 ECTS in consultation with their first and second supervisors. For more information, please find the curricula of the two doctoral programmes on the website:

<https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/research/doctoral-studies/study-info>

When and how often do these courses with on-site attendance take place?

In the winter semester, the foundational courses “Fundamentals and Concepts of Artistic-Scholarly Research” and “Methods of Artistic-Scholarly Research” take place jointly four times in the 1st and 2nd year and last 1.5 days in each session. In each of the 3 years, a discipline-specific doctoral seminar takes place twice in the winter semester in team teaching, which is coordinated within the respective groups.

In the summer semester, the three-day PARL Spring Lab takes place in each of the three years.

Private tutorials are arranged individually with the supervisors.

In addition, an examination takes place after the first semester (“Module 1 Examination”), for which attendance at ABU is also required.

Can I integrate my artistic practice into my studies?

In the artistic-scholarly doctorate, your artistic practice is a core element of your research. If necessary, you can use ABU facilities for this purpose, subject to availability.

Is there a lesson offering outside the doctorate (e.g. individual instrumental coaching)?

No.

Are there tuition fees for the doctoral programme?

Yes, there are tuition fees. You can find information on tuition fees here:

<https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/admissions/application/tuition-fees>

Is there a possibility of funding or scholarships?

Yes! ABU itself, for example, offers the [Doctoral Study Fund](#) explicitly for its doctoral students, which amounts to up to EUR 1,000 per calendar year over a maximum period of three years.

An overview of scholarships, grants and financial support for doctoral candidates can be found [here](#). Information on general scholarships, grants and competitions can be found [here](#).

In which language can the dissertation be written?

The dissertation can be written in German or, with the agreement of the supervisors, in English. Many of our doctoral candidates write their theses in English.

Is the diploma from ABU internationally recognised?

Yes.

According to § 3 para. 1 second sentence of the Private Universities Act, academic degrees that are equivalent to academic degrees under the Universities Act (UG) have the legal effect of academic degrees under the Universities Act (UG).

Within Europe (more precisely: within the 53 signatory states), the Lisbon Recognition Convention also applies, whose Article VI regulates the recognition of degrees and sets out the essential principle that “the Contracting Parties shall recognise higher education qualifications obtained at a higher education institution located in another Contracting Party, unless a substantial difference can be demonstrated between the qualification for which recognition is sought and the corresponding qualification in the country in which recognition is sought.”

Is there a possibility of a *cotutelle* at ABU?

No, the Anton Bruckner University does not currently offer *cotutelle* doctorates.

5 Important Links

Link to the doctoral programmes:

- German: <https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/de/forschung/doktoratsprogramme>
- English: <https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/research/doctoral-studies>

Here you will find all the important general information on the admission process (useful tips on how to design your application exposé as well as a checklist):

- <https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/research/doctoral-studies/admission>

For more information, you can find the curricula of the two doctoral programmes here:

- <https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/research/doctoral-studies/study-info>

Contact information for the Student Services:

- <https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/admissions/contact/student-services>

Information on grants and scholarships:

- <https://www.bruckneruni.ac.at/en/research/doctoral-studies/scholarships>