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The KIT – An institute unique in Germany

Karlsruhe House of Young Scientists (KHYS) – A central institution for promotion of young scientists

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2.3.2 Matriculation as doctoral student

Matriculation as doctoral student at KIT is limited to persons who are not employed full-time in any profession or occupation. Doctoral students apply for matriculation after confirmation of the admission as doctoral student by the Students' Services. The term of enrolment depends on the maximum duration of the doctoral studies laid down in the doctorate regulations (between three and five years, with the option of prolongation).

Matriculation at KIT entitles you to

- receive a KIT Card.
- receive a free-of-charge KVV (Karlsruhe Transport Association) ticket for use in the KVV transport network every day from 6 pm to 5 am as well as on weekends and holidays.
- obtain the KVV Studikarte.¹
- make use of the services of Studentenwerk Karlsruhe e.g., canteen, cafeteria, and sports discounts as well as psychotherapeutic counseling by Psychotherapeutische Beratungsstelle (PBS).
- participate in one free-of-charge language course per semester.

Once you are matriculated,

- you are insured against third-party risk.
- you are insured against accidents (on the premises of KIT as well as on the way to and from KIT).

Without KIT employment contract, matriculation is recommended for insurance reasons. More information on accident and liability insurances at Studentenwerk Karlsruhe.²

¹ The "Studikarte" entitles you to use the KVV transport network throughout the day. It is valid for six months and can be purchased for about €136 at the International Student Center of Studentenwerk (in the foyer of the canteen, Adenauerring 7), at the KVV service centers, and at DB train stations.

² Please note that matriculated students are not entitled to unemployment compensations (Arbeitslosengeld I or Arbeitslosengeld II).

Doctoral students can matriculate any time. The **application for matriculation** is found on the website of the Students' Services. Please print and fill in form and either drop in to submit or mail by post along with the remaining documents to Students' Services. The following **documents** must be submitted in addition to the filled-in application for matriculation:

- Certificate of qualification for university matriculation, master's, diploma or state examination certificate.
- Confirmation of acceptance as doctoral student by the respective department.
- Copy of identification card.
- Certificate of health insurance.
- If applicable, proof of scholarship or employment at KIT.
- Proof of payment of the semester fee.
- ID picture.

Matriculation of doctoral students

[KIT Servicezentrum Studium und Lehre: Studierendenservice](#)

Welcome Desk

Campus Süd

Kaiserstr. 12

76131 Karlsruhe

Phone: +49 (0)721 608-47483 or -42952

The semester fee amounts to about € 130³ and is composed of the administrative expenses and the KVV ticket expenses. Please note that, as a rule, matriculated doctoral students are not entitled to reduced health insurance fees.

2.4 Financing your doctoral studies

The KHYS 2013 doctoral students' interview revealed that 83% of the doctoral students interviewed work at least half-time. Besides KIT, external research institutions and companies offer PhD positions. Scholarships, through which about 8% of the interviewees finance their doctoral studies, are another option.

³ Karlsruher Institut für Technologie (KIT): Beitrags- und Gebührenübersicht, www.kit.edu/studieren/8302.php, last accessed: 03/2014.

Entire doctoral studies financing schemes are rarely known from the beginning, and scholarships or employment contracts might expire before doctoral studies have been completed. Please keep track of your personal financial situation and make sure that transitional or further financing are provided for at an early stage. It is quite usual to finance doctoral studies from different funds and baskets. In Germany, only few doctoral students can rely on just one type of financing⁴ throughout the entire period of their doctoral studies.

Employment or scholarship?

Both of these two financing models have advantages and disadvantages that must be considered individually. The differences lie in security as provided by social and employment law and in the (working) time you have available for doctoral studies.

During **employment**, you enjoy more adequate social protection than during a scholarship. You pay for health insurance, social and old-age pension insurance and profit from the legal provisions as regards pregnancy and parental leave. You are entitled to paid vacations, continued remuneration in the case of sickness⁵, and unemployment compensations (Arbeitslosengeld I)⁶ after expiration of employment. While you are employed, however, other obligations such as teaching, administrative duties, and organizational tasks will as a rule prevent you from using all your time for your doctoral studies.⁷ Prior to signing your contract, please discuss how much time you can spend on your doctoral studies and on other tasks.

Scholarships as a rule are awarded to excellent graduates and are a special honor to receive. With a scholarship, you can normally concentrate primarily on your doctoral studies and may need less time for completing them. The best opportunity for obtaining a scholarship is when you apply during the first year of your doctoral studies. Only few foundations support advanced doctoral projects, and there are hardly any completion scholarships. The scholarship amount is fixed by the scholarship donor and in most cases is between € 800 and € 1,800. Since doctoral scholarships are intended to promote research, they are usually exempted from tax.⁸ Please note, however, that fees for health

⁴ Cf. Würmann, Carsten: Finanzierung der Promotion. In: Koepernik, Claudia (ed.): GEW-Handbuch Promovieren mit Perspektive. Ein Ratgeber von und für DoktorandInnen, Bielefeld 2006, pp. 125-155, p. 125.

⁵ Some scholarship donors e.g., the Landesgraduiertenförderung (State Postgraduate Scholarship Program), in addition provide regulations for continued sickness payments. For details, please contact the respective scholarship donors.

⁶ Unemployment compensations (Arbeitslosengeld I) can be applied for provided that during the last two years the employee was employed for at least twelve months in a job subject to social insurance contributions.

⁷ This does not apply to doctoral contracts provided by the large-scale research sector.

⁸ Cf. Income Tax Act § 3 No. 44.

and long-term care insurance must be paid from the scholarship money. There are no fees to be paid for old-age pension insurance and unemployment insurance. This means, however, that you are not entitled to unemployment compensations (Arbeitslosengeld I) after scholarship termination.

2.4.1 Employment at KIT

Research assistants

In addition to their own research work, research assistants have (administrative) tasks and assist their supervisors in research and teaching through lecturing, guiding students, evaluating written exams and term papers, organizing conferences, etc. In this way, research assistants are closely integrated in the university structures and gain comprehensive insight into the tasks of a university. Research assistant positions, half-time to full-time, depending on the department or institute, are usually paid in accordance with TV-LE 13⁹. Please note that research assistant contracts are subject to the maximum fixed term contract period according to the Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz (WissZeitVG).

Please do not hesitate to contact the KIT Human Resources Service Unit or the KIT Staff Council should you have questions concerning employment. For vacancies for doctoral students, please refer to Job and Career on the KIT website. For further information on salaries, please refer to Tarifgemeinschaft Deutscher Länder.

Doctoral contracts at KIT's large-scale research sector

Doctoral students at KIT's large-scale research sector are entitled to obtaining so-called doctoral contracts where they are employed exclusively to pursue their doctoral studies and are not responsible for any other tasks at the respective institute. Payment under such contracts is in accordance with TVöD 13¹⁰. Depending on the department or institute, the doctoral students are paid 50% or 75% including a 25% allowance for profit. Doctoral contracts too are subject to the maximum fixed term contract period according to the Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz (WissZeitVG).

⁹ TV-LE 13 - Public Sector Collective Agreement on Länder, salary class 13.

¹⁰ TVöD 13 – Public sector tariff rules- salary class 13.

In the case of a full-day position paid in accordance with TV-LE 13 or TVöD 13, the gross monthly salary amounts to approximately € 3,250.

Student research assistants at KIT

With about € 14/h earned by students with a master's degree or diploma, positions as student research assistants¹¹ pay less than positions as research assistants. As a student research assistant earning more than € 450/month, your employment is subject to social insurance contribution and your health and social insurances will be covered by the employer. All work as student research assistant exceeding 25% of the normal working time¹² will be credited against the maximum fixed term contract period according to the Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz (WissZeitVG) applicable to universities and research institutions.

Maximum fixed term contract period according to WissZeitVG

Adopting the WissZeitVG Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz (law on fixed-term contracts in higher education and research) of April 12, 2007, the legislator has enacted temporary contracts of employment without explicitly stated reasons for scientific and artistic personnel except professors. Scientific personnel is defined as research assistants, doctoral students with doctoral contracts, and student research assistants. In accordance with WissZeitVG, scientific employees at German universities and research institutions mainly funded by the government hence may be employed temporarily without explicitly stated reasons within up to six years (nine years in the context of degrees in medicine) both before and after the conferral of the doctorate.¹³ All of the above-described employment contracts covering more than one fourth of the normal working time¹⁴ shall be credited against the permissible six-year periods of temporary contracts before or after the conferral of the doctorate. Periods of time spent doing the doctorate, also those without employment contract with a university or research institution, shall in principle be credited. Temporary-contract periods prior to the completion of studies are not credited against the period of temporary contract. Possibly, temporary contracts of employment can be concluded beyond this period of time.

¹¹ Student research assistants can be employed for eight to 85 hours per month at universities and research institutions.

¹² The normal working time is 39.5 hours/week.

¹³ When rearing children under the age of 18, this period will be extended (by two years per child).

¹⁴ See fn. 12.

2.4.2 External employment

In addition to the above concepts, it is common practice to finance doctoral studies through PhD positions in external (research) institutions and companies. Whereas research institutions pay on the basis of TVöD, companies use individual payment schemes. Please keep track of the time you are able to spend on your doctoral studies and on maintaining regular contacts with the supervisors at KIT ([External Doctorate](#)).

2.4.3 Doctoral grants

Doctoral grants are awarded through the state postgraduate scholarship program of the Land Baden-Wuerttemberg, through doctoral programs, organizations for the promotion of young talent ([Begabtenförderungswerke](#)), and other external foundations. Selected doctoral grants are listed on the [KHYS website](#) and in online scholarship data bases such as [Stipendienlotse](#).

Some scholarship donors, moreover, offer their scholarship holders specific framework programs as well as further support in the form of e.g., research cost allowances, travel grants, and advanced education and network programs. A [synopsis](#) or research plan as well as [time and work schedules](#) are often required for application. At the time of application, you must, in addition, have been admitted to doctoral studies by one of the KIT departments.

If you plan to do a **sideline job** beside your scholarship, please inform yourself by asking the foundation whether, how long and for how much salary you are allowed to work without negative effects on the scholarship.

Members in the KHYS network are informed regularly via e-mail about vacant scholarships.

Starting doctoral studies

- **Know the doctorate regulations**

The doctorate regulations can be downloaded at [KIT Departments](#).

- **Specify the subject of your doctoral dissertation**

- **Individual doctoral studies: Find supervisors entitled to supervise doctoral studies**
Doctoral programs (graduate schools and research training groups) usually assign doctoral students to a team of supervisors.
- **Ensure appropriate financing**
Vacancies for doctoral students at KIT
Scholarship Counseling at KHYS
- **Admission as doctoral student by the KIT Department**
- **Online registration in the KHYS Network**
- **Matriculation at KIT**

During doctoral studies

- **Participation in conferences, meetings, symposia (e.g. KIT PhD Symposium), etc.**
- **Publication of papers and other contributions**
- **Use of the KHYS programs**
- **(Personal) exchange with other doctoral students**

Completing the doctorate

- **Submission of doctoral dissertation and initiation of doctoral examination procedure**
- **Initiation of doctoral examination procedure by the KIT Department**

The doctoral examination procedure comprises the written examination, the evaluation of the dissertation, the oral examination, and the publication of the dissertation.

- **Evaluation of the dissertation**
- **Oral examination**
- **Publication of the dissertation**
- **Submission of depositary copies to the KIT Library and the respective KIT Department**
- **Receipt of PhD certificate**