

Doctoral Degree Regulations of the Inter-University Doctoral Research Centre for Social Work of Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences, Fulda University of Applied Sciences, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, and RheinMain University of Applied Sciences

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Article 1 General provisions

- (1) As members of the Hessian Universities of Applied Sciences (HAW), Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences, Fulda University of Applied Sciences, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, and RheinMain University of Applied Sciences (hereafter referred to as the “partner universities”) – have been granted the right to award doctoral degrees in Social Work.

The Doctoral Research Centre for Social Work is a joint inter-university central scientific facility of these partner universities in accordance with Art. 47 of the Hesse Higher Education Act (HHG). The Doctoral Research Centre is a platform on which to combine research activity in order for the partner universities to obtain their own right to award doctoral degrees.

- (2) Provisions are in place to guarantee compliance with the regulations of the Hesse State Ministry of Higher Education, Research and the Arts (HMWK) (Requirements and conditions for conferral of the right to award doctoral degrees at universities of applied

sciences in the German state of Hesse, see Appendix 1).

Article 2 Doctoral degrees

(1) In accordance with the provisions of these Doctoral Degree Regulations, the partner universities award the academic degree of

- Doctor of Philosophy (Dr. phil.)

following completion of the doctoral examination process in accordance with the requirements.

- (2) A doctoral degree is a qualification that reflects special academic achievement. In order to be eligible to study for a doctorate, students must generally have successfully completed a university degree with a standard duration of at least eight semesters, a Master's degree, or a university degree in combination with aptitude assessment.
- (3) The requirements for earning a doctorate comprise completing an academic treatise (thesis) and an oral viva voce examination in the form of a thesis defence and demonstrate the ability to undertake independent research work.

Article 3 Responsibilities and organisation

- (1) The parties involved in the doctoral examination process are the Doctoral Committee in accordance with Art. 4, the Examination Committee in accordance with Art. 15, the supervisors in accordance with Art. 7, and the examiners in accordance with Art. 12.
- (2) A separate Examination Committee is appointed for each doctoral examination process.

Article 4 Doctoral Committee

- (1) The Doctoral Committee is presided over by a member of the management of the Doctoral Research Centre, who is elected as Chair by the members of the Centre management.
- (2) The Doctoral Committee also includes four representatives (one from each partner university) of the group of professors who are members of the Doctoral Research Centre and satisfy the criteria for evidence of sufficient research activity for approval of an independent right to award doctoral degrees in research-intensive disciplines (Appendix 1) and have been admitted by the management of the Centre, and two of the doctoral students who are members of the Doctoral Research Centre.
- (3) The members of the group of professors on the Doctoral Committee are elected for a period of 2.5 years by and from among the members of the Doctoral Research Centre who are professors. The doctoral student representatives are each elected from among the doctoral students for a period of 2.5 years. A deputy is elected for each member to represent the respective member in their absence or in the event of early resignation. Periods of office should overlap in order to guarantee quality standards. Re-election is possible.
- (4) The Doctoral Committee must additionally appoint a professor from a university to join the Doctoral Committee as a voting member. If no professor from a university is available, the Hesse State Ministry of Higher Education, Research and the Arts has the right to put forward a nomination.
- (5) The Doctoral Committee decides on all formal procedural matters, in particular on the following:
- a) acceptance as a doctoral candidate in accordance with Art. 5;

- b) admission to the doctoral examination process in accordance with Art. 11;
 - c) approval of the thesis in accordance with Art. 14;
 - d) appointment of the Examination Committee in accordance with Art. 15;
 - e) appointment of the Chair of the Examination Committee and the supervisors in accordance with Art. 7 and the examiners in accordance with Art. 12;
 - f) graduation and conferral of the doctoral degree in accordance with Art. 21.
- (6) The decisions of the Doctoral Committee are made in closed session and by open majority vote with no abstentions. The Doctoral Committee has a quorum if at least half of its members are present. Recourse is only made to deputies if the respective members are unable to attend. In the event of a tie, the Chair casts the deciding vote. If all members of the Committee agree, decisions can be made by tacit agreement. On decisions relating solely to individual examination requirements/achievements, members who themselves do not hold a doctorate have only an advisory role. Meeting minutes must be taken at each session.

Article 5 Acceptance as a doctoral student

- (1) Applications for acceptance as a doctoral student are made to the Chair of the Doctoral Committee. The following documents must be submitted with the application:
- a) a certified copy of the certificate(s) showing successful completion of a university degree in accordance with Art. 4 and/or 5;
 - b) officially certified translations in German of equivalent foreign certificates;
 - c) an academic curriculum vitae;
 - d) a copy of the applicant's identity document or passport;
 - e) a detailed written synopsis of the proposed independent research project. The synopsis should contain the topic proposal, current research, the goals and contribution of the work together with a description of the approach and proposed methods and of the resource planning approved by the supervisors, and a declaration of which language the thesis is to be written in;
 - f) a written undertaking of doctoral supervision in the form of the Supervision Agreement, as per Appendix 2, which also contains an assurance of compliance with good scientific practice and compliance with the position paper of the German Association of Social Work (DGSA) on research ethics in social work ("Eckpunktepapier der DGSA Forschungsethik in der Sozialen Arbeit");
 - g) a declaration of whether the applicant has failed at the final attempt a comparable aptitude assessment procedure (Para. 5) or doctoral examination process at another higher education institution;
 - h) if the thesis is to be written in a language other than German, the doctoral student must make an application to the Doctoral Committee to that effect and stating the reasons.

When the application for acceptance has been examined and checked that it is complete and correct, it is forwarded to the Doctoral Committee.

- (2) Doctoral candidates who have already been accepted at other higher education institutions may make an application for acceptance in accordance with Para. 1.
- (3) The Doctoral Committee decides on acceptance of the applicant as a doctoral student. Acceptance may only be denied with reasons. Applicants have no claim to performance of an aptitude assessment procedure or to acceptance. The applicant is informed in writing of the Doctoral Committee's decision and the right of legal appeal.
- (4) The requirements for acceptance as a doctoral student are as follows:
 - a) a Master's degree in a relevant subject after completing a total of 300 ECTS credits

- and achieving an overall result of at least grade 2.0; or
- b) a university degree in a relevant subject in accordance with Art. 2(2) second sentence (see also Para. 5);
- the Lisbon Recognition Convention must be referred to in this context.

(5) Applicants who have completed

- a) a university degree in a subject area related to Social Work;
- b) a university degree in Social Work with fewer than eight semesters of study;
- c) a Master's degree with a grade lower than 2.0 but higher than 3.0

may be admitted if they have the necessary specialist knowledge in the field of Social Work and have supplied evidence of this in an aptitude assessment procedure. The aptitude assessment procedure involves an assessment of the applicant's specialist knowledge and methodological competence. To do this, the Doctoral Committee generally appoints two professors who are members of the Doctoral Research Centre to assess the applicant's final dissertation and a written report on an issue of Social Work. In cases of doubt, the two professors appointed can request and hold an interview on the subject area lasting no more than one hour.

A degree is recognised as being in a subject related to Social Work if it includes certain content as specified by the Doctoral Committee. The Doctoral Committee may compile a catalogue of possible degree programmes as a general guide.

- (6) The Doctoral Committee decides on the existence of substantial differences, if applicable with relevant internal assistance. Assessment should not be made by schematic comparison but by considering all relevant aspects as a whole.
- (7) The Doctoral Committee may make acceptance conditional on certain requirements and set a deadline for the applicant to meet them. The requirements must be met at the latest on submission of the thesis.
- (8) If the Doctoral Committee approves the application for acceptance as a doctoral student, supervision, review and subsequent conduct of the doctoral examination process in accordance with these Doctoral Degree Regulations are guaranteed.
- (9) Accepted doctoral applicants may enrol at one of the partner universities from the time at which they are accepted up to completion of the doctoral examination process.

Article 6 Thesis

- (1) The thesis must contribute to advancing scientific knowledge as a piece of independent work of academic standard. It must be submitted in German or, with the prior consent of the Doctoral Committee, in a foreign language.
- (2) The doctoral candidate must include in the thesis a list of all sources used and a declaration that the thesis has been produced independently – with the exception of the assistance explicitly stated in it – by the doctoral candidate.
- (3) Any work that has already been used for examination purposes will not be admitted as a thesis. The results of work that has already been submitted for examination may nevertheless be used for the thesis; such work must be included in the reference list.
- (4) Individual findings of the thesis may be published before the thesis is submitted. A declaration must be made to this effect.
- (5) Cumulative theses are not permitted.
- (6) The thesis must contain the essential experimental and statistical research data that have led to the new scientific knowledge. They should be included as an appendix. Where necessary, an application may be made to the Doctoral Committee to restrict access to this appendix.

Article 7 Appointment of supervisors

- (1) The thesis is completed under the supervision of at least one professor who is a member of the Doctoral Research Centre and satisfies the criteria (Requirements and conditions for conferral of the right to award doctoral degrees at universities of applied sciences in the German State of Hesse, see Appendix 1).
- (2) In justified cases, professors who hold a doctorate who are engaged to take care of the other research-related tasks and are members of the Doctoral Research Centre may also be appointed as second supervisors.
In justified cases, the following, who do not have to be members of the Doctoral Research Centre, may also be appointed as second supervisors:
 - a) professors from a different subject area who hold a doctorate;
 - b) emeritus and retired professors, part-time professors, honorary professors, adjunct professors or visiting professors or adjunct lecturers, all of whom must hold a doctorate;
 - c) professors who hold a doctorate and are from one of the partner universities of the Doctoral Research Centre for Social Work or from another university of applied sciences or university;
 - d) researchers from a university or non-university research institution who hold a doctorate and proven academic qualifications.
- (3) It is important to ensure on the appointment of supervisors that they have the necessary time resources to supervise the doctoral thesis up to its expected conclusion.
- (4) If a supervisor leaves office before completion of the doctoral examination process, supervision may continue if the supervisor commits in writing to the Doctoral Committee to continue in their role.
- (5) In justified cases, the Doctoral Committee may, of its own accord or if the doctoral student makes a justified application, appoint replacement supervisors in the course of doctoral study, especially if a supervisor is no longer able to continue providing doctoral supervision.

Article 8 Thesis supervision

- (1) The applicant must submit with their application for acceptance as a doctoral student the supervisor's written undertaking to provide doctoral supervision in the form of the Supervision Agreement. The Supervision Agreement begins when the applicant is accepted as a doctoral student in accordance with Art. 5 and is conditional on this.
- (2) Supervision consists in the provision of regular academic guidance and support to doctoral students, as described in the Supervision Agreement.

Article 9 Doctoral training

The Doctoral Research Centre offers training and events for doctoral students during their studies.

Article 10 Amendments, termination of doctoral relationship

- (1) Prior to submission of the thesis, doctoral students may apply to the Doctoral Committee, in writing and giving their reasons, to change their supervisor. If supervision becomes impossible before completion of the thesis, the Doctoral Committee is obliged, within the realms of possibility, to ensure that another supervisor in accordance with Art. 7 takes over supervision. In the event of any dispute, all parties must first be given an opportunity to make their case.
- (2) If another member of the group of professors takes over as supervisor, a renewed application for acceptance in accordance with Art. 5 of these Doctoral Degree Regulations is not necessary. A new Supervision Agreement must be presented.
- (3) Before submission of the thesis, doctoral students may apply to the Doctoral Committee, in writing and giving their reasons, to suspend or terminate the doctoral relationship. In addition to stating their reasons, they must also submit a detailed interim or final report, as applicable. They will then not be classed as having failed the doctorate and re-application is possible.
- (4) There should generally be no longer than five years between acceptance as a doctoral student and the start of the doctoral examination process. The Doctoral Committee can withdraw acceptance of the doctoral student after five years. If acceptance is withdrawn, the student is classed as having failed the doctorate and is not allowed to repeat.
- (5) Acceptance as a doctoral student cannot be withdrawn if the reason for the delay is beyond the student's control. This applies in particular in the case of
 - a) prohibitions on working in accordance with the German Maternity Protection Act (MuSchG);
 - b) parenting leave in accordance with Section 15 of the German Act on Parental Allowance and Parental Leave (BEEG);
 - c) a chronic illness or a disability within the meaning of Section 2 (1) of Book IX of the German Social Code (SGB);
 - d) illness of dependent children and adult dependent relatives;
 - e) periods of service pursuant to Section 12a (1) or (2) of the German Basic Law or corresponding voluntary service for a temporary period of up to two years.

Evidence must be supplied to the Doctoral Committee without delay.

Article 11 Admission to and introduction of doctoral examination process

- (1) The doctoral student makes a written application to the Doctoral Committee to open the doctoral examination process. The following documents must be submitted with the application:
 - a) an updated academic curriculum vitae;
 - b) where applicable, evidence that any requirements have been satisfied;
 - c) three copies of the thesis on paper and an electronic version on a permanent data storage device;
 - d) a declaration stating whether the submitted thesis has already been submitted for another doctoral degree.
- (2) An affidavit must be submitted with the thesis, stating that
 - a) the thesis was completed independently and without unauthorised outside assistance and only with the assistance stated;
 - b) all text passages that have been taken word for word or paraphrased from published writing and all details that are based on verbal information have been identified as such;

- c) the principles of good scientific practice have been observed.
- (3) The decision on admission to the doctoral examination process is made by the Doctoral Committee.
- (4) Admission will be denied if the evidence required in accordance with Para. 1 and Para. 2 is not submitted or not submitted in full.
- (5) Admission will be denied if, at the time of making the decision,
 - a) the thesis has previously been assessed as unsuitable at another higher education institution or the candidate failed the examination;
 - b) there are circumstances that would justify revocation of the doctoral degree under state (*Land*) law.
- (6) Withdrawal of the application for admission to the doctoral examination process after admission is permissible if the doctoral candidate has special grounds that are acknowledged by the Doctoral Committee as long as the doctoral examination process has not been terminated by rejection of the thesis or the thesis defence has not begun. One copy of the submitted thesis is retained with the doctoral records in any event.

Article 12 Appointment of examiners

- (1) On admission of the doctoral candidate in accordance with Art. 11, the Doctoral Committee appoints at least two examiners who hold doctorates to review the thesis. They must be able, based on their academic qualifications, to make a detailed assessment of the thesis in its specialist subject matter (Requirements and conditions for conferral of the right to award doctoral degrees at universities of applied sciences in the German State of Hesse, see Appendix 1).
- (2) The examiners must not be the first or second supervisor for the doctoral degree.
- (3) The first examiner must be a member of the Doctoral Research Centre and be able to demonstrate that they satisfy the relevant criteria (see Appendix 1).
- (4) Further details of the (second) examiners and the relevant criteria are covered in Appendix 1.
- (5) The doctoral candidate may nominate examiners.

Article 13 Thesis assessment

- (1) Each examiner produces a report on the thesis and submits it to the Chair of the Doctoral Committee. In the report, the examiner proposes either approval or rejection of the thesis or, in exceptional cases, returning it to the doctoral candidate for revision. The thesis is simultaneously awarded one of the following classifications:
 - summa cum laude – outstanding, exceptional achievement (0),
 - magna cum laude – very good achievement (1),
 - cum laude – good achievement (2),
 - rite – sufficient achievement (3),
 - non rite – insufficient achievement (4).
- (2) A thesis that is classified as “non rite” will not be recommended for approval.
- (3) If revision to the thesis is necessary, the Doctoral Committee decides to return it to the doctoral candidate for revision by a set deadline. The doctoral candidate will be notified in writing of corrections and/or amendments and the set deadline. The time allowed should not exceed one year. The deadline can be extended under special circumstances. If the

doctoral candidate resubmits by the deadline, the thesis is reassessed according to the existing provisions, and a decision is reached; if the candidate does not meet the deadline, the thesis is rejected and the doctoral examination process is completed unsuccessfully. Further revisions are not possible.

- (4) The reports must be written separately. In each report, the outcome of the review must be explained transparently.
- (5) If a report has not been submitted within eight weeks of the appointment of the examiners, the Chair of the Doctoral Committee is required to seek clarification. If a report has not been submitted after a further eight weeks, the Doctoral Committee may appoint a new examiner.
- (6) If the examiners fail to agree on returning the thesis, or if the reports differ from each other by more than one grade, the Chair of the Doctoral Committee must attempt to clarify and resolve the situation. If this is not possible, a further report must be obtained, preferably from a professor or an adjunct lecturer from another university of applied sciences.
- (7) The Chair sends all reports to the members of the Doctoral Committee and the Examination Committee and makes the thesis with the reports available for consultation. The consultation period is two weeks.
- (8) Anyone wishing to make a statement after consulting the thesis may notify the Doctoral Committee in writing within the consultation period. The statement must be submitted to the Doctoral Committee within two weeks.
- (9) The doctoral candidate is entitled to information on the examiners' reports.
- (10) When all reports have been submitted, the final grade of the thesis is calculated. It is calculated from the arithmetic mean of the separate grades awarded. If the calculated average is not a whole number, the lower grade is awarded for 0.6 and below. Candidates require a final grade of at least 3 to be admitted to the defence.

Article 14 Decision on thesis approval

- (1) After expiry of the consultation period (Art. 13(7)), the Doctoral Committee decides on approval of the thesis based on the examiners' recommendations and any statements received (Art. 13(8)). If the examiners' recommendations regarding approval of the thesis differ, and in other cases of doubt, further examiners may be appointed in order to reach a final decision. The candidate may be heard in this case; the decision is made by the Doctoral Committee.
- (2) When the thesis has been approved at the latest, the Chair of the Doctoral Committee sets the date of the defence. This should take place no later than eight weeks after approval of the thesis.
- (3) The thesis is rejected if it is rejected by the majority of the Doctoral Committee or all the examiners. The doctoral candidate must be informed of rejection of the thesis in writing and with the reasons. The doctoral candidate may submit one new or improved thesis. Further repetition is not permitted.
- (4) The thesis and the research data, all reports, additional reports and statements are retained with the records of the Doctoral Committee.

Article 15 Examination Committee

- (1) The Doctoral Committee sets up the Examination Committee at the latest on submission of the reports.
- (2) The Doctoral Committee appoints a Chair who is not one of the supervisors or examiners.
- (3) The Examination Committee is made up of the following:
 - a) the Chair;
 - b) all examiners of the thesis;
 - c) the supervisor and any second supervisor, and
 - d) one other member who is a professor qualified in the subject area and from a department of Social Work at the participating partner universities.
- (4) The Examination Committee conducts and assesses the defence and arrives at a final grade. It decides whether the defence needs to be repeated and sets the requirements for publication of the thesis and the deadline by which they must be met.

Article 16 Defence

- (1) The oral viva voce examination takes the form of a separate thesis defence held by the Examination Committee for each doctoral candidate.
- (2) The thesis defence is open to members of the universities of applied sciences belonging to the Doctoral Research Centre; the date is announced at least two weeks in advance.
- (3) The Chair of the Examination Committee presides over the defence.
- (4) The Chair writes a report documenting the conduct, key content and outcome of the examination; the report is retained with the records of the Doctoral Committee.
- (5) The doctoral candidate and the members of the Examination Committee are invited to attend this examination personally at least two weeks in advance.
- (6) On the day of the examination, before the defence begins, the doctoral candidate gives a presentation on the thesis or on a topic of the candidate's choice from the area of the thesis; the presentation should be no longer than 30 minutes.
- (7) The doctoral candidate subsequently defends the thesis before the Examination Committee. The defence discusses the content of the thesis, draws on the examiners' reports and also extends to problems touched on in the thesis in the disciplines associated with Social Work. The members of the Examination Committee are required to participate actively in the discussion with the doctoral candidate. The defence generally takes between 60 and 90 minutes.
- (8) If the thesis has been submitted in a foreign language and the Doctoral Committee agrees, the presentation and the defence may be held in that language. If the defence is held in a foreign language, a German version of the report must also be produced.
- (9) The classifications referred to in Art. 13 (1) are used to grade the defence. Each member of the Examination Committee awards a grade. The overall grade of the defence is calculated from the arithmetic mean of the separate grades awarded by the members of the Examination Committee. If the calculated average is not a whole number, the lower grade is awarded for 0.6 and below. The candidate requires a final grade of at least 3 to pass the defence. The grade awarded to the defence is discussed in closed session.

- (10) If the thesis defence cannot take place on account of the doctoral candidate, or if the doctoral candidate decides not to defend the thesis, the candidate is judged as having failed the defence.
- (11) If the candidate fails the defence, they are only required to repeat the defence. Only one attempt to repeat the defence is permitted, at the earliest three months and at the latest one year after the failed defence. In special circumstances the deadline can be extended on application by the doctoral candidate. If the candidate fails the defence again or it is judged as a fail, the doctoral examination process is classed as having been completed unsuccessfully.

Article 17 Overall result

- (1) Directly after the defence, the Examination Committee decides in closed session on the overall result of the doctoral degree.
- (2) The candidate must pass both the thesis and the defence with at least grade 3.
- (3) The overall result is made up of the grade for the thesis and the grade for the defence, where the grade for the thesis carries 75% and that for the defence 25%. If the calculated average is not a whole number, the lower grade is awarded for 0.6 and below. An overall grade of at least 3 is a pass. The distinctions are:
 - summa cum laude – outstanding, exceptional achievement (0),
 - magna cum laude – very good achievement (1),
 - cum laude – good achievement (2),
 - rite – sufficient achievement (3).
- (4) The Examination Committee records in writing, based on the reports, whether publication of the thesis is subject to any requirements, and if so, what they are. Requirements may be corrections, tightening up or minor revisions.
- (5) Following the defence, the Chair notifies the doctoral candidate of the outcome of the defence, the overall result and, where applicable, any requirements for publication, and instructs the candidate that they are not entitled to use the doctoral title until after graduation in accordance with Art. 21. This brings the doctoral examination process to a close. Enrolled doctoral candidates are removed from the student register at the end of the semester in which they are notified of the overall result.

Article 18 Repeat attempt

- (1) If the first attempt at the doctorate fails, the doctoral candidate may re-apply in accordance with Art. 5 once only by submitting a new thesis, at the earliest after one year.
- (2) If the doctoral degree requirements are not met as a result of the doctoral candidate failing to submit the deposit copies or infringing in some other way against these Doctoral Degree Regulations, the Doctoral Committee will decide whether and under which conditions they may repeat.

Article 19 Examination records

The examination records are confidential and retained by the Doctoral Research Centre.

Article 20 Thesis publication

- (1) After passing the examination, the doctoral candidate is required to publish the thesis in accordance with the requirements set by the Examination Committee; the version that is to be published must be approved by a member of the Examination Committee in consultation with the Chair of the Doctoral Committee. If the requirements are not met, the candidate fails the doctorate.
- (2) The publication must be identified as a thesis of the four partner universities (Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences, Fulda University of Applied Sciences, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, and RheinMain University of Applied Sciences). If by agreement with the Doctoral Committee the thesis is published in an extended or abridged version or in extracts only, this must be clearly indicated.
- (3) The doctoral candidate is required to supply the required number of deposit copies of the thesis in accordance with Para. 4 to the library of the university to which the first supervisor belongs within one year of the defence. These copies are distributed in the partner universities. The library confirms that the doctoral candidate has submitted the deposit copies in accordance with the requirements. The confirmation must be submitted to the Chair of the Doctoral Committee. The Doctoral Committee may extend the deadline for deposit by one year in justified cases and if an application is made in good time.
- (4) The deposit copies may be submitted in the following forms:
 - a) An electronic version and six permanently bound copies on permanent paper.

The electronic version is published on a university publication server of the libraries belonging to the Doctoral Research Centre. The other libraries of the universities belonging to the Doctoral Research Centre have electronic access to it.

The electronic version must include an abstract in German and English. The doctoral candidate must confirm that the electronic version corresponds to the approved thesis. The data format must be discussed with the library, which checks that the deposited version is readable and meets the stipulated requirements.

The library of the first supervisor's university is granted the right, within the scope of the statutory duties, to produce and distribute further copies of the thesis and/or provide access to them in data networks. It is also granted the right to publish the abstract in bibliographic databases. The library makes the mandatory deposit with the German National Library (DNB).
 - b) Six copies if the thesis is published by a commercial publisher, where the minimum print run is shown to be 150 copies, or by publishing on demand.
 - c) Six copies if the thesis is published wholly or in part in a scientific journal with a minimum print run of 150 copies or in electronic form.

In cases b and c it is possible to grant the library of the first supervisor's university the right to publish electronically in parallel on a university publication server of the libraries belonging to the Doctoral Research Centre.

- (5) The thesis must have a cover page identifying it as such. The cover must show
 - the thesis topic,
 - the name of the Doctoral Research Centre,
 - the name of the partner universities,
 - the doctoral candidate's name, date and place of birth,
 - the doctoral candidate's previous academic degree,

- the title and name of the supervisors,
- the title and name of the examiners,
- the submission date and examination date,
- the place and year of publication.

In the case of Para. 4 b and c, it is sufficient if the copies have a notation or reference indicating that the publication is a thesis of the partner universities. The locations of the partner universities must also be given. If the title has changed, the title of the thesis when it was submitted must additionally be indicated.

Article 21 Graduation and conferral of doctoral degree

- (1) As soon as the required copies of the thesis have been deposited, the certificate conferring the doctoral degree is awarded or sent to the doctoral candidate. From this point, the candidate is the holder of a doctorate and entitled to use the doctoral title.
- (2) In the event of publication in accordance with Art. 20 (4) b or c, the Chair of the Doctoral Committee can issue the doctoral certificate on presentation of a written and legally binding original contract with a publisher covering publication of the thesis if the doctoral candidate has already provided a security to the Doctoral Centre for Social Work in the form of a “qualified surety” (Sections 232, 233, 239, 240 of the German Civil Code [BGB]) covering the estimated publication costs or if a certificate covering a publication cost subsidy from another source is presented. If the copies as provided for in Art. 20 are deposited within two years of the doctoral certificate being issued, the Doctoral Research Centre is required to relinquish the surety. If the doctoral candidate does not deposit the copies stated in Art. 20 by the deadline, the Chair of the Doctoral Committee will arrange for publication in accordance with Art. 21 using the surety provided.
- (3) The doctoral degree certificate is dated to the day of the thesis defence and issued in triplicate. It is signed by the Chair of the Doctoral Committee and the President of the first supervisor’s university of applied sciences and carries the official seal of that university.
- (4) The doctoral candidate can apply through the Doctoral Research Centre to have a provisional document certifying the doctoral degree issued for a limited period. This does not entitle the candidate to use the doctoral title.

Article 22 Denial of graduation and withdrawal of doctoral degree

- (1) If it is found before the doctoral degree certificate is issued that essential conditions for admission to the doctoral examination process were incorrectly assumed to have been met or that the applicant attempted to cheat or cheated in the course of the doctorate, graduation will be denied. The decision is made by the Doctoral Committee.
- (2) Once the doctoral degree certificate has been issued, withdrawal of the doctoral title is subject to state (*Land*) law. Return of the doctoral degree certificate is governed by the provisions of the Hesse Administrative Procedure Act (AVG) as in effect at any given time.
- (3) Before the decision to deny graduation or withdraw the doctoral degree is made, the individual concerned must be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations by an appropriate deadline.

Article 23 Continuation

In the event that the Doctoral Research Centre ceases to exist or the supervisor leaves the Doctoral Research Centre, ongoing doctoral examination processes may continue to completion.

Article 24 Appeals

The individual may appeal against decisions of the Doctoral Committee to the Doctoral Committee or to the President of the first supervisor's university. If the Doctoral Committee does not remedy the appeal, it passes it immediately to the President of the supervisor's university with details of the case, the reasons for rejection and a proposed procedure. The President of the supervisor's university issues the decision on the appeal.

Article 25 Entry into force

These Doctoral Degree Regulations enter into force on the day after the last publication in the official journals of record of the partner universities. They apply to all doctoral students commencing their doctoral research project on or after the date on which the Regulations come into force. Doctoral candidates who commenced their doctoral research project under the old version dated 01.02.2017 must specify in writing under which version of the Doctoral Degree Regulations they wish to proceed. These Doctoral Degree Regulations will apply to all doctoral candidates by 31.12.2023 at the latest.

Darmstadt, Frankfurt am Main, Fulda, and Wiesbaden, 01.01.2019

Prof. Dr. Detlev Reymann
President of Hochschule RheinMain
University of Applied Sciences
Wiesbaden Rüsselsheim

Prof. Dr. Karim Khakzar
President of Hochschule Fulda
University of Applied Sciences
Fulda

Prof. Dr. Frank E.P. Dievernich
President of Hochschule Frankfurt
University of Applied Sciences
Frankfurt am Main

Prof. Dr. Ralph Stengler
President of Hochschule Darmstadt
University of Applied Sciences
Darmstadt