PhD Studies at the Department for Oriental and Islamic Studies, University of Tuebingen

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Thank you for your interest in PhD studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at the University of Tuebingen. We want to make sure that your PhD thesis will make an original contribution to international scholarship. Therefore we would like to provide a structure to PhD students that secures regular exchange with supervisors and fellow research students.

The following guidelines are intended to provide you with a road map for PhD studies at our department.

Most importantly, your PhD project needs to be supervised by a person who is competent to guide you through the chosen topic and field of research, i.e. someone having an active research interest in your work. This is the only way to guarantee that you will become familiar with the state of the art in your field and that you get in touch with the relevant research networks.

We are very interested in research students who have gained a degree at other universities and who want to continue their studies in Tuebingen because of our research profile. Applicants from outside Tuebingen should explain their motivation in a short letter of motivation (see below).

Step 1:

If you feel that our department is the right place to conduct your PhD studies, please contact your preferred supervisor. (Usually the best way to do this is via email.) In so doing, it is important to clarify the following points:

(a) Motivation

• What is your topic? Please name a possible working title (or several possible working titles).

• Why would you like to conduct your PhD studies in Tuebingen?

(b) Qualifications/previous studies:

• Do you have qualifications that are of special relevance for the chosen topic (e.g. the focus of your graduate studies, special linguistic skills, familiarity with a certain region of the Middle East)?

• Have you perhaps conducted previous studies in the field, e.g. in the framework of a Master’s thesis?

It is most helpful if you attach a PDF copy of your Masters’s thesis.

Step 2:

If the supervisor displays interest in your project and you have a working title for your PhD thesis, we ask you to write a proposal for your research project. This might be further refined after discussing it with your possible supervisor.
The proposal needs to contain the following:

1. Working title
2. Abstract (c. 150 words)
3. Research programme (c. 1500 words)
4. Preliminary table of contents of your thesis
5. Work schedule showing how you would like to implement your PhD project in a period of three years (c. 1 page)
6. Bibliography

Notes:

- Research programme: Here you should explain briefly how your project would add to previous work in this research area. How and to what extent can your research question lead to new insights? Has your study the potential to correct previous research? What are the methods you intend to use? What are the sources you have identified? What would you like to do first and how do you plan to proceed in your research?
- Work schedule: Here we would like to ask you to name the specific steps in which you plan to proceed in small intervals of 2-4 months. Although it is foreseeable that many things will need to be adapted, it is important to estimate the time needed for specific steps in your work and to plan for a sensible sequence of these steps.

Step 3:

Once your preferred supervisor is convinced that your proposal is sufficiently sophisticated and if he or she is indeed ready to supervise your work and to recommend you for acceptance as PhD student at the Faculty of Philosophy, you need to agree on a second supervisor. (This is a precondition for acceptance as PhD student in Tuebingen.)

Step 4:

After you have secured the acceptance two supervisors, we can initiate the formal steps for your acceptance as PhD student (Doktorand/in) at the University of Tuebingen.

You find the guidelines and the necessary documents for your application as PhD student (Anmeldung zur Promotion) on the Faculty’s website:

http://www.uni-tuebingen.de/fakultaeten/philosophische-fakultaet/dekanat/promotion.html

One of these documents is the Agreement on PhD Supervision (schriftliche Betreuungsvereinbarung). Please discuss this agreement with your first and second supervisor and have it signed by them. Most importantly, you will have to specify in which frequency you meet with your supervisors in order to discuss your work.

Step 5:

Once you have passed these hurdles successfully, we hope that you can work peacefully on your dissertation. Next to that, we expect that you use the regular meetings with your supervisors and that you regularly participate in our department’s Research Colloquium in order to discuss your project in a broader scholarly context. Once a semester we expect a presentation on a specific aspect of your PhD work in the colloquium. In addition, we would like to encourage you to attend other courses at the department with relevance to your project, e.g. our course on ‘Methods and methodology’.