

Instructions for the exposé in order to be accepted as a doctoral candidate to the Doctoral Center for Social, Health and Economic Sciences

The exposé helps to prepare for the doctorate as it is the written plan of the own research project. An exposé features the working title, deduces research questions based on a comprehensive literature overview and may formulate hypotheses. It comprehensibly outlines the planned methods used to answer the research questions, respectively to test the hypotheses deduced from the questions. A realistic time and resource plan shall serve as an orientation.

The exposé shall be added to the application for acceptance as a doctoral student. After intensive mutual work on the exposé between the doctoral applicant and the supervisor (i.e. a professor who is a member of the Doctoral Center), it shall be accepted by both sides. The exposé is the basis of the Doctorate Agreement with the supervisor.

The exposé shall present what you would like to research in your dissertation as well as why and how you would like to research the question. According to the doctoral regulations – which do not yet exist in English –, the exposé shall consist of:

1. the **proposed topic**,
2. the **state of research**,
3. the **aims** and the **contribution of the dissertation**, and
4. the description of the **approach** and of the planned **methods**.

The following contents shall be presented in the exposé:

1. **Proposed topic:** working title of the dissertation, with explanations if necessary.
2. **State of research:** an extensive literature analysis concerning the theoretical background and the state of research.
3. **Approach and methods:**
 - Research questions and, possibly, deduced hypotheses.
 - Approach used to answer the research questions (planned methods).
 - Detailed time and resource plan (Which resources will be necessary for the research? Should be agreed upon with the supervisor).
4. **Aims and contribution of the dissertation:**
 - Motivation, problem statement and aim of your dissertation.
 - Relevance of the expected results and limitations of the study.
5. **Further information:**
 - Where necessary, clarifications on preparatory work for the dissertation project (e.g. a pilot study).
 - Where necessary, an account of additionally acquired relevant scientific knowledge and competencies as sufficient qualification for the planned dissertation project.

The exposé (without title, table of contents, bibliography and - if needed - annex, i.e. plain text) should consist of 25,000 to 35,000 characters (3,500 characters including spaces per page; font size 11 or 12, normal page margins, 1.5 line spacing) which equals seven to ten pages (in exceptional cases, the exposé can take up to 15 pages).