



Implementation Provisions for the Faculty of Natural Sciences for the University of Hohenheim's Doctoral Degree Regulations for the Degree Dr. rer. nat.

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A. Responsibilities / Timelines for decision in the doctoral examination process

In general, the doctoral committee is responsible for decisions in the doctoral proceedings. The committee typically meets twice per semester: once at the beginning of the lecture period and once at the end. In the meantime, decisions may be made by circulation. The chair of the doctoral committee may make decisions on the following topics on an ongoing basis (in a rapid decision process):

- Appointment of the mentor group
- Request to change the title / topic of the dissertation project and the language of the dissertation
- Application to change the supervisor
- Request for an extension
- Appointment of additional reviewers according to § 19(5) of the Doctoral Regulations
- Application to open the doctoral examination process including the appointment of the examination board
- Exclusion of observers for oral examinations according to § 21(6) of the Doctoral Regulations
- Request to end the dissertation project
- Request for acceptance as a doctoral candidate in justified cases

B. Request for acceptance as a doctoral candidate

Proof of language proficiency

According to § 10(4) of the Doctoral Regulations, applicants must have at least good language skills in the language of the dissertation. The following documentation directly permits the candidate to write the dissertation in the requested language:

For doctoral examination processes conducted in German:

- Abitur from a German school or a German-language Bachelor's or Master's degree
- UNIcertII certificate (minimum grade "good")
- Goethe Certificate B1:Zertifikat Deutsch
- Deutsches Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz, level DSD 1
- TestDAF at the level TND 3 - German language exam for university admission at the level DSH 1



For doctoral examination processes conducted in English:

- Completion of an English-language Bachelor's or Master's degree program
- Secondary school certificate (Abitur, A-levels, high school diploma, etc.) from an English-language or bilingual school as long as one of the languages of instruction is English
- TOEFL test (internet based) with at least 90 out of 120 points
- IELTS certificate with at least 6.5 out of 9 points
- UNIcertII certificate (minimum grade "good")

In addition, the doctoral committee may permit other forms of documentation upon request. In exceptional cases, a reasoned confirmation of sufficient language proficiency from the supervisor may be accepted.

Research proposal

According to point (2) of the doctoral agreement, the application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate must be submitted together with a research proposal that includes both a description of the doctoral project and a timeline.

Information on structuring the research proposal

- The research proposal includes the name of the doctoral project, the name of the doctoral candidate, and has page numbers.
- The description of the doctoral project is to be summarized briefly on a maximum of 2 pages (DIN A4) and should include:
 - A working hypothesis and the research objective
 - The doctoral candidate's plan for generating the data necessary for the later discussion
- The timeline for the doctoral project should be attached to the research proposal as page 3.
- The research proposal is to be written in the language (German or English) in which the dissertation will be written.
- The research proposal is signed by the doctoral candidate and the supervisor.

Aptitude test

For applicants who do not fulfill the requirements according to § 10 of the Doctoral Regulations, in the context of an aptitude test the doctoral committee may set additional requirements to be fulfilled (knowledge exam). The knowledge exam is typically made up of an oral examination in two subject areas that are relevant to the topic of the dissertation project. The choice of subject areas depends on the candidate's previous knowledge as documented in the degree certificate / transcript of records.



C. Conditions for supervision

According to points (5) and (6) of the doctoral agreement, the doctoral candidate and the supervisor discuss the progress of the dissertation project at least once per semester. The doctoral candidate may take minutes of this in agreement with the supervisor and retain it until the end of the doctoral examination process.

Upon request and in justified cases, the minutes are to be shown to the chair of the doctoral committee or the ombudsperson.

In addition, for doctoral projects that were accepted after 1 February 2019, a mentor group is appointed. Changes planned to the dissertation proposal as submitted with the application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate are to be discussed with the supervisor, set down in writing, and - if they affect the title or topic - reported immediately to the doctoral committee for approval.

The request to change the title or topic can be submitted informally and digitally to promotionnatur@uni-hohenheim.de. It should be signed by both the doctoral candidate and the supervisor.

D. Outer appearance of the dissertation

General information on the outer appearance of the dissertation

The regulations stated here apply to both publication-based dissertations (cumulative) and monograph dissertations.

The design of the title page is shown in Annex 2 of the Doctoral Regulations. The dissertation must also include a table of contents; a clear summary in German and English, each two pages in length; a curriculum vitae (signed); a detailed list of the sources and literature used; and an affidavit (signed) according to Annex 3 of the doctoral degree regulations.

The introduction should not be less than five pages long; ten pages is a reference point for a suitable length. It should introduce the topic to readers who are not familiar with it, for specialists the current state of the art on the topic should be described, and the objective and research question of the dissertation should be outlined.

If the dissertation is submitted as a monograph, "Materials and Methods" or the "Experimental Design" should be a set element of the work.

The dissertation can be written in German or English. The title of the dissertation and the dissertation itself should be written in one language, especially if the dissertation is a monograph. The format of the dissertation is DIN A4. If a printed dissertation is to be submitted, it must be printed single-sided and is to be bound with a hard cover (no spiral binding). The dissertation must also be submitted in an electronically searchable form, ideally as a PDF. This is saved by the Graduate Academy for possible plagiarism reviews.

The dissertation must adhere to good scientific practice according to the DFG guidelines. If the doctoral candidate has questions about citing the findings of other authors, they are to consult the supervisor. Quotations from other publications by the doctoral candidate must also be cited accordingly.



Particular guidelines for cumulative dissertations
(§ 17(5-7) of the Doctoral Regulations)

Definition

A cumulative dissertation is a dissertation in which the findings of the project are not written up in the form of one long book (monograph) but as a collection of several publication manuscripts. For a cumulative dissertation, generally at least two original publications must have been accepted for publication in a scientific journal with the doctoral candidate as the lead author. The reviewers may consider reviewed conference contributions of full papers to be equivalent to publications in scientific journals. Shared first authorship is permitted. The other manuscripts may be original publications, book chapters, or review articles. Manuscripts in English and German may be mixed. The manuscripts must be closely related in terms of their topics and be linked by an overarching research question that makes up the topic of the dissertation. Publications that are primarily based on findings from the final thesis of a degree program before the doctorate cannot be counted as an element of a cumulative dissertation.

Additional material from the doctoral project that is not intended for publication can be included in separate chapters.

Formal structure

A cumulative dissertation must be bound before submission, and all parts must be copied onto DIN A4-format pages regardless of the format of the original publication. The pages of the dissertation must be sequentially numbered; for manuscripts that have already been published, the original page numbers must also be included.

A cumulative dissertation is made up of the following parts:

a. Cover page

The first page is a cover page according to Annex 2 of the Doctoral Regulations.

b. Table of contents

The pages in the table of contents refer to the sequential numbering in the dissertation. Bound manuscripts are listed like chapters with a page number only for the title page. The publication status at the time the dissertation is submitted must be included, whereby the following categories are permitted:

- “published” for journal XYZ with complete reference
- “accepted for publication” for journal xyz / acceptance confirmation from publisher included
- “Submitted” to journal xyz / Confirmation of receipt from publisher included



c. Introduction

The introduction refers to the entirety of all manuscripts and is of great importance for the review of a cumulative dissertation. It must make clear how the individual manuscripts are linked with an overarching research question and which aspects are to be covered by each of the manuscripts. The introduction should not be less than five pages.

d. Manuscripts

The manuscripts that have already been published and are included in the dissertation must completely correspond to the original publication in regard to the linguistic elements of the text, the structure of the figures, and the content completeness. Manuscripts in preparation are to be printed in manuscript form.

e. Concluding discussion

The concluding discussion refers to the entirety of all manuscripts and chapters. It is of key importance for the review of a cumulative dissertation and must unite all of the manuscripts' individual findings.

In particular, a logical description must be included of what each of the manuscripts contribute toward answering the research question set down in the dissertation topic and formulated in the introduction. In addition, an overarching discussion of the methods used must be included. Finally, the dissertation's contribution to scientific progress is to be described. The concluding discussion should not be less than five pages.

f. Summary in English and German

A summary in English and German (max. 2 DIN A4 pages each) is a standard part of every dissertation. The summary must describe the most important points of the introduction and concluding discussion.

g. List of references

A complete reference list is not necessary as long as all of the publications and sources cited in the dissertation are included in the reference lists for the individual chapters.

h. Affidavit

An affidavit must be included according to Annex 3 of the Doctoral Regulations.

i. Curriculum Vitae in table form

A curriculum vitae in table form is to be included and signed according to the provisions of the Doctoral Regulations.

j. Annexes

The dissertation may be supplemented by additional documentation material (e.g., original data, results of statistical tests, model structures, maps, etc.).

k. Information on doctoral candidate's contribution



For publications with more than one author, the doctoral candidate's contribution is vitally important for the review of the dissertation. In these cases, therefore, for each manuscript the candidate's part of the work must be described in terms of precise content and scope. The candidate's contribution for all manuscripts may be listed on the same page. The description of contributions must be confirmed by the dissertation supervisor's signature.

E. Opening the doctoral examination process

The application to open the doctoral examination process is to include the documents listed in § 18 of the Doctoral Regulations. In addition, if one or more members of the examination board requests, the corresponding number of printed copies of the dissertation is to be included.

F. Transferring the right to supervise doctorates to outstandingly qualified academic staff members of Faculty N with doctorates

According to § 8(3) of the Doctoral Regulations, in exceptional cases, persons described in the heading may participate in the doctoral examination process as supervisors. The doctoral committee has made the following decision of general principle:

In the case of junior research group leaders or scholarship holders in the Emmy Noether Program (DFG) and Wrangell Habilitation Program (MWK), upon request to the chairperson of the doctoral committee, the right to supervise doctorates shall be granted for the duration of the person's employment with the Faculty N. In cases of doubt, the decision can be supported by an internal expert opinion. Contacting the doctoral committee at an early point in time when preparing the request is recommended. Upon request and with the submission of a curriculum vitae as well as a list of publications and courses taught, the doctoral committee may confer the right to supervise doctorates to other groups of people.