

INDIVIDUAL STUDY PLAN (ISP)

WHAT IS ISP?

The course of study is **governed by an individual study plan, which is binding and its fulfilment is obligatory** (see Article 30 of [the CBA](#)). The individual study plan sets out the **conditions of study and the fulfilment of key obligations**, in particular the preparation of the dissertation, publishing activities, participation in conferences and professional forums, research internships, a plan for the development of teaching skills, demonstration of language competences, professional courses and other forms of theoretical training, study milestones and other requirements related to the focus of the programme or set by the subject council. The ISP is administered through an application in the MU IS.

HOW ISP IS CREATED?

The individual study plan and its modifications are drawn up **jointly by the student and the supervisor**. Subsequently, **the supervisor** submits it to **the departmental board for approval** (which also approves any subsequent changes). When drawing up the ISP, the compulsory subjects of the programme as accredited or other policies approved by the relevant subject board must be respected.

*deadlines: the student, after consultation with the supervisor, enters the IS by **20 February of the first year of study***

*the supervisor confirms in IS by **28 February of the first year of study**, then submits to the departmental board*

Note: Part of the overall ISP is the definition of the "**research focus of the dissertation**". This does not necessarily coincide word for word with the final title of the dissertation. The title should not deviate from the approved research focus, but may be a concretization of it. Therefore, it may be advisable to choose the research focus specifically, so that it is clear what the student will be doing, but leaving some room for specifying the final dissertation title later (by the end of the 6th semester)

Term: Research focus is established for non-habilitated supervisors in September of the first semester¹

The semester content (= plan for the following semester) of the approved ISP is proposed by the student and approved by the supervisor (not by the departmental board). Typically, for better clarity, the semester plan of activities will be presented in the following structure: *a) preparation of the dissertation, b) publications, c) conferences, d) development of pedagogical competences, e) other*. If certain activities go beyond the horizon of one semester, this will be indicated in the semester plan (e.g. preparation of a major publication which will be submitted to the press in the following semester). Some components of the usual structure (e.g. conferences) may not be fulfilled in each semester by a specific obligation, unless such an obligation is implied by the overall ISP or by the content of the courses enrolled. In particular, for *full-time* learners, arranged teaching activities and other activities, including arranged attendance at the training site, are also detailed in the 'other' section.

deadlines: according to the announced [schedule of](#) the PrF MU academic year for DSP

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FULL-TIME AND COMBINED STUDIES

Due to the significant difference in the monthly stipend, **the mandatory components of the ISP set for full-time students may vary**. They may be determined by the Board of Governors in accordance with Article 30(3)(i) in conjunction with Article 27(5)(a) of the CPR. In particular, this may concern **'pedagogical**

¹ The research focus must be approved by the departmental board. In the case of a non-habilitated supervisor, the person of the supervisor for the specific research focus must also be approved by the Research Council. In order for the supervisor to be able to supervise the student in the first semester of study, this should preferably happen at the first meeting in October (i.e. the first Tuesday in October) - hence the relatively early deadline for the research proposal. The reason for this is precisely the need for approval by the relevant authorities.

competences', but also quantitative and qualitative requirements for presentations **at conferences** and requirements for **publication**. Obligations set by the Board for full-time study may also take the form of study 'milestones' within the meaning of Articles 30(5) and 27(5)(c) of the CPR.

HOW ISP PERFORMANCE ASSESSED?

The performance of the ISP **is evaluated by the supervisor each semester** and by the supervisor together with the **departmental board (committee) at least at annual intervals**. The result of the evaluation is recorded via the **IS MU** application.

*deadlines: according to the announced [schedule of](#) the Pr MU academic year for DSP
evaluation by the departmental board: at any time, at least once a year (e.g. in September)*

In the event of **unsatisfactory fulfilment of** the ISP, at the initiative of the supervisor, the departmental board may propose to the dean **the reduction or withdrawal of the scholarship** awarded under the MU Scholarship Regulations (see Article 30 of [the Regulations](#) for more details).

If the evaluation of the study shows that the fulfilment of the ISP **is seriously violated**, this may be grounds for **termination of the study** (see Article 30 of [the CPR](#) for more details).

THE ROLE OF THE TRAINER IN RELATION TO ISP - TRAINER IN PARTICULAR:

- **draws up together with the student** his/her study plan - overall and semester content
- **each semester evaluates** the student's study **progress** and fulfillment of the individual study plan,
- **in agreement** with the student, **submits** the student's proposal for the **planned research focus of** the dissertation **to the departmental board** (in the case of non-habilitated supervisors, on call *in September of the first semester*) - to be notified to the Doctoral Studies Department,
- **supervises the** student's **professional preparation** and **methodically manages** the preparation of his/her dissertation,

THE ROLE OF THE STUDENT IN RELATION TO ISP - STUDENT IN PARTICULAR:

- cooperates with the trainer in determining the overall ISP, drafts the ISP proposal
- **proposes the semester ISP to the supervisor** within the set deadlines and responds to any corrections made by the supervisor (while the student gradually improves his/her ability to schedule his/her duties in time and to plan individual activities in a meaningful way)
- duly and timely **fulfil the obligations** set out in the ISP
- **provides feedback on the fulfilment of** semester assignments within set deadlines
- **reflects the evaluation** received from the supervisor, or the disciplinary board (committee) in the further development and implementation of the ISP

THE ROLE OF THE DISCIPLINARY COUNCIL IN RELATION TO THE ISP - THE DISCIPLINARY COUNCIL IN PARTICULAR:

- **approves the overall** ISP of each student
- **assess** each student's ISP **performance** at least **once a year**
- (for clarification: the subject board is not obliged to *approve* the semester ISP, this is the responsibility of the supervisor; the subject board has the possibility to comment on them if it deems it appropriate, it sees their content in the IS - this is more important for the *annual evaluation* - in addition to the overall ISP, it is mainly based on the semester ISP and its evaluation by the student and the supervisor, to which it also has access)

WHAT DOES THE OVERALL INDIVIDUAL STUDY PLAN LOOK LIKE?

The overall ISP is a general document containing mainly

- **research focus of the dissertation,**
- A plan for **fulfilling key responsibilities** (e.g. **dissertation** preparation, **publications, conferences, internships, teaching competencies**),
- a basic **selection of electives** (e.g. core electives).

The specifics are only made in the semester outlines (the "next semester plan") - these need to be given due consideration. Moreover, much is addressed by compulsory courses, which themselves largely predetermine the study plan. There is no need to rewrite them in the overall ISP unless they are also specified.

However, the overall ISP is still an **important document** that clearly **declares the content of study** at the beginning of the study so that there are no unnecessary surprises later on.

EXAMPLE OF TOTAL ISP in structure by IS:

(the text is ready for individual modification according to the agreement with the supervisor within the limits set by the branch council)

Dissertation:

Research focus of the dissertation:

Activities aimed at the creation of the dissertation are carried out according to the schedule in the semester fillings.

The semester outlines respect the following schedule:

- refinement of **the subject and aim of the thesis** (within the approved research focus) by the end of the second semester; presentation and discussion of the subject and aim of the thesis at a discussion meeting with subsequent incorporation of the feedback received
- elaboration of the **"thesis statement"**, its **opposition** (also by persons other than the supervisor) and subsequent **discussion** at a meeting by the end of the 4th semester²; elaboration of the introductory chapter of the dissertation
- elaboration of a substantial part of the dissertation (e.g. one or more complete chapters), presentation and discussion of **the intermediate outputs** defined in the semester outlines at a broader discussion meeting by the end of the 6th semester;
- **pre-defence of the finished draft** of the thesis by the end of the **7th** semester
- **submission of the finished thesis** by the end of the eighth semester

Other specific tasks/procedures that go beyond individual semesters:

Publications³:

Combined form of study: the learner will produce publication outputs in order to fulfil the obligations arising from the relevant courses as specified in IS: <https://is.muni.cz/auth/el/law/podzim2020/DIPUB/index.qwarp>. The manuscript of the first publication will be submitted by the end of the 2nd semester. A manuscript of at least a Category B publication will be submitted no later than the end of Semester 5.

A more detailed schedule of publication activities will be given in the semester fillings.

Full-time form of study: the student will produce publication outputs in order to fulfil the obligations arising from the relevant courses as specified in IS: <https://is.muni.cz/auth/el/law/podzim2020/DIPUB/index.qwarp> and to meet the publication standards set by the discipline council for full-time form of study. A manuscript of the first publication of at least category C will be submitted by the end of the second semester. Additional manuscripts of at least category B will be accepted for publication no later than the end of the 4th, 6th, and 7th semesters.

A more detailed schedule of publication activities will be given in the semester fillings.

Conferences and professional forums:

² At least one milestone consisting of a peer-reviewed presentation of the progress of the dissertation to date is mandatory according to the DSP study guidelines. For full-time students, it may be appropriate to include this milestone at the end of the second semester.

³ In all study programmes except ICT, ICTA and INTPA, the categories of publications A,B,C are distinguished in the performance of publication activities. In the other programmes, they are not formally distinguished, however, from a qualitative point of view, they are also informally based on principle.

Combined form of study: the student continuously presents partial results of his/her scientific activity at discussion forums according to the semester content and thus aims to develop the necessary scientific and presentation skills. Demonstration of sufficient mastery of these skills will be demonstrated by active participation in at least one (foreign?) conference of significance in the field, the selection of which will be approved by the supervisor.
More specific specifications (optional):

Full-time form of study: the student continuously presents partial results of his/her scientific activities at discussion forums according to the semester content and thus aims to develop the necessary scientific and presentation skills, to the extent and quality specified by the discipline council for full-time study. Participation in a quality conference is expected, in principle, once per academic year.
Demonstration of sufficient mastery of presentation skills will be done by active participation in at least a foreign conference of significance in the field, the selection of which will be approved by the supervisor

Theoretical preparation:

The student completes all courses that are **compulsory** in the study programme.

Of the compulsory **and elective** courses, the student will take the following courses:⁴

- in the 1st semester DSPVP01 Legal Science and Legal Research - Methodological Approaches and DSPVP02 Working with Sources and Principles of Publication
- in the 2nd semester DSPVP03 Presentation and Pedagogical Skills
- Subject X (and no later than the end of the 2nd year)
- Subject Y (and no later than the end of Year 3)

Other professional and methodological subjects are chosen by the student according to his/her own preference.

Internships and international cooperation:

The student is obliged to complete a foreign internship of a cumulative duration of at least 30 days within the relevant DIINTER Internationalisation course⁵ and to register it in accordance with the guidelines: <https://www.law.muni.cz/content/cs/student/pruvodce-studiem/doktorske-studium/#item57198>

(Note: If there is no specific idea of an internship yet, it can only be stated in this general way. If a specific idea exists, it can be stated - both the destination and the expected timetable. The sectoral council may also define the requirements in more detail.)

Pedagogical competences:

Combined form of study The student fulfils the obligations set by the supervisor within the framework of the relevant compulsory courses registered in the MUNI IS, the content of which is usually specified in the semester ISP.

(optional) Recommendation to take a course? Moving towards a more specific goal?

Full-time form of study:

The student will complete the course DSPVP03 Presentation and Pedagogical Skills, and any other courses designated by the university to develop pedagogical skills (the so-called pedagogical minimum).

The learner fulfils the obligations set by the supervisor within the framework of the relevant compulsory courses registered in the MUNI IS, the content of which is usually specified in the semester ISP. The student also fulfils the obligations set by the supervisor and the head of the supervisor's department, especially in the provision of examinations, defences and committees organised by the department, and, according to the instructions of the study department, in the provision of state examinations organised by the faculty.

Language competence:

The student takes the compulsory language courses prescribed by the study plan.

Of the elective language courses: ... (optional)

Transferable skills and career development:

The student will use the offer of faculty, university (e.g. CERPEK) and external courses to develop his/her other skills, including e.g. development of communication and presentation skills, time management, teamwork, leadership, data analysis, work with artificial intelligence, scientific ethics, etc.

⁴ Study plans for individual programmes are available [here](#).

⁵ For students of the ICT programme, the equivalent of "D34PIT01 Foreign Internship" applies:

(Note: Depending on the agreement with the supervisor and the recommendation of the departmental board, specific transferable & soft skills in which the doctoral student will develop with regard to his/her future career plan as a doctoral graduate may also be listed here.)

Other duties:

For full-time learners, e.g. agreement on attendance at the training site. Assistance in organizing departmental conferences, summer school, PhD workshops.

Prerequisite participation in a specific project (approximately when and what project?)

Consultation doctoral student - supervisor

Presentation form of study: the student reports on the progress of the dissertation project and publication activities **at least once a month/twice a month**. As a rule, **there is an in-person consultation with the supervisor on the last Friday of each month / every second Friday at 9:00 a.m. (except July and August)**.

The student and the supervisor agree to reply to each other's email messages within five days as a rule (except for illness or periods of extended absence, of which they inform each other in advance).

Written materials for consultation are always sent by the student well in advance so that they can be read before the consultation.

Combined form of study: the student reports on the progress of the dissertation project and publication activities **at least once a month/two months** in principle. On the last Friday of each (odd) month at 9:00 a.m., a **face-to-face/online** consultation with the supervisor via MS Teams is held.

The student and the supervisor agree to reply to each other's email messages within five days as a rule (except for illness or periods of extended absence, of which they inform each other in advance).

Written materials for consultation are always sent by the student well in advance so that they can be read before the consultation.

Funding

Doctoral student's personal income

Full-time study: students are entitled to a regular monthly stipend of at least the amount specified in the relevant regulations. Other scholarship programmes provided by the Faculty and the University are available to students, in particular according to the PrF MU Measure No. 5/2021

Combined form of study:

A regular monthly stipend is not provided in the combined form of study. Scholarship programmes provided by the faculty and the university are available to students, in particular according to PrF MU Measure No. 5/2021.

Plan for covering the costs related to the PhD student's research

Electronic databases and legal information systems provided by the Faculty and the University are available to students. The faculty library is available to students. Scholarship programmes provided by the faculty and the university, especially according to the MU Faculty of Arts Measure No. 5/2021, and, if announced, specific research projects are available to students.

FOR CONCRETE SEMESTER PLANS (not part of the overall ISP)⁶:

In IS, the semester fillings ("next semester plan") are structured university-wide. They are filled in **together with the evaluation of the previous** semester's filling (end of semester evaluation). Each semester **the preparation of the dissertation** must be planned, and above all fulfilled - this is a key component. **Publications and conferences** are planned as the situation dictates (and in relation to the overall ISP), and sometimes deliverables may be prepared over multiple semesters (e.g., a publication article is being prepared one semester, finalized and under review the next semester). For **internships**, it is typically the case that some semesters do not run at all (then it does not need to be listed in the semester plan). The **"other"** section is primarily filled in with teaching involvement, and for full-time students, the faculty attendance schedule and other activities.

Semester assignments are supposed to be **completely individualized** and therefore a single template cannot be created that is directly applicable - it cannot be copied, it must be really **created by the student and the instructor for the given topic**.

Sometimes it is possible to start writing right from the first year at the same time as reading the sources, sometimes it is necessary to read for a long time first (for example, the whole first year) and then only to write anything. Sometimes the topic itself has to be "discovered" in the first semester, sometimes it is clearly defined and thought out in the application for the degree, sometimes you have to look for suitable methods, sometimes they are obvious right away. In any case, however, **work on the dissertation should start from the first semester** (even if it consists "only" of searching and reading sources and organizing the findings from them - which, by the way, is often the most time-consuming part of the whole process). It is definitely not a good idea to leave the dissertation until the last year of study. Experience shows that this is often a downright unsuccessful strategy. On the contrary, it is also advisable to conceive the publication output during the course of your studies thematically and methodologically in such a way that it is useful for the dissertation later on.

Development of pedagogical skills

It is advisable to write in the semester outline the specific subjects that will be covered, as well as the specific content and scope of involvement.

In general, this includes e.g. participation in the organisational and content preparation of teaching and teaching materials, participation in the organisational and content preparation and implementation of examinations, preparation for involvement and then involvement in direct teaching under the mentorship of an authorised academic staff member (usually a supervisor), so that students are gradually able to conduct teaching independently, usually in an area more broadly related to the topic of the dissertation or chosen specialisation in the field. To this end, the student seeks, receives and responds to feedback.

On direct teaching: **At first** it is advisable to participate only **indirectly** (discussion of the lesson content, appropriate content and format, listening - participation in the lesson, follow-up discussion of the course), **only later** can **direct teaching** take place, again including discussion before and after the lesson, if necessary. It depends on the specific cases, especially the pedagogical skills of the student and the difficulty of the particular lesson.

Presentation at the conference

There are different types of conferences (in terms of professional level, composition of participants, space for discussion, etc.) At least once per study (but ideally more than once) there should be a presentation of the results of one's own creative activity at a major conference **recognized in the field**. Participation in conferences is a good opportunity to get **feedback and suggestions for further elaboration of the topic**, either in the form of an independent scientific publication or a part of a dissertation (this is ideal). By presenting at such a demanding conference, the student demonstrates full mastery of the relevant **professional as well as presentation skills** expected of a researcher, **including dealing with questions in the ensuing discussion**, for which **the format of the conference should offer space**. Specific conditions may be specified in the individual study plan or semester content. Preparation, implementation and evaluation are preferably under the mentorship of a supervisor.

This (major) conference presentation is usually preceded by mock presentations (also with other topics) at less demanding conferences, through which the student develops the necessary skills (according to the individual needs of the student identified in collaboration with the supervisor), most often in connection with the preparation of a dissertation or in connection with the preparation of a partial publication output.

Conference presentations also serve to gain valuable contacts, including foreign ones, for the possibility of further cooperation in the future.

⁶ Semester ISP fillings are entered separately into the IS. They are not back-transcribed into the overall ISP. On the contrary, the semester contents are based on the overall ISP.