

**MUNI  
MENDEL  
DOCTORANDUS**



MUNI | MUNI | MUNI | MUNI | MUNI | RECETOX | CEITEC  
SCI | MED | PHARM | SPORT



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

# **MUNI MENDEL DOCTORANDUS AWARD**



# MUNI Mendel Doctorandus Award

Status, Governance, Implementation  
Final. Version 2 (2024-09-20)

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## Preface and objectives of the programme

MUNI MENDEL DOCTORANDUS (MMD) is a voluntary programme organized by Faculties and Institutes of Masaryk University (in the text described as „Faculties “):

- Faculty of Science (SCI MUNI),
- Faculty of Medicine (MED MUNI),
- Faculty of Pharmacy (PHARM MUNI),
- Faculty of Sports Studies (SPORT MUNI)
- CEITEC MU

MMD is based on generic Memorandum signed by representatives of the above-mentioned MUNI parts – „Memorandum o společném uskutečňování doktorských studijních programů a dalším vzdělávání doktorských studentů “.

The overarching objective of the MMD is to improve standards in PhD education at MUNI and Faculties involved. This is achieved through active involvement of doctoral students, their supervisors and corresponding doctoral boards who jointly and voluntarily accept additional duties and obligations by

- accepting **conditions of the European Doctorate** (Doctor Europaeus) which acknowledges the international dimension of the PhD
- organizing an **open and transparent international admission procedure** for PhD candidates
- actively participating in **mentoring programmes** and **additional trainings** advancing their own interdisciplinary education and transferable soft skills
- **defending PhD** within standard period of study i.e. within 4+1 years
- guaranteeing good financial conditions for living costs of PhD students

MMD is meant to be a prestigious brand (label) acknowledging and bringing additional credits to best PhD graduates as well as to their supervisors and doctoral programmes at MUNI. MMD label (including the recognition of the European Doctorate/MMD International Certificate) is provided as a supplement to the official MUNI doctoral diploma recognizing thus the significant assets of the student and PhD programme.

The expected impacts of MMD include:

- improved standards in PhD at MUNI,
- attracted the best available PhD candidates,
- advanced quality of science and quality of PhD graduates,
- improved preparation of PhD graduates for further careers
- better environment and infrastructure at MUNI supporting PhD studies
- strengthened collaboration among PhD students, supervisors, and doctoral programme

Awarded graduates as well as supervisors and doctoral programmes involved in MMD thus serve as an inspiration and example of good practices for other stakeholders, improving thus overall quality of PhD education at MUNI.

## Criteria for MUNI MENDEL DOCTORANDUS

The criteria listed in Table 1 are expected to be fulfilled when MMD - including European Doctorate label - is awarded. More details are provided below in the Implementation section

**Table 1:** Criteria for awarding of the MMD. Note: Fulfilling of criteria is fully required for students newly starting their PhD studies at MUNI in 2024 and later. For students already enrolled during the initiation of MMD programme in 2022 and 2023, ad hoc evaluation on individual basis is done by the MMD Committee.

Criterion	Description	Details	Notes
<b>Preconditions – general</b>			
Open and transparent international admission procedure	The PhD position is advertised internationally, the admission committee organizes competitive evaluation and selection of the candidates. The admission process is conducted in English.	The process is organized by respective doctoral programme. The proof of international advertisement and procedure is provided in the <a href="#">Application dossier</a> .	
<b>Preconditions – supervisors</b>			
Active in research publishing, lead extramural grant(s), positive record of supervised students, active in own life-long learning and mentoring	MMD Committee reviews the materials listed in the “Details” column on annual basis. The committee evaluates alignment with MUNI principles <sup>2</sup> , and agrees on inclusion of a supervisor into the list of “MMD Certified Supervisors”.	Materials reviewed by the MMD Committee: 1- managerial data from IS MUNI (publications, successfully graduated PhD students) <sup>3</sup> 2- information on supervisor’s activities from semestral MMD reports submitted by a Student 3- ad hoc evidence provided from doctoral boards or Faculty administrations.	Meeting between MMD Committee and supervisor is organized in case of disputes or negative evaluations

<sup>1</sup> MUNI Standards are available at the link below. Doctoral Boards are primarily responsible for assignment, monitoring and advancing quality of supervisors’ work, [https://is.muni.cz/auth/do/mu/Uredni\\_deska/Predpisy\\_MU/Masarykova\\_univerzita/Ostatni\\_dokumenty/Methodika/odbor\\_vyzkumu/metodicky\\_list\\_c\\_1\\_2021\\_zasady\\_a\\_doporuceni\\_pro\\_efektivni\\_a\\_kvalitni\\_doktorske\\_s/](https://is.muni.cz/auth/do/mu/Uredni_deska/Predpisy_MU/Masarykova_univerzita/Ostatni_dokumenty/Methodika/odbor_vyzkumu/metodicky_list_c_1_2021_zasady_a_doporuceni_pro_efektivni_a_kvalitni_doktorske_s/)

<sup>2</sup> <https://muni.cz/go/phd-data>. Additional information confirmed by Faculty representative (e.g. letter from vice-dean) is also accepted.

<b>European Doctorate conditions (<a href="https://eua.eu/">https://eua.eu/</a>)<sup>4</sup></b>			
International secondment for 3 months minimum	<p>The European Doctorate must, in part, have been prepared during a research internship period of at least three months in another European country. For European Doctorate, 3 months of continuous stay abroad are standard.</p> <p>A student undertaking a placement abroad in a non-European country cannot be formally entitled to a European Doctorate but is awarded with "MMD International Certificate"</p>	<p>Organized by a student and supervisor. Secondments must be recorded in IS MUNI via standardized existing procedures at Faculties.</p> <p>Duties to participate in interdisciplinary and soft skill trainings are waived during secondment abroad.</p> <p>Participation at workshops, summer schools, conferences etc. is not considered to be eligible secondment.</p>	<p>In exceptional cases, 3 months duration can be combined from few shorter research stays related to thesis. The student may request an exception from the dean of respective Faculty.</p> <p>During the semester when student is abroad, enrolment in <b>MMD Course</b> is still obligatory.</p>
Oral thesis presentation and defence	<p>Presentation and PhD defence are conducted in English. Reports on thesis (reviews) are submitted by two evaluators who are independent from MUNI. Reviewers should be from university or research institute from different European country other than CZ or SK. At least one member of jury (committee for PhD defence) is from European higher education institution outside of CZ or SK.</p>	<p>Organized by a doctoral board.</p>	<p>Specific instructions are provided in a separate document (06_ <b>Guidance on issuing MMD International Certificate / European Doctorate</b>)</p>
<b>Duties of a student</b>			
Participation in interdisciplinary training activities	<p>Student participates at activities/seminars - minimum duration of 8 hours per semester is required. Content of the training shall be research or technology development. It shall be outside of the main study focus or research direction of a student. Typical profile includes, for example, 8</p>	<p>MMD administrator provides an offer of MMD certified events, participation of students is recorded during semester. Student also submit <b>Student's semestral MMD report</b>, where he/she can claim</p>	<p>Courses that are obligatory in the Individual Study Plan are not MMD eligible for respective student. Participation in</p>

<sup>3</sup>Note to MUNI administration: Study documents (SZŘ) should be aligned with international standards (do not mention that supervisor is a member of PhD evaluation committee)

	interdisciplinary seminars (1 - 1.5 h each) or other activities such as secondments in research infrastructural facilities, interdisciplinary summer schools etc.	participation in other courses (within or outside of MUNI)  Courses and interdisciplinary seminars specifically recommended to MMD students are listed on the webpage.	specific programmes such as CEITEC Bridge Fund is eligible. Courses of English language or similar are not eligible.
Participation in transferable, soft skills training activities	Student participates in minimum 1 activity or training per academic year corresponding to minimum of 8 hours. Typical examples include a day workshop, two half-day seminars, full semester soft skills course offered at university or other relevant.	MMD Committee evaluates this criterion on a yearly basis (academic year), various trainings in both semesters can be combined.	Students provide detail in the Semestral MMD report. Student can ask for a waiver in given semester if he/she participated in extensive soft skill activities during previous semester.

e.g. letter from vice-dean) is also accepted.

## Governance and management

MMD programme is jointly organized by Faculties involved. Following principles, bodies and task owners are involved in the governance and management of MMD programme:

### Technical principles

- Primary language of communication of MMD programme is English.
- Team in MS Teams is established and used as the primary resource for materials, documents, and communication of MMD programme bodies

### Organizational principles

- MMD programme is primarily operated from Faculty of Science, office for Doctoral Studies with involvement and support from all other Faculties - MED, CEITEC MU, SPORTS, PHARM.
- Daily management is assured by **MMD Administrator**
- Programme is supervised by **MMD Committee** consisting of vice-deans and scientific secretary representing CEITEC. MMD Committee reports to deans of individual Faculties and to director of CEITEC.
- **MMD Board** consists of Heads of Doctoral programmes.

**MMD Administrator** is dedicated person, Early-Stage Researchers' Support Specialist at SCI MUNI who coordinates with other Faculties and is responsible for regular management with following responsibilities and duties:

- Developing and updating the information and materials at MMD web and Teamsfolder
- Communicating and coordinating with PhD administrators at other Faculties
- Organization of MMD procedures for enrolled students
- Preparing materials and working reports for MMD Committee
- Other support to MMD and daily management

**MMD Committee** has following organization and responsibilities

- Regularly meets twice a year (start of each semester) with following regular tasks:
  - Discussion and approval of the **Application summary report** prepared by the Administrator (summary of new applications), approval of new enrolments into the MMD programme
  - Discussion and approval of the **MMD semestral summary report** prepared by the Administrator (summary after each semester), discussion of eventual programme updates
  - Evaluation and updating the **List of MMD Certified Supervisors**, eventual corrections of the list
- **Chair of the Committee** (elected/approved on annual basis) moderates meetings, together with Administrator presents the materials for decisions of the Committee. Chair can call for ad hoc meeting/teleconference or start communication via emails or in MS Teams in case of relevant, important, and urgent needs.

**MMD Board** consists of Heads of Doctoral programmes that support students participating in MMD programme.

## MMD Board

- is invited by the Chair of the MMD Committee to meet on annual basis
- serves an advisory and consultation body to the MMD Committee assuring thus continuous improvements and alignment of MMD with practices at Faculties and Doctoral programmes.

## Processes and implementation

This section describes in brief major processes how is the MMD programme implemented at MUNI.

### Advertisement and information sharing

- [Information hub](#) – is maintained with all necessary information and guidance available to students, supervisors, and doctoral boards. Web structure and content:
  - Overview, intro to MMD
  - News, Success stories, awarded graduates
  - Why to apply – what will you earn?
  - How to apply?
  - Instructions – for enrolled students, supervisors, doctoral boards
- Information is also directly provided to new applicants for PhD studies (*links are established from MUNI web interface for new applicants*)
- Vice-deans organize ad hoc meetings with Heads of doctoral boards introducing the MMD
- Following the introductory meetings, emails are sent to supervisors with reference to web page and doctoral boards
- Newsletters and emails are used at individual Faculties

### Applications to MMD programme are prepared and submitted by doctoral students

- Each student interested in MMD prepares a structured **Application dossier** and submits it as an application. Structure of the dossier differs for new students starting PhD studies at MUNI and students who already study at MUNI and want to join the MMD:
- Template documents are prepared and are available for download from web (see annex)
- Deadlines for submissions – two times a year. Exact dates are announced at MMD webpage.

	<b>MMD application template for newly starting PhD students</b>	<b>MMD application template for students already at MUNI during MMD launch</b>
Motivation letter (prepared by the applicant)	Yes	Yes
Documentation of the open and transparent international admission procedure	Yes <sup>5</sup>	Not relevant
Description of previous activities related to	Not relevant	Yes

<sup>4</sup> Format of the documentation of the admission procedure will be specified later. It is expected that Doctoral Boards will be responsible for providing this information.



interdisciplinary and soft skills training		
Letter from supervisor, support to student, interest to support MMD	Yes	Yes
Letter from doctoral board, support to student, interest to support MMD	Yes	Yes

### Evaluation of students' applications and enrolment

- MMD Administrator with Committee Chair compiles the applications and together with administrators of PhD studies at individual Faculties check the completeness of individual dossiers
- MMD Administrator then submits the **Application summary** to MMD Committee who checks and decides on actual enrolment of individual students
- MMD Administrator then confirms to the approved applicants/students that they can officially enrol to MMD
- Approved students actually enrol by signing up a specific course MUNI MENDEL DOCTORANUS (Code XD007 in IS MUNI)
- **Confirmation of enrolment** to MMD is issued by an email letter to each enrolled student

### Monitoring of student's progress

- Progress of enrolled students is monitored continuously through XD007 course in ISMUNI:
  - o Participation of students in interdisciplinary and soft skills activities offered through MMD programme (courses, seminars, lectures) is directly monitored by Administrator (8 per semester required; participation is directly recorded by IS MUNI in the XD007 Course – "Docházka")
  - o After each semester, student prepares a brief structured **Student's semestral report** and submits it to the XD007 Course in IS MUNI – "Odevzdávárna" ("Homework Vaults"). [Texts prepared by a student for formal reporting of their study progress (Semestrální náplň / Term content) can be used for MMD reporting]
  - o Student's semestral report also includes statement from supervisor (email from supervisor copy-pasted to the report)
- Administrator checks the individual reports and prepares a **Programme semestral summary**, which is evaluated by the MMD Committee who decides
  - o Students with good progress are then encouraged by Administrator to continue (enrol to the MMD Course in following semester)
  - o Students with poor performance who do not fulfil criteria or communication is lost are signed off from MMD programme
- Duty of minimum 3-month secondment abroad is checked by registration of the stay abroad in IS MUNI (standard procedures at Faculties). During the stay abroad obligations to participate in interdisciplinary and soft skills courses are waived. Even during his/her stay abroad, student register the MMD Course and provide **Semestral report**, in which secondment abroad is described

### Monitoring of supervisors' quality

- Supervisor provides feedback on semestral basis (student's Semestral report)
- MMD Committee evaluates performance of supervisors at their bi-annual meetings and updates the [List of MMD Certified Supervisors](#)

### Finishing of the programme, issuing MMD International Certificate / European Doctorate

- Student who successfully participated in the MMD programme and is ready to submit his/her PhD thesis for defence, consults with the Administrator formal finishing steps
- [Guidance on issuing International MMD Certificate / European Doctorate](#) is provided to all stakeholders (student, supervisor, and doctoral board)
  - o How to organize European Doctorate defence
  - o How to wrap-up into the [Final Certificate Application](#)
- Student submits the [Final certificate Application](#)
- MMD Committee approves the Final MMD Certificate Application and issues the [International MMD Certificate / European Doctorate](#)
- International MMD Certificate /European Doctorate is issued to student as addition to his/her PhD Diploma.
- Awarding ceremony is organized annually as a part of PhD Day

### Additional issues & bonuses at Faculties

- Faculties have individual arrangements regarding additional awards or bonuses for successful graduates, Certified Supervisors or Doctoral Boards, which may include, namely:
  - o additional scholarship to successful MMD Graduate
  - o additional financial reward (bonus) to supervisor of successful MMD Graduates
  - o additional financial reward (bonus) to Doctoral board representative(s) involved in support to or development of MMD programme

### Annexes – documents, forms, templates

**List of the templates.** Documents are available for download from MMD webpage.

01\_Application Dossier

02\_Application Summary for MMD Committee

03\_Confirmation of Enrolment sent via email

04\_Student's MMD Semestral Report

05\_Programme Semestral Summary Report for MMD Committee

06\_Guidance on issuing MMD International Certificate /European Doctorate

07\_Final MMD Certificate Application

08\_MMD International Certificate

List of MMD Certified Supervisors