



**Faculty of
Economics and
Business Administration**

Guidelines on

What you need to know when studying for a PhD?

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

The flowchart shows the process and timelines

Deadline:
until 10th October

1. Admission

- 1.1. Access
- 1.2. Meeting your PhD supervisor
- 1.3. Attending an informational/introductory meeting

Deadlines:
2.1. until 1st November
2.2.-2.3. over the
course of studies

2. Study process

- 2.1. Preparation and approval of the study plan
- 2.2. Attending courses
- 2.3. Exams and course completion

Deadline:
3.1. November

3. Attestations

- 3.1. Annual attestation
- 3.2. Extraordinary/special attestation

Deadline:
over the course
of studies

4. Additional opportunities

- 4.1. Business trips and internships
- 4.2. Research support
- 4.3. Workspace and equipment
- 4.4. Academic leave

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

5. Completion of studies

- 5.1. Defense at the Department
- 5.2. Defense at the Committee
- 5.3. Defense at the Defense Board

1. ADMISSION

1.1. Access

- Register your bank account;
- Create a VU account;
- Log in to VU email at **<https://exchange.vu.lt>**, since all study-related information will only be sent to this address.

1.2. Contacting and meeting your supervisor. During the meeting, discuss the requirements for doctoral students during their studies, the role they play in the EVAF community, available opportunities, and expectations..

1.3. Attend an informational/introductory meeting, where the EVAF administration will present practical information about doctoral studies, the doctoral fund, mobility opportunities, employment possibilities, and answer any questions.

2. STUDY PROCESS

2.1. Preparation and approval of the study plan

- The plan consists of: review of scientific literature, research, data analysis and publication of results, preparation of dissertation, presentation of results at scientific events, internships, etc.

Helpful tips:

- By November 1st, together with the supervisor, you should prepare the full study plan. Study plan templates are available here: [Document samples for doctoral students](#).
 - The doctoral study load is at least 30 credits. The doctoral student studies at least 3 subjects related to the dissertation. Course descriptions: **[Programmes and subject descriptions](#)**. It is recommended that 3–5 credits be allocated to general skills development (e.g., project applications, academic writing, ethics, intellectual property, entrepreneurship, communication skills, etc.).
 - The list of courses must be coordinated with the supervisor and related to the dissertation topic.
 - The study plan must be approved during the Doctoral Committee meeting at the beginning of the studies (November).
 - Later, if corrections are necessary:
 - a) agree on changes with your supervisor;
 - b) submit the old and new plan, with a free-form request explaining the changes, to the doctoral coordinator. The request will be considered at the next Doctoral Committee meeting, and the student will be informed of the decision.
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- In the **first year**, plan exams, literature review, and analysis; in the **second and third years**, prepare dissertation chapters, conduct empirical data collection and analysis, publish at least 2 scientific papers, and participate in international conferences; in the **fourth year**, plan dissertation pre-defense and defense. Spread the work evenly and realistically.
 - After the Doctoral Committee approves the plan, enter it into the VU IS system.

2.2. Attending courses

For elective courses conducted on a consultation basis (not lectured), coordinate requirements and schedule with the course instructors. Consultation-based means self-study with lecturer's support as needed.

2.3. Exams and course completion

- Each course ends with an exam, with the date agreed upon with lecturers.
- At least **2 weeks before the exam**, inform the doctoral coordinator about the date, time, place, and commission members (the coordinator prepares the exam order, without which the exam cannot take place). The order is uploaded and signed in Avilys.
- Exam protocols are uploaded to Avilys and signed by the examination committee.
- If failed, the exam may be retaken after 2 months. After a second failure, an special attestation is announced (deciding whether the student can continue studies).

Additional courses:

- With supervisor's approval, doctoral students may take courses in other institutions, but they must be validated by the Doctoral Committee.

3. ATTESTATIONS

3.1. Annual attestation

- The annual attestation evaluates academic progress and takes place in two stages: first at the Department, then at the Doctoral Committee.
- The doctoral student must present completed work. Achievements are compared against the individual study plan. Only with positive evaluation can studies continue.

Documents required:

After Year 1:

- Department meeting protocol extract
- Report on study plan implementation
- Proof of activities (certificates of general skills courses, conference participation, etc.)
- Supervisor's review

After Year 2 (or Years 2–4 for part-time):

- Department meeting protocol extract
- Report on study plan implementation
- Publication list from eLABa database
- Proof of activities (courses, certificates, etc.)
- Supervisor's review
- Dissertation draft
- 10-min presentation at the Committee (progress + 1–2 slides with next year's plan)

After Year 3 (or Year 5 part-time):

- Same documents as above
- Dissertation draft
- 15-min presentation at the Committee (progress + 1–2 slides with next year's plan)

Final attestation (end of studies)

- Evaluates all achievements.
- Decides whether the dissertation can be submitted for defense.

Required: Department protocol extract, report, eLABa publications list, proof of activities, supervisor's review, dissertation draft, and 15-min presentation at the Committee.

3.2. Extraordinary/special attestation

- Held in exceptional cases if the study plan cannot be completed. It may be postponed, but if problems persist, the student's ability to continue studies is reconsidered.

4. ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

4.1. Business trips and internships

- Doctoral students must go on at least one. Expenses may be covered by the EVAF Doctoral Fund, with supervisor's and Vice-Dean's approval.
- To participate in conferences, internships, etc., fill out a business trip request and obtain the Pro-Rector's order (via VU IS or by sending the signed form to the coordinator).
- Financial questions: contact finance officer Ilma Jonaitytė (*ilma.jonaityte@cr.vu.lt*).

4.2. Research support

- Activities directly related to dissertation (data, equipment, editing, publishing fees, etc.) may be financed from the EVAF Doctoral Fund.

4.3. Workspace and equipment

- Dedicated doctoral room: 604 (with shared desks).
- To get access, contact EVAF HR administrator for a personal entry card. The card also allows use of printers and scanners (4th and 8th floors).

4.4. Academic leave

- Allowed once, up to 1 year, for personal reasons, or for important reasons (illness, childcare).
- Apply via IS system or submit a request to the coordinator (sample forms available).

5. COMPLETION OF STUDIES

Successful doctoral studies end with dissertation defense.

If submitted before the end of studies but not defended in time, the dissertation may be defended within 12 months after graduation.

Eligibility for defense:

- All planned exams passed;
- 3–5 credits in general skills;
- At least 2 peer-reviewed publications (or a scientific monograph);
- Results presented at 2 international conferences.

Alternatively:

- Defense based on a set of scientific articles (minimum of 4 published/accepted with DOI in CA WoS journals). Includes overview (≥ 1 author's sheet), summary in another language, and copies of publications.

5.1. Defense at the Department

- Dissertation reviewed by 2 reviewers, Department submits opinion to the Committee.

5.2. Defense at the Committee

- Submit request (with dissertation) to coordinator, reviewed at the Committee meeting.
- Committee may: approve, return for corrections, or reject.
- Once approved, doctoral student proposes defense board, date, and language.

5.3. Defense at the Defense Board

- Board reviews dissertation, provides written feedback.
- Defense is public (unless closed session approved).
- Conducted under fairness and transparency principles.
- Decision made by open vote; degree awarded if supported by majority.

WHO CAN HELP AND WHEN?

- **Supervisor:** helps with plan, publications, dissertation, signs documents, advises on studies and personal matters. A consultant may also be appointed.
- **Department:** monitors progress, reviews plans, drafts, annual reports, and gives feedback. Annual attestations held here.
- **Doctoral Committee:** approves plans, supervisors, attestations, credit recognition, dissertation review, defense board, defense date.
- **Vice-Dean for Research.** Oversees the Faculty's research activities and, in cooperation with the Doctoral Committee, supervises doctoral studies. Advises on doctoral mobility opportunities, involvement in research programs, and the dissemination of research results in international and national scientific journals. Supports planning of an academic career within the Faculty and helps resolve complex or exceptional issues that doctoral students may encounter.
- **Doctoral Studies Coordinator.** Works closely with the Doctoral Committees and other academic units, provides consultations to doctoral students regarding their study progress, assists in preparing and submitting required documents, helps to resolve non-standard situations related to studies, and ensures the smooth organization of attestations and the defense process.

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