



PURPOSE

Good Practices in Research Attractiveness

University of Lüneburg, Leuphana Graduate School – Doctoral Track

Presentation

The Doctoral Track enables well-qualified students admission to study for a doctorate during their Masters course. With the simultaneous admission on a Master's course and a doctorate, they can begin preparing for their doctoral research project during their Masters and make a start on becoming part of the scientific community.

In the last 10 years less than 10 students participated in the programme.

The application can be made at any time during a Master's course, although the first or second semesters of the Master's are recommended. Students who are in the program can participate in all doctoral courses offered by the university. It is a regional offer for students at the University of Lüneburg.

Description

Interested students are advised to use the initial months of their master's course to gain an initial picture of the contents of their major and to contact potential supervisory academic staff from their intended area of research to discuss potential research projects. As soon as the future supervisor has been confirmed and created a corresponding review, students can submit their application for admission to the Doctoral Track to the responsible doctoral board through Student Services.

In order to participate in the program, students must have achieved a grade of at least 1.5 during their BA. The programme ends with the final enrolment in the doctoral programme after the Master's degree has been awarded.

With the Doctoral Track, students are able to focus intensively on their chosen area of research during their Master's courses and to use their Master's thesis as the basis for their doctoral research project. Being able to focus early on the area of research creates the ideal conditions for active, research-focused learning. The early participation in the modules for the doctorate supports this learning process.

Students who are in the program can participate in all doctoral courses offered by the university. Through a mentoring programme, PhD students advise the Doctoral Track Master's students and share their experience with them. It is also common practice that the graduates of the Doctoral Track work as research assistants with their supervisor during their MA degree.

Results – impact

Students are supported and get prepared for their doctorate already during their Master's studies. After graduation, students can start directly with their doctorate since they have identified the topic for their thesis and acquired the necessary skills. Through employment as a research assistant which usually goes hand-in-hand with the successful completion of the programme and the Master's degree, the university benefits from capable employees.

Transferability – improvement

The program can be transferred to many universities, as it does not initially require any financial resources. The programme merely provides a framework for students to prepare for a doctorate while they are still in their Master's programme: students are informed of the possibility to do a doctorate through the programme, and then they shall discuss different options for employment or financing with their professor on a case-to-case basis.

Measures to enable transferability could be to set up a similar infrastructure and assign a responsible person who would take care of the organization of the courses but also the interests of the students. Measures to improve the initiative could include adjusting the criteria of the final grade for the BA degree, as it might be a reason why the program is not well received by students, and active promotion by the teaching staff by contacting students individually.

Further information

<https://www.leuphana.de/graduate-school/master/doctoral-track.html>