

# Conclusion of the PhD study

Automatic English translation of the Czech guide "Závěr doktorského studia"

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# About the chapter

The **Final phase of the Phd study** chapter is a small guide to the final events of the PhD in Study of Religions.

The content of that guide is fully identical to the content displayed on the IS website under the sections related to doctoral studies.

Have you found ambiguities or have questions? The chair of the Doctoral board is responsible for the content of the documents, see <https://www.muni.cz/en/about-us/organizational-structure/faculty-of-arts/oborova-rada-24166>.

If you find formal errors or have comments on the way the information is presented, please write to the Secretariat of the Department.

Thank you very much!

# The schedule of state examinations and dissertation defence

The path to graduation from the PhD programme is lined with a series of "finalising" study events - the State Doctoral Examination, the Internal Defence and the final Dissertation Defence.

## Doctoral State Examination

At the beginning of the the **5th semester of studies**, students register for the **Doctoral State Examination** and undergo it.

Please note that the prerequisite for the PhD examination is the completion of the course **RLDrA09 Draft Article!** We have introduced this prerequisite as a checkpoint to remind students that they need to submit their journal article for review well in advance so that they more easily meet the requirement of its actual publication before the defence.

## Advanced version of the dissertation, mock defence and final version of the dissertation

In the **6th semester of studies**, students register for [RLDrA12 Doctoral Seminar IV: Advanced Dissertation Draft](#) and submit an advanced version of their dissertation for mock defense during the exam period.

In the **7th semester of studies**, students register for [RLDrA14 Doctoral Seminar V: Internal Review and Dissertation Submission](#). In this course, the supervisor and a designated internal reviewer read the thesis and give feedback to students regarding the completion of the thesis at the mock defense.

The moc defence takes place physically, online or in a hybrid mode, and follows the form of the actual defense.

The student then completes the dissertation and submits the final version by **January 31** (fall semester) or **August 31** (spring semester). (These are mandatory dates for the study programme, it is not just a question of requirements of a specific course.)

## Dissertation defence

In the last semester of study, at a date determined by the chair of the Study Programme, the dissertation defense is held.

# State examination, internal defence and final defence of the dissertation

## State examination and final defence of the dissertation

The Doctoral State Examination (I) and the Dissertation Defense (II) are two distinct events in the current Doctoral Program in Religious Studies. The State Doctoral Examination in Religious Studies (SDZ) takes place in the 5th semester of studies.

### I. Doctoral State Examination

The course of the State Doctoral Examination is described in the IS MU and should be identical to the following extended description.

The State Doctoral Examination in Religious Studies (SDZ) takes place in the **5th semester** of studies. A prerequisite for the examination is the completion the course RLDRA09 Draft Article.

The application for the exam is made by the candidate at the **beginning of the semester** through the Office for Studies on the prescribed form.

The doctoral state examination is conducted orally and consists of the following parts:

#### 1) Position paper in the study of religions

At least ten working days prior to the state exam, the candidate submits a brief argumentative **position paper**, summarizing the main content of their presentation, sending it by email to the managing assistants of the department ([sekretariat-reli@phil.muni.cz](mailto:sekretariat-reli@phil.muni.cz)).

The position paper should be in the form of a text file of 3-5 standard pages (5400-9000 characters including spaces). It must contain a title, the author's name and surname, running references (there is no bibliographic standard, but we recommend the Harvard style rather than footnotes), and a final list of references.

The position paper should present an original position concerning a current, more general religious studies problem that is not identical with the dissertation topic. It must be based on a clear and convincing argument understandable to a non-specialist audience in the study of religions. They should therefore not drown in highly specialized details, but present a general argument that can be critically debated at the examination.

At the examination, the candidate presents the position paper in a maximum of **15 minutes**. The use of slides is recommended.

The committee evaluates the originality, quality and persuasiveness of both the written position paper and its presentation and subsequent participation in the debate. The weight of this part in the overall assessment of the examination is 50%.

## 2) Discussion of concepts and topics in study of religions

Together with the position paper, the candidate submits a **list of readings** by e-mail to the managing assistants of the departments. The list must be sent ten working days before the state doctoral examination at the latest, and will have two parts:

- (a) theory and methodology of religious studies; and
- (b) the chosen thematic specialisation.

Each of these groups will contain a minimum of five and a maximum of ten book titles (in the case of a major contribution, this may be a study in a journal or in conference proceedings), including brief annotations written by the doctoral candidate. Taking into account this list of references, the committee will ask a question which the candidate will discuss. This will be followed by a discussion. The weight of this part in the overall evaluation of the oral examination is 50%.

## II. Defence of the dissertation

The dissertation defence takes place at the very end of studies. Candidates submit an application through the Office for Studies on the prescribed form after fulfilling their study obligations.

For the submission of the dissertation, see a special page.

In the semester of the defence, the PhD student submits electronically the **Extended thesis summary**.

# Dissertation: format

During their studies, students produce a dissertation. The thesis must contain original and significant research results.

## Two dissertation formats

In accordance with the MU Study and Examination Regulations, the dissertation may be either 1) a monograph or 2) a collection of thematically related studies already published or accepted for publication, accompanied by a comprehensive introduction to the subject and a commentary.

### 1) Dissertation as a monograph

In the first case, it is a monographic study of between **180 000 and 270 000 characters** including spaces (100-150 standard pages).

Even with a monographic dissertation, **one article published in an academic journal** covered in either the **Scopus or Web of Science databases** is required.

### 2) Dissertation as a collection of studies

In the second case, there is no minimum or maximum character limit, but the collection must contain either at least **three publications** as lead author or at least two publications as lead author and two more as co-authors. The publications must have been **published or accepted** for publication in journals included in the Scopus or Web of Science databases or it must be chapters in an academic book (not a paper in conference proceedings!) published by a publisher on the [Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts list of category A and B publishers](#) with one exception, which can be an article in a journal not covered in those databases, a book chapter published by a publisher not listed on the category A and B list, or paper in conference proceedings.

The collection must be accompanied by (1) a preface (or acknowledgements) with a detailed explanation of the doctoral student's contribution and bibliographic data of the individual studies, (2) a comprehensive introduction to the subject holding the studies together, and (3) a final commentary of the results. If co-authored studies are included, the Study Regulations (section 31) further require "the student's statement on the extent of their creative contribution for each such outcome". In practice, this statement is part of the preface / acknowledgements.

## Required formal requirements

The obligatory part of the thesis is the title page, which includes the name of the university, faculty and institute, the title of the thesis, the name of the preparer, the name of the supervisor, the place and year of completion. Furthermore, the thesis must be accompanied by a statement by the

author on the originality of the thesis, a table of contents, a list of references used and bibliographic references. It is mandatory to use the [MUNI Arts template](#).

The thesis is submitted only in the **digital form**.



# The procedure for submitting a dissertation in 9 steps

Important information about completing your doctoral studies is provided on the website of Office for Studies. We summarize the procedure in 9 steps.

1. The candidate first requests by e-mail to the Office for Studies ([phd@phil.muni.cz](mailto:phd@phil.muni.cz)) to set up a **thesis archive** in the IS MU. In the same message, he/she communicates to the Office for Studies the final title of the dissertation in the language of the thesis and in English, consulted with the supervisor.
2. The candidate consults the supervisor about the final version of the thesis, appendices, annotation and keywords.
3. The candidate uploads the complete text of the dissertation including appendices, annotation in Czech and English and keywords in Czech and English.
4. The candidate then closes the archive.
5. The supervisor checks the dissertation in the dissertation archive and confirms the legibility of the file and the originality of the dissertation.
6. The candidate fills in any missing data in the Individual Study Plan application in IS MU and informs the supervisor, who checks the Individual Study Plan and, if everything is in order, confirms its completion.
7. The candidate submits an application for defence to the Study Department using the form by sending an e-mail from the official address in the IS MU (external e-mail box cannot be used) to [phd@phil.muni.cz](mailto:phd@phil.muni.cz). ATTENTION: The **dissertation**, including the **application for the defence**, must be submitted **at least one semester before the maximum period of studies expires**.
  - Together with the application form, or later during the semester of the defense, the candidate also sends electronically all the obligatory annexes to the thesis listed at the Study Department website.
  - Dissertations can be submitted continuously throughout the academic year. However, for the defense in the spring semester, the dissertation, including the application for examination and defense and all required appendices, must be submitted no later than **31 January**. The deadline for the defence in the autumn semester (i.e., by mid-February) is **31 August**.
8. If everything is in order, the Office of Studies will ask the Programme Board chair to nominate reviewers and the examining committee.
9. In the semester of the defense, the Office for Studies and the Programme Board **checks whether graduation requirements are met, all courses completed**, and the **Individual Study Plan** fulfilled.

# Extended thesis summary

The extended thesis summary explains the focus, methods, and the main conclusions of the thesis.

Use the prescribed template (for a Czech or Slovak dissertation, the Czech template, for an English dissertation, the English template) to prepare the extended summary. The mandatory parts are (the template will guide you):

- Czech or Slovak summary including a list of keywords (for dissertations written in Czech or Slovak).
- English abstract including the English wording of the title and a list of keywords.
- The extended summary of the main results of the dissertation in the language of the dissertation, with a minimum of 10 pages in the formatting according to the prescribed template.
- A list of references (identical to the list of references in the dissertation itself).
- A list of your publications related to the studies.
- A list of other academic activities (internships, presentations at conferences, etc.).

## Submission

The extended summary must be submitted electronically both to the Office for Studies in the semester of the defence, no later than **15 working days** before the examination.

## Form

See the prescribed template. The minimum length of the actual thesis abstract is 10 printed pages. This does not include the other mandatory components (see above).