

Overview of PhD Philosophy Program

Entrance exam: only for EU, UK, EEA, Swiss citizens (All other citizens are admitted without taking an entrance exam.)

There is an entrance exam, which must be passed. It consists of a 4 hour 'pen and paper' written exam, and a 20 minute oral exam. You must prepare for the exam; as such you will be asked to home study 12 topics. You will be examined on 2 of these topics during the exam. As soon as you have sat the entrance exam, you will know if you have passed or not.

The upcoming entrance exams are mid June, 2021 and mid December, 2021.

Western language entrance exam

There is a Western language entrance exam, which must be passed; English, French, Italian, Spanish, and German are options. It is possible to sit for an exam in your native language.

Intake schedule

MA students graduating in March can start studies in October the same year; those graduating in July, in February the next year. You must graduate from your MA before you can apply for the PhD.

Scholarship application: EU, UK, EEA, Swiss citizens are eligible

When you apply for the PhD course, you apply for entrance + scholarship. So, if you are accepted, you will definitely receive a scholarship.

Stipend

If you receive the scholarship, you will receive a 500 leva monthly stipend for 36 months, including summer months. You will receive a 2000 leva bonus if you complete your dissertation and defense according to the course schedule. Other bonuses are available on early basis.

Medical coverage and retirement benefits

EU, UK, EEA, Swiss citizens receive a full medical coverage according to the BG health care system and retirement benefits according to the BG pension system.

Brexit

The last opportunity for UK citizens to apply within this scholarship program is March-April, 2021.

Duration

The PhD course is 6 semesters in total.

Supervision

Supervision begins on commencement of the 4th semester, this is when you start your PhD dissertation. Meeting your supervisor once a month is possible, but normally appointments are scheduled on a little less frequent basis: 2-3 times per semester. You can stay in regular contact by email.

If you are a student on the MA Philosophy course, you will have already met nearly all of the supervisors, as your course lecturers.

Course schedule

The first two semesters are similar to the philosophy masters degree. You take four courses per semester, thus 8 courses in total. In the third semester you have no courses, only reading revision, which requires approximately 20 hours home study per week for your 'doctoral minimum' exam, a 4 hour 'pen and paper' exam, with 4 topics given, sat at the end of this semester. You must pass the doctoral minimum exam to proceed.

From the 4th semester onwards, you will begin to write your dissertation, which requires 20-30 hours home study per week. If you wish, you may take a part-time job during this time. Some students do this. Although, if you receive the scholarship and stay in Sofia University dormitory accommodation, and live moderately, you should not need a part-time job to sustain yourself, the stipend is enough.

Course lecture attendance

If you are residing in Sofia, whilst it's strongly recommended and ideal for you to attend lectures, it's not compulsory.

PhD dissertation

The PhD dissertation is 200 pages, 60,000 words. It must not only be academic, but a scholarly work of a quality suitable to be published as a book, and acceptable to the academic community.

Sofia residence

Although it's preferable to reside Sofia, so you can attend lectures, you can reside anywhere in the world and still receive the 500 leva monthly stipend. However, you must attend Sofia to sit the entrance exam, the third semester 'doctoral minimum' exam, and to perform your dissertation defense.

Course registration fee

The registration fee is 1,900 leva, payable in two instalments:

1st instalment is payable on registration 950 leva

2nd instalment is payable after 6 months 950 leva

PhD research topic

You choose your research topic, it is not set. However, the research topic you choose must be within the knowledge range of the PhD dissertation supervisors. It's recommended you let Dr. Alexander Gungov know in advance what you are interested in researching, and he will tell you if there is a supervisor available for your proposed research topic.

Professional title

Once you have graduated from the PhD, your professional title will be: Doctor in Philosophy

Degree certificate

SU issues the degree certificate in English but it is considered to be a copy (it is marked with word 'supplement') while the original is in Bulgarian. You will also receive a degree transcript, which will be in English. Either the English or Bulgarian degree certificate is suitable to be used in an employment application setting.

If you would like to see the appearance and format of the certification, Mrs. Tania Vitanova (viatnova@phil.uni-sofia.bg) she might be able to e-mail you a scanned one.

Employment opportunities for graduates

There are exceptionally few jobs in academic philosophy. Thus, directly after graduating, it's very unlikely you will find employment in philosophy. This qualification increases your chances of gaining employment in fields that require critical, well-ordered thinking and communication, such as marketing, publishing, secondary school teaching, *etc.*

Currently enrolled PhD students

The total number of PhD students now is 27. 7 of them are resident in Sofia.

Success rate

Generally, most students graduate.

Degree recognition

The PhD is recognized in all countries around the world.

Can I take a year out during my PhD course?

Although undesirable and defiantly not ideal; yes, you can take a gap year during your PhD study.

PhD dissertation examples

There are a range of PhD theses available to read, in room 518 of the Philosophy building. Mrs. Tania Vitanova (viatnova@phil.uni-sofia.bg) can e-mail a sample if requested.

Delayed dissertation submission and defense

It's possible to submit a rough draft of your dissertation on the submission date—about a third of the final word count—and then complete, and defend your dissertation within a year of the submission date.

Attending upcoming PhD dissertation defenses

You can attend dissertation defenses. Either on campus in Sofia or via MS Teams platform. For more information, please contact Mrs. Tania Vitanova (viatnova@phil.uni-sofia.bg).