

Guidelines on

What you need to know when studying for a PhD?

Admission, study process, certifications, additional opportunities, defense and completion of studies



**Faculty of
Economics and
Business Administration**

The flowchart shows the process and timelines

Deadline:
until 10 October

1. Admission

- 1.1. Connecting
- 1.2. Meeting your supervisor
- 1.3. Attending an information/acquaintance meeting

Deadlines:
2.1. until 1st November
2.2.-2.4. over the
course of studies

2. Study process

- 2.1. Preparation and approval of the study plan
- 2.2. Taking courses
- 2.3. Course evaluation and crediting by examination committees
- 2.4. Crediting of additional courses

Deadline:
3.1. November

3. Certifications

- 3.1. Annual certification
- 3.3. Extraordinary certification

Deadline:
over the course
of studies

4. Additional opportunities

- 4.1. Secondments and field trips
- 4.2. Support for research
- 4.3. Workplace and other necessary equipment

Deadline:
no later than 12 months
after the completion of
studies

5. Completion of studies

- 5.1. Defense in the Department
- 5.2. Defense at the Committee's meeting
- 5.3. Defense at the Dissertation Defense Board

1. ADMISSION

1.1. Connecting

- Register your bank account: **registration**;
- Create your **VU account**;
- Log in to the VU email address: **<https://exchange.vu.lt>**, as all information about your studies will be sent only to this email address.

1.2. Contacting and meeting your supervisor. The meeting should discuss the requirements for PhD students during their studies, highlight their role in the FEBA community, present opportunities and expectations.

1.3. Attending an information/acquaintance meeting during which the FEBA administration will present practical information about doctoral studies, information about the Doctoral Fund, training and employment opportunities, and answer your questions.

2. STUDY PROCESS

2.1. Preparation and approval of the study plan

- The plan includes: studying of scientific literature, research, analysis of data and publication of results, preparation of the dissertation, presentation of results at scientific events, field trips etc.

Useful to know:

- You and your supervisor should draw up a plan for all your studies by 1 November. The study plan can be found here: **[Documents \(Templates\)](#)**;
- The scope of doctoral studies is at least 30 credits. The PhD student shall study at least 3 subjects on the topic of the dissertation. Descriptions of subjects: **[Syllabuses](#)**
- The PhD student must coordinate the list of subjects and choose to study subjects related to the topic of the dissertation;
- The PhD student's study plan must be approved during the doctoral committee meeting, at the beginning of the studies;
- Later, if necessary, the following steps should be taken to adjust the plan:
 - a) coordinate changes with the supervisor;
 - b) submit both the old and the new plans to the PhD coordinator, together with a free-form request reflecting the justification for the change. The request will be considered at the next meeting of the PhD Committee and the doctoral student will be informed about the decision.
- It is recommended that the doctoral student's work plan be structured in such a way that 5 credits are devoted to the development of general skills (i.e. preparation of project proposals, research writing, academic integrity, intellectual property, entrepreneurship, communication skills, etc.)

2.2. Taking courses

- You will receive a timetable of courses (compulsory and elective) with registration information by email from the PhD coordinator.
- For elective courses that are taught on a consultative basis (not lectured), the timetable and requirements must be agreed with the professors. Consultation-based means that the PhD student will consult the content of the course independently and, if necessary, with the professors of the course.

2.3. Course evaluation and crediting by examination committees

- Each course is concluded with an exam, the date of which PhD students must arrange with their lecturers.
- At least 2 weeks before the exam, the PhD coordinator must be informed about the date, time, location and composition of the committee. The PhD coordinator will prepare the exam order, without which the exam cannot take place, and share it with you.
- The examination grades are recorded in the PhD student's examination report and are certified by a wet signature. The PhD student must keep them until the end of their studies.

The exam protocol form can be found here: [**Documents \(Templates\)**](#)

2.4. Crediting additional courses:

- With the agreement of the PhD supervisor, you may choose to take courses at other institutions, but they must be confirmed at a meeting of the PhD committee.

3. CERTIFICATIONS

3.1. Annual certification

- The annual certification is intended to track the progress of the PhD student and takes place in two stages: at the department and in the committee.

At the beginning of each academic year, the PhD student is certified for the previous year of study.

Documents to be submitted:

For those who have completed the first year of studies:

- Report on the implementation of the study plan
- Feedback from the supervisor.

For those who have completed the second-third (in the case of continuous studies - second-fifth) years of study:

- Report on the implementation of the study plan
- Feedback from the supervisor
- Dissertation draft
- 10-minute presentation to the doctoral committee on the progress of the thesis

For those who have completed the fourth (in the case of continuous studies - sixth) year of study:

- Report on the implementation of the study plan
- Feedback from the supervisor
- Dissertation draft
- 10-minute presentation to the doctoral committee on the progress of the thesis

3.2. Final certification

- Is conducted at the end of the PhD student's studies in order to assess the achievements throughout the study period.
- During this certification, it is also decided whether the PhD student will be allowed to defend their dissertation.

3.3. Extraordinary certification

- Extraordinary certification is carried out in exceptional cases.
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4. ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

4.1. Secondments and field trips

- During their studies, doctoral students must undertake a secondment or field trip. The costs of secondments and field trips are reimbursed from the FEBA Doctoral Fund, subject to prior agreement with the Research Support Division. What activities can be compensated from the Doctoral Fund, as well as the system for filling out applications, can be found [here](#).

4.2. Support for research

- If there is a need to prepare or carry out a study related to the dissertation, the PhD student should contact the FEBA Research Support Division for support in conducting primary data research.

4.3. Workplace and other necessary equipment

- The Faculty administration strongly encourages spending more time at the faculty. For the convenience of PhD students, two faculty offices (604 and 718) have been assigned, each with 4 shared desks, which are accessible only to PhD students and can be used at their convenience.
- In order to use the work spaces, you should contact the FEBA PhD coordinator, who will make sure that an individual access card is generated for you.
- The card allows you to use the printer and scanner on the 4th floor of the faculty.

4.4. Academic leave

- Academic leave for personal reasons is allowed once during the study period, if necessary, up to a maximum of one year.
- Submit a request to the PhD coordinator. The application form can be found here: [Documents \(Templates\)](#)



5. COMPLETION OF STUDIES

- Successful doctoral studies are completed by the defense of the dissertation. If the PhD student submits the thesis to the Committee before the end of the doctoral degree but fails to defend it, the dissertation may be defended in the usual matter within 12 months after the end of the doctoral studies.

Useful to know:

A PhD student may submit a thesis for defense when:

- has passed all the examinations set out in the PhD student's work plan;
- has published the most important results of their research in at least two articles published (or accepted for publication) in peer-reviewed scientific publications or in a scientific monograph;
- if the PhD candidate defends their dissertation on the basis of articles, the main results of the research must have been published in at least four articles (at least one of which has the PhD candidate as first co-author or sole author), which have been published, or have been accepted for publication, (with a digital object identifier (DOI)) in international scientific journals with a citation index in the Clarivate Analytics Web of Science (CA WoS) database).

5.1. Defense in the Department

- The prepared dissertation must be presented by the PhD candidate in the department. The department submits a conclusion to the doctoral committee.

5.2. Defense at the Committee's meeting

- The PhD student must apply for the appointment of reviewers. They send the request together with their thesis to the FEBA PhD coordinator, who submits the documents to the Committee. At the next meeting, the PhD candidate presents the thesis for the committee to consider. If the dissertation fulfills the requirements, the PhD candidate, in agreement with their supervisor, submits to the committee the proposed composition of the dissertation defense board, the date and the language of the defense. The Committee shall consider and approve the submission, together with the choice of the room for the defense. In exceptional cases, the Committee shall justify and decide to hold the defense of the dissertation in a closed meeting and shall set up a five-member defense board, appoint one of its members as chairperson and submit it to the Rector of the University for approval.
- After the committee meeting, which decides that the dissertation is suitable for defense, the PhD candidate must submit **the following documents** to the PhD coordinator of the Doctoral and Postdoctoral Department of the VU Central Administration.
- The dissertation defense takes place at the faculty, so please contact the faculty's PhD coordinator for any organizational/practical questions.

Useful to know:

The Committee may take the following decisions at the meeting, after assessing the dissertation, the scientific articles published on the dissertation, the examinations passed, and the participation in scientific events and secondments:

- the dissertation is properly prepared and meets the requirements, the PhD student has fulfilled the requirements of the PhD student's work plan and the dissertation, after considering the comments of reviewers and committee members, can be submitted for defense;
- the dissertation needs revision. The dissertation shall be returned to the PhD candidate and the revised dissertation shall be discussed again at a meeting of the committee after the reviewers, who have read the revisions, have submitted their conclusions to the committee within one month;
- the dissertation does not meet the requirements and is returned to the candidate for further amendments.

5.3. Defense at the Dissertation Defense Board

- The members of the Defense Board shall examine the submitted dissertation and indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the dissertation, evaluate the scientific novelty, relevance, originality of the dissertation, express their opinion whether the thesis meets the requirements for dissertations and submit their written feedback on the dissertation at least 5 working days prior to the defense of the dissertation (can also be submitted by e-mail) to the Doctoral and Postdoctoral department, which shall send them to the PhD candidate without delay. Feedback in printed form must be submitted before the defense of the thesis.
- The dissertation shall be defended in a public meeting of the Defense Board (unless a closed meeting is scheduled) in accordance with the Regulations of the Defense Board for the Defense of Doctoral Dissertations (Annex 2 of the Regulations) of the ***Doctoral Regulation (for those joining from 2017 onwards)***, and the meeting shall be audio recorded. The dissertation defense may be conducted in either Lithuanian or another language, with translation provided if necessary. The language of the dissertation defense shall be determined by the Committee. The meeting shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the Defense Board. The meeting shall be valid if more than half of the members of the Defense Board (including those participating by teleconference) are present. The meeting shall read out the feedback on the thesis received from the absent members of the Board. The members of the Defense Board shall take decisions in accordance with the principles of objectivity, impartiality, transparency and legitimacy, and shall take personal responsibility for their actions and decisions.
- After a discussion with the PhD candidate, the members of the Defense Board, in the absence of the PhD candidate and other members of the meeting, individually expressing the arguments of their decision, decide by open vote whether the degree of doctor of science should be awarded. The members of the Defense Board present by teleconference shall also vote. The decision to award the doctorate shall be taken if more than half of the members of the Defense Board vote in favor. In the event of a decision not to award the doctorate, the reasons for the decision shall be stated in the minutes of the vote. The voting record shall be signed by all members of the Defense Board who were directly present at the meeting.

Useful to know:

- During the defense, the PhD candidate presents the main results and conclusions of their work and indicates their contribution to the publications in the dissertation. The PhD candidate answers questions and comments on the comments made. During the discussion, the dissertation shall justify the conclusions of the thesis and demonstrate their scientific competence as a researcher.