



Information on habilitation at the University of Vienna

1) General information

Habilitation

Habilitation is the conferral of the authorisation to teach (*venia docendi*) a subject area that is within the sphere of activities of the University of Vienna.

Prerequisite for the conferral of the authorisation to teach

The prerequisite for the conferral of the authorisation to teach an entire academic subject at university level is proof of excellent academic qualifications and repeated teaching activities at recognised post-secondary educational establishments proving the applicant's didactic competences.

Habilitation thesis

The habilitation thesis has to focus on a theme from the subject area for which there is an application to be granted the authorisation to teach. The habilitation thesis has to address a theme that is different from the doctoral thesis or further develop the theme of the doctoral thesis by applying academic methods. In order to be assessed as an independent habilitation thesis, however, it has to be a substantial development of the doctoral thesis in qualitative and quantitative respects.

The habilitation thesis can comprise one individual academic paper or several, thematically connected academic publications. A cumulative habilitation thesis has to be given a title and the thematic link of the publications has to be explained.

The habilitation thesis has to be of impeccable methodological quality, contain new academic insights, and demonstrate the candidate's command of his/her habilitation subject using academic methods and ability for its advancement.

Acquisition of the authorisation to teach

The authorisation to teach an entire academic subject at university level is conferred by way of an official notice issued by the Rectorate.

Expiry of the authorisation to teach

The authorisation to teach expires

- due to resignation,
- due to continued inactivity over four years without stating reasons,
- with a conviction that has been handed down by an Austrian court and which, based on section 27 of the StGB (Austrian criminal code), Federal Law Gazette no. 60/1974, leads to forfeiture of office of a civil servant.

If one of these three elements is present, the authorisation to teach will expire automatically, viz. without any official notice being issued regarding expiry.

If the holder of the authorisation to teach resigns, he/she is obliged to inform the Rectorate of this fact in writing via the Human Resources and Gender Equality service unit. Resignation becomes effective upon receipt of this letter.

2) The habilitation procedure

Submission of the application for habilitation

The [application for habilitation](#) has to be submitted in writing to the Rectorate by using the form and via the dean's office or the office of the centre responsible for the applied-for habilitation subject. Official fees based on the 1957 Gebührengesetz (law on fees) have to be paid for the application for habilitation:

- Application for habilitation: 1 x € 47.30 (section 14, fee item 6, para. 2 (1) of the 1957 Gebührengesetz (law on fees))
- Enclosures: € 3.90 per sheet, but not more than € 21.80 per enclosure (section 14, fee item 5, para. 1 of the 1957 Gebührengesetz (law on fees))
- Fees have to be paid only for one copy of the five copies of the habilitation thesis and other academic papers.
- Official notice of habilitation: 1 x €83.60 (section 14, fee item 2, para. 1 (1) of the 1957 Gebührengesetz (law on fees))

The fees can be paid in cash at the Accounting and Finance service unit or by wire transfer to the following account (reference: ER 123030).

Raiffeisenlandesbank NÖ-Wien
1010 Vienna, Schottengasse 2
Account no.: 00000 675 447
Bank code: 32000
IBAN: AT08 3200 0000 0067 5447
BIC / SWIFT: RLNWATWW

The following enclosures have to be submitted together with the application for habilitation:

- a. a curriculum vitae with a description of the previously carried out academic work, particularly with reference to the entire academic subject for which the authorisation to teach is envisaged;
- b. proof of graduation of completed university-based degree programmes;
- c. a list of all written and published academic papers, which – or a selection of which – has to be submitted either electronically in a common file format on a common data medium or in five copies on paper;
- d. proof of repeated teaching activities at recognised post-secondary educational establishments and a list of previous teaching activities, particularly also with reference to the entire academic subject for which the authorisation to teach is envisaged;
- e. a habilitation thesis about a theme of the applied-for habilitation subject or several, thematically connected academic publications (each in five copies on paper or electronically in a common file format on a common data medium); a cumulative habilitation thesis has to be given a title and the thematic link of the publications has to be explained; the habilitation thesis has to deal with a theme that is different from the doctoral thesis or noticeably further develop the theme of the doctoral thesis by applying academic methods;
- f. if more than one author has been involved in the habilitation thesis or in the academic papers that are presented cumulatively as one habilitation thesis, a declaration of the applicant regarding his/her share in the habilitation thesis or academic papers.

Criteria for admission to the habilitation procedure

1. proof of graduation of a university-based degree programme which, in terms of its subject matter, is appropriate for the applied-for authorisation to teach;
2. proof of repeated teaching activities at recognised post-secondary educational establishments;

3. proof of a doctorate or an equivalent relevant academic qualification;
4. proof of payment of fees (section 3, para. 3);
5. the clear name of the entire academic subject for which there is an application to be granted the authorisation to teach (section 103, para. 1 of the Universities Act);
6. inclusion of the applied-for authorisation to teach in the sphere of activities of the University of Vienna (section 103, para. 1 of the Universities Act).

The dean or the head of the centre is obliged to examine the application to check its admissibility (section 4, para. 1 (1-6)). Any incomplete applications (section 4, para. 1 (1-5)) will be returned so they can be improved. Any complete applications that have not been improved within the specified period will be passed on to the Rectorate via the service unit responsible for human resources. The Rectorate is obliged to reject any inadmissible applications.

If all the prerequisites for admission have been fulfilled, the Rectorate has to inform the dean or the head of the centre about this. If the applied-for authorisation to teach is within the sphere of activities of several faculties or centres, their heads have to be informed and one of them has to be entrusted with the further organisational procedure. He/she has to pass on the application to the Senate.

All applications for the conferral of an authorisation to teach which fall within the subject-specific sphere of activities of several faculties or centres have to be prepared by the dean or head of the centre in the form of related proposals for the Senate in a way that a habilitation committee can be established (section 5) and reviewers can be appointed (section 6) in an interdisciplinary manner.

Appointment of the habilitation committee

The Senate has to appoint a habilitation committee with decision-making power. It lays down the total number of members of the habilitation committee (not more than nine) and specifies the number of members from the groups of professors, mid-level faculty and students.

The members from the group of students have to pursue a degree programme that is relevant to the subject (valid admission) and must have completed at least the first stage of the diploma programme or obtained at least 120 ECTS credits in compulsory modules or compulsory elective modules of the bachelor's programme or be enrolled in a master's or doctoral programme.

The 2002 Universities Act stipulates that university professors have to make up more than half of the members of the habilitation committee and that at least one student representative has to be involved.

Appointment of reviewers to review the academic qualification

The representatives of university professors in the Senate appoint at least three representatives of the envisaged habilitation subject, of which at least two should be external, as reviewers to review the submitted academic papers.

Review of the academic qualification

The reviewers' task is to review whether the habilitation thesis and the other submitted academic papers

- are of impeccable methodological quality,
- contain new academic insights,
- demonstrate the applicant's command of the habilitation subject and use of academic methods as well as
- his/her ability for its advancement.

Non-submitted academic papers do not have to be considered when the expert opinions are drawn up. Any subsequent changes or amendments to the paper(s) submitted as a habilitation thesis will not be considered in the procedure.

Establishment of the habilitation committee

The inaugural meeting will be convened by the oldest committee member from the group of university professors of the University of Vienna and he/she will chair it until a chairperson has been elected. The chairperson is elected by simple majority from the group of habilitated committee members.

Examination of didactic competences

The habilitation committee will assign the task of drawing up the expert opinions and statements on the habilitation applicant's didactic competences to at least two of its members, one from the group of students and one from the group of academic university staff. The examination will be conducted based on his/her previous teaching or lecturing activities or on the teaching or lecturing activities to be conducted to a sufficient extent within the framework of the procedure. The habilitation committee can obtain further expert opinions or statements. To provide evidence of his/her didactic competences, the applicant can submit additional results of course evaluations, proof of completion of initial and continuing education programmes on higher education didactics, etc.

Right to express opinions

The university professors of the relevant academic discipline and closely associated academic disciplines are entitled to express their opinions about the expert opinions and the applicant's academic papers to the chairperson of the habilitation committee up to two weeks after the end of the term for inspection at the latest.

The applicant can also submit an opinion within this period. Before the end of the period the applicant can also submit expert opinions he/she has obtained himself/herself.

Change of the application during the procedure

If the application is changed while the procedure is ongoing, the Rectorate must be informed so that it conducts another check of admissibility. If the Rectorate affirms that the changed application is admissible, the Senate must be informed. The latter has to carry out another examination to check if the composition of the habilitation committee is appropriate for the relevant subject (section 5, para. 2). Similarly, the university professors of the Senate have to examine if the reviewers are qualified for the relevant subject (section 6, para. 1). The habilitation committee will interrupt its procedure until the Rectorate and the Senate have made their decision.

Decision on the application for habilitation

The habilitation committee has to carry out the procedure swiftly and decide by way of a resolution whether the applicant has provided proof, as required for the conferral of the authorisation to teach at university level, of his/her outstanding academic qualifications in the applied-for academic discipline. For this resolution, the majority of the members of the habilitation committee who hold the authorisation to teach (*venia docendi*) will be decisive. Similarly, the habilitation committee will decide by way of a resolution whether the applicant has provided the required evidence of his/her didactic competence. The resolution will only be considered positive within the meaning of section 103, para. 9 of the 2002 Universities Act if both resolutions are positive. The habilitation

committee has to state reasons for its decision.

Official notice of the application for habilitation

The Rectorate will issue the official notice of the application for habilitation based on the resolution of the habilitation committee. If the Rectorate cannot comply with the resolution issued by the habilitation committee on grounds of content or procedural conditions, the resolution of the habilitation committee must be returned to the habilitation committee, which will have to pass a new resolution.

If the application for habilitation is assessed as positive by the habilitation committee, the Rectorate is obliged to accept the application for habilitation and confer the authorisation to teach for the applied-for academic discipline.

If the application for habilitation is assessed as negative by the habilitation committee, the Rectorate is obliged to reject the application for habilitation. An appeal can be lodged against the official notice with the federal administrative court.

3) Rights and obligations

The conferral of the authorisation to teach is connected with the right to freely exercise academic teaching in this discipline at the University of Vienna through its institutions and to supervise and assess academic papers. The conferral of the authorisation to teach will neither establish an employment relationship nor modify an existing employment relationship with the University of Vienna.

To the extent that the facilities of the University of Vienna permit it and the head of the organisational unit agrees, a private lecturer (Privatdozent/in) who is not in an employment relationship with the University of Vienna can use the facilities of the University of Vienna for his/her own academic work, but is not legally entitled to do this. The holder of the authorisation to teach at university level can call himself/herself “Privatdozent der Universität Wien” (private lecturer of the University of Vienna).

4) Legal basis

- Sections [102](#) and [103](#) of the Universities Act
- [Satzungsteil Habilitation](#) (Statute section “Habilitation”, in German)
- [Satzungsteil Erlöschen der Habilitation](#) (Statute section “Expiry of habilitation”, in German)