

Guidelines for collaborative doctoral studies

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Table of contents

0 Preliminary remark.....	1
1 Admission procedure.....	2
2 Study programme.....	2
3 Completion.....	2
4 Frequently asked questions (FAQ).....	4
4.1 Can I apply individually and collaboratively at the same time?.....	4
4.2 What if one of the contributors is not an artist?.....	4
4.3 Can individual team members also work at other universities or research institutions?.....	4
4.4 Can each person in the group have different supervisors?.....	4
4.5 How many team members can there be?.....	4
4.6 Am I eligible for financial support?.....	4
4.7 How does the rigorosum work?.....	4
4.8 How are degrees awarded?.....	5
4.9 What happens if conflicts arise or a member drops out of the programme?.....	5

0 Preliminary remark

These guidelines are intended to provide assistance and will be updated from time to time. In the event of any discrepancy with academic documents (e.g., curriculum or doctoral regulations), the academic documents are the authoritative source and shall take precedence.

This document is limited to the specific differences between an individual doctorate and a collaborative doctorate within the PhD in the Arts programme at GMPU. For all aspects not expressly mentioned here, the standard guidelines of the program apply.

The collaborative doctorate complements the traditionally individual and “solitary” concept of a doctorate—where only one person is responsible for the research—with a model that reflects the reality of many postdoctoral research projects, in which researchers work together. In this way, the collaborative doctorate supports both the claim that Artistic Research is often interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity and to make collaborative practice itself a subject of research.

1 Admission procedure

All members of a team wishing to complete a collaborative doctoral degree must submit their own online application. However, they must share a joint exposé and indicate that it is a collaborative project. The team also shares a joint primary and secondary supervisor. Each member must still provide proof of the corresponding supervision commitment in their own name. The dissertation project described in the exposé must explicitly outline the individual roles of each team member and show how their specific skills and responsibilities contribute to the overall research goals. Each team member must submit an individual portfolio and a separate letter of motivation.

2 Study programme

The programme combines collaborative and individual elements. Collaborative aspects include joint project presentations, joint experimental design, and collective research methodologies. Individual responsibilities include completing courses, collecting individual ECTS credits, making individual scientific contributions, and tracking progress separately. On the other hand, the *privatissimum* (private supervision) and presentations in the colloquium are completed jointly.

3 Completion

The degree process includes a joint (and therefore longer) *rigorosum* (doctoral defence / *viva voce*), in which the team presents its research in a coherent manner. However, the assessment continues to be individual. Each team member submits their written part of the dissertation separately and undergoes an independent academic assessment in which their own research contribution is reviewed. The following diagram shows when which aspects of the programme are completed individually and when jointly, or when a hybrid form is used:

	joint		hybrid	individually	
Planning	Research project		↔	Defined role in the team, corresponding qualifications	
Application	Exposé	Supervision agreement		Portfolio* and letter of motivation	
Admission	Requirements met by all team members	Invitation to interview	Coordinated interviews (individual and, if applicable, joint parts of the artistic presentation and the dissertation projects generated from the research project)	Application of selection criteria	Minutes and evaluations of the expert committee
	Decision of the admissions committee				
Course of study	Privatissimum	Presentations in the colloquium*	If certain courses are attended at the same time, joint presentations are also possible* (e.g., conference participation; the joint workload must then correspond to twice the workload of an individual course).	Courses and study-related achievements within the framework of the curriculum (collection of ECTS, grading, etc.)	
			Coordinated research proposals* (related topic, differentiated research questions, and time and work plans); all proposals from the team must be positively evaluated in order for the projects to move from the introductory phase to the main phase.		
Dissertation project and documentation	Jointly conducted experiments* and artistic projects*		↔	Individual experiments and research contributions	Written part of the dissertation
Completion	Admission to the Rigorosum requires a positive assessment of all work (research proposal, courses, dissertation project, and documentation) by all team members.			Grading	Usually different reviewers
	Rigorosum*		The duration of the rigorosum is adjusted to the size of the team so that there is sufficient time for the examination board to ask questions.	Assessment	Certificate, awarding of the degree

*in cases where not obvious to determine: written explanation of how and to what extent collaboration took place

4 Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

4.1 Can I apply individually and collaboratively at the same time?

No. You can only submit one application, either as an individual or as part of a collaboration.

4.2 What if one of the contributors is not an artist?

Interdisciplinary teams with different practices are welcome. However, the programme is designed as an Artistic Research programme (see the programme's main FAQ), which means that all participants must have an artistic practice that can be supervised accordingly. All applicants must meet the admission requirements individually.

4.3 Can individual team members also work at other universities or research institutions?

No. The collaborative doctoral programme is limited to the GMPU. This does not preclude collaborations with other researchers at other institutions within a dissertation project, but these individuals are not part of the educational contract at the GMPU.

4.4 Can each person in the group have different supervisors?

No. Primary and secondary supervision are the same for all participants in a collaborative doctoral programme. However, primary and secondary supervision can be chosen in such a way that different practices of the doctoral candidates are well (complementarily) represented.

4.5 How many team members can there be?

The size of the team will depend on the specific research project and is not limited. However, since the number of study places is limited, a team of two will have the best chance of being admitted.

4.6 Am I eligible for financial support?

The financial options outlined in the main FAQ remain unaffected by the collaborative nature of the doctoral programme. For example, scholarships from the state of Carinthia are currently only awarded on an individual basis. When academic job positions are advertised at the GMPU, it may be possible to split them.

4.7 How does the rigorosum work?

The rigorosum (doctoral defence / viva voce) is conducted as a team, but each candidate is assessed individually. This approach allows the research team to present their joint work while ensuring that the individual contributions and academic abilities of each member are adequately assessed.

4.8 How are degrees awarded?

Each team member receives an individual degree certificate, which ensures that individual achievements are documented and evaluated. Upon request, the collaborative nature of the dissertation can be noted on the certificate to highlight the unique cooperative approach to research.

4.9 What happens if conflicts arise or a member drops out of the programme?

We recognise that a collaborative doctoral programme is a dynamic environment in which situations may require careful reassessment.

If a team member encounters a conflict that requires them to withdraw from the collaboration, the remaining team may continue their research temporarily until a comprehensive review is conducted. The review process confirms the feasibility of the adjusted project and ensures that the research can maintain its original goals and academic standards while offering flexibility to the remaining team members.