

**New version of the doctoral degree regulations of School VI - Medicine and Health Sciences  
of the University of Oldenburg for awarding the titles of “Doctor” or “Doctor of Medicine (Dr. med.)”  
and “Medical Doctor - Doctor of Philosophy (MD-Ph.D.)”**

dated 21/03/2022<sup>1</sup>

unofficial reading version

On 12 January 2022, the School Council of School IV - Medicine and Health Sciences of the University of Oldenburg approved the first amendment to the doctoral degree regulations for awarding the titles of ‘Doctor’ or ‘Doctor of Medicine (Dr. med.)’ and ‘Medical Doctor - Doctor of Philosophy (MD-Ph.D.)’, in the version dated 12 October 2021, in accordance with Section 9.3(1) of the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (NHG) (in the version published on 26 February 2007 in the Lower Saxony Law and Official Gazette, p. 69), which was last amended by Article 4 of the Act of 15 June 2017 (Lower Saxony Law and Official Gazette, p. 172). The amendment was approved by the Presidential Board on 8 March 2022 in accordance with Section 44.1(3) of the NHG.

**Table of contents:**

Section 1	Purpose of the doctorate and doctoral assignments
Section 2	Responsibilities
Section 3	Cross-school and international doctorates
Section 4	Doctorate Committee
Section 5	Examination Committee
Section 6	Assessors
Section 7	Supervision, acceptance as a doctoral candidate
Section 8	Admission requirements
Section 8a	Admission procedure, acceptance, enrolment
Section 9	Doctoral thesis
Section 10	Initiating the doctoral degree procedure
Section 11	Assessing the doctoral thesis
Section 12	Thesis defence
Section 13	Assessing the doctoral assignments, completing the doctorate
Section 14	Publication of the doctoral thesis
Section 15	Concluding the doctorate
Section 16	Unsuccessful termination of the doctoral degree procedure
Section 17	Withdrawal of the doctoral application
Section 18	Invalidity of the doctoral assignments
Section 19	Access to doctoral records
Section 20	Appeal
Section 21	Honorary doctorate
Section 22	Entry into force
Section 23	Transitional provisions

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<sup>1</sup> Date of electronic publication.

## **Section 1**

### **Purpose of the doctorate and doctoral assignments**

- (1) The doctorate serves as proof of the ability to conduct in-depth, independent academic work.
- (2) Candidates must complete the following doctoral assignments:
  - a) A written assignment (doctoral thesis), the subject matter of which belongs to the field of medicine and health sciences and corresponds to the desired title. Further details are specified in Section 9.
  - b) An oral examination (defence). Further details are specified in Section 12.
  - c) Successful completion of the accompanying curriculum (Dr. med.) or of the structured doctoral programme (MD-PhD). Further details are specified in the process-specific provisions in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.
  - d) Publication of the doctoral thesis. Further details are specified in Section 14.
- (3) School VI – Medicine and Health Sciences (hereinafter referred to as the School) awards the title of Doctor of Medicine (Doctor medicinae, Dr. med. for short) and, as part of a structured doctoral programme, the title of Medical Doctor – Doctor of Philosophy (MD-PhD), for in-depth, independent scientific achievements in the field of medicine and health sciences on the basis of the following provisions for doctoral assignments in accordance with para. 1.

## **Section 2**

### **Responsibilities**

- (1) The following are involved in the doctoral programme
  - a) the Doctorate Committee (Section 4),
  - b) the Examination Committee (Section 5),
  - c) the assessors (Section 6),
  - d) the first supervisor of the doctoral project as well as the Supervisory Committee, if appointed (Section 7),
  - e) the Dean.
- (2) The Doctorate Committee decides on all procedural matters, unless the doctoral degree regulations state otherwise.
- (3) The Examination Committee carries out the thesis defence and evaluates it.
- (4) The assessors assess the doctoral thesis.
- (5) The first supervisor advises and supports the doctoral candidate in preparing the doctoral thesis (Section 7). The first supervisor prepares a written statement (votum informativum). If a Supervisory Committee has been appointed, it oversees the supervision of the doctoral thesis (Section 7.3).
- (6) The Dean concludes the procedure by issuing the certificate.

## **Section 3**

### **Cross-school and international doctorates**

(1) A doctoral degree procedure can be carried out across schools provided that the topic of the doctoral thesis can be allocated to several schools and that the respective other school is in agreement. The title of doctor is awarded collectively by the schools. However, it can also be awarded by the School of Medicine and Health Sciences alone.

(2) Joint doctoral degree procedures (bi-national doctorate) can be carried out as part of international doctoral programmes or based on a co-operation agreement with the University of Groningen (UG) or the University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG), or another higher education institute abroad or non-university research institution (hereinafter referred to as 'co-operation partner'). Before initiating these procedures, the parties involved must confer with regard to the particularities of a bi-national doctorate. Joint doctoral degree procedures with higher education institutes in Germany and non-university research institutions in Germany (hereinafter referred to as 'co-operation partner') can also be carried out by the School based on co-operation agreements or in a joint academic institution according to Section 36a of the NHG. If permissible, the title of 'Doctor' is jointly awarded by the School and the competent institution of the cooperation partner, or else by way of a double doctorate, if the cooperation partner is authorised to award doctoral degrees; if this is not the case, the title is awarded by the School with reference to the cooperation. For procedures with the University of Groningen, the specific regulations according to Appendix 6 'Bi-national doctoral degree procedures with the University of Groningen (UG)' apply.

## **Section 4**

### **Doctorate Committee**

(1) The School forms a Doctorate Committee from among its members by decision of the School Council, which consists of one university lecturer or a habilitated member or associate as Chair and, in general, four further university lecturers or habilitated members or associates. The majority of members must hold a doctorate in human medicine or a relevant professorship. The committee includes two members who are research assistants with a doctoral degree and have voting rights and one member from the accepted doctoral candidates with an advisory vote. All members have up to three representatives. The members of the Doctorate Committee and their representatives are elected by the School Council according to status groups for a term of two years; the accepted doctoral candidates are elected for a term of one year. The order of representatives is to be determined when the committee is elected. The Chair is elected by the School Council.

(2) The Doctorate Committee makes decisions by majority vote. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair has the casting vote. Abstentions are not permitted. The deliberations of the Doctorate Committee are not public.

## **Section 5**

### **Examination Committee**

(1) The Doctorate Committee appoints an Examination Committee for each doctoral degree procedure following acceptance of the doctoral thesis. If possible, subject areas covered in the doctoral thesis outside of medicine and health sciences should be taken into account when assembling the committee. In the case of bi-national or other joint doctoral degree procedures (Section 3), lecturers of the co-operation partner should be given appropriate consideration when assembling the committee. The Chair is appointed by the Doctorate Committee. Decisions of the Examination Committees are made by majority vote.

(2) The Examination Committee consists of at least three and no more than five members:

a) at least one member or deputy member of the Doctorate Committee, who is a university lecturer or is at least habilitated and, as a rule, chairs the Examination Committee

b) at least one of the assessors

c) a further authorised examiner, where appropriate

If the Chair resigns from the Doctorate Committee after the Examination Committee has been established, they continue to chair the Examination Committee until the end of the doctoral degree procedure.

Up to two further examiners can be appointed. Of these, one person may be a research assistant with a doctoral degree at the suggestion of the doctoral candidate.

(3) The majority of members must belong to the School. In justified exceptional cases, it may also be fewer. Section 4 (2) will apply *mutatis mutandis*.

(4) Authorised examiners can be members of university teaching staff in accordance with Section 16.2.4(1) of the NHG or other habilitated members or associates of the university, private lecturers not on leave, honorary professors as well as lecturers who are retired or have dispensation, in addition to independent junior research group leaders with a doctorate who have received their function after an external assessment by recognised research or research funding institutions. The School Council shall decide whether a research or research funding institution is to be considered a recognised institution. In certain cases and at the suggestion of the Doctorate Committee, the Faculty Council can also grant persons with a doctorate who do not meet these formal qualifications authorisation to conduct examinations.

## **Section 6**

### **Assessors**

(1) The Doctorate Committee appoints two assessors to assess the doctoral thesis. The assessors should, as a rule, be from different subject areas of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences. In the case of a bi-national or other joint doctoral degree procedure in accordance with Section 3.2, one assessor may be from the co-operation partner. One of the reports can also be drawn up by an external assessor. They have the same rights as the other assessors in the doctoral degree procedure. The reports must be drawn up independently of one another.

(1) The assessors must meet the requirements according to Section 5.4.

(2) The doctoral candidate can suggest an assessor.

## **Section 7**

### **Supervision, acceptance as a doctoral candidate**

(1) The doctoral project should be agreed with a university lecturer or another habilitated member or associate of the university (within the meaning of Section 5.4) of the applicable subject area. They supervise the doctoral thesis substantively and are the first supervisor. They support the doctoral degree procedure by submitting a written statement (*votum informativum*), which acknowledges the written doctoral assignment and specifies the doctoral candidate's own contribution as well as the role of other contributing researchers in the doctoral thesis, if applicable. The *votum informativum* is submitted with the doctoral thesis. It does not contain a proposal for grading the doctoral thesis.

(2) A university lecturer of a co-operation partner can also be selected as first supervisor in accordance with Section 3.2, provided that the qualification according to Section 5.4 is fulfilled. This requires the approval of the Doctorate Committee upon admission to the doctoral programme. In this case, supervisors have the right to exercise the rights of a member of teaching staff in the School of the doctoral degree procedure. A further supervisor who fulfils the qualification according to Section 5.4 must be a member or associate of the School in this case.

(3) In addition, the doctorate is to be supervised by a Supervisory Committee. The doctoral candidate can make suggestions. In justified exceptional cases, academics from non-university research institutions can also be appointed members of the Supervisory Committee if they hold a doctorate and have

at least five years of professional experience in the responsible research position. Further details are determined by the relevant Doctorate Committee.

(4) By entering into a written Supervision Agreement (according to the document published on the School's website), which has to be countersigned by the Chair of the Doctorate Committee after verifying the admission requirements according to Section 8, the doctoral candidate is granted the status of 'accepted doctoral candidate' before formal acceptance of their doctoral project in accordance with Section 8a. Section 7 (2) will apply mutatis mutandis. The application for admission to the doctoral programme must be submitted within one year after acceptance as a doctoral candidate. If the candidate has still not been admitted after this period in accordance with Section 8a, an application for extension, which has to be countersigned by the first supervisor of the doctoral studies, must be submitted every three years to the Doctorate Committee in order to maintain the status as 'accepted doctoral candidate'. The applicant may request that the Doctorate Committee arrange supervision.

(5) A logbook must be kept regularly (according to the document published on the School's website).

(6) If the first supervisor of a doctoral thesis retires from the School, they have the option to supervise the doctoral thesis until the end of the doctorate.

(7) The supervisory relationship can only be terminated by the first supervisor for objective or personal reasons after careful consideration. This supervisor must notify the doctoral candidate and the Chair of the relevant Doctorate Committee immediately, stating the reasons. In this case, the Doctorate Committee will endeavour to quickly find a replacement supervisor.

(8) If there are serious problems in the supervisory relationship, the doctoral candidate can contact the relevant Doctorate Committee. In this case, the Doctorate Committee will mediate between the doctoral candidate and first supervisor or Supervisory Committee and endeavour to find a solution.

## **Section 8**

### **Admission requirements**

(1) In order to be admitted to the doctoral programme, candidates must complete the Human Medicine degree programme by passing the medical examination. Other corresponding degrees obtained abroad may be recognised subject to a special review by the Doctorate Committee and provided that the Doctorate Committee deems the final medical examination taken by the candidate to be equivalent to the medical examination taken in accordance with German licensing regulations. The Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Federal Law Gazette 2007 Part II, p. 712 ff.) must be taken into account. The Doctorate Committee can also base its decision on a recommendation of the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) at the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK).

(2) Notwithstanding para. 1, the Doctorate Committee can also request a certificate of equivalence from the relevant medical association by majority vote. This must then be submitted by the applicant in a reasonable time frame. Only then can a decision be made on admission to the doctoral programme.

(3) Admission to the doctoral programme will be refused to anyone who

- a) is completing a similar doctoral project at another school or another higher education institute,
- b) has already completed a similar doctoral project at another school or another higher education institute without success, except in justified individual cases, or
- c) has already successfully completed a similar doctoral project at another school or another higher education institute and is entitled to use the doctoral title sought with the doctorate.

## Section 8 a

### Admission procedure, acceptance, enrolment

(1) Applications for admission to the doctoral programme and thus for 'acceptance as a doctoral candidate', unless already done according to Section 7, must be submitted to the Chair of the Doctorate Committee in writing.

(2) The following documents must be submitted with the application:

- a) a CV in German with details of the education, accompanied by a list of any scientific publications,
- b) a detailed proposal for the planned thesis,
- c) proof of the higher education entrance qualification,
- d) academic transcripts and evidence pursuant to Section 8.1,
- e) a declaration of any grounds for refusal pursuant to Section 8.3,
- f) a declaration stating whether clinical trials on people, epidemiological studies with personal data or tests on extracted human material with reference to individuals (Ethics Committee), experiments involving genetically modified organisms (Genetic Engineering Act) or experiments on vertebrates (animal testing approval) are to be carried out. If applicable, a copy of the approval from the competent authority shall be submitted to the Doctorate Committee before the start.
- g) if applicable, an application for a bi-national doctorate or another joint doctoral degree procedure (Section 3.2) that specifies the cooperation partner,
- h) a declaration that you are aware of the regulations on good academic practice at the University of Oldenburg and that you will adhere to those regulations,
- i) a declaration of an authorised examiner pursuant to Section 5.4 stating their willingness to supervise the planned doctoral thesis of the applicant and to submit a written statement (votum informativum), a signed Supervision Agreement stating the members of the Supervisory Committee, and, if applicable, an application to appoint a first supervisor pursuant to Section 7.2 or 7.4,
- j) a declaration that no mediation or consultancy services (doctoral coaching) have been, are being or will be used in connection with the doctoral project,
- k) a declaration that the applicant has not already used major parts of the thesis in an examination component for a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Diplom or similar,
- l) declaration of consent for plagiarism checking.

All submitted documents - with the exception of originals and academic transcripts, certified copies of which must be submitted - shall become the property of the university.

(3) If the applicant submits proof that they have completed a degree abroad, the Doctorate Committee shall verify in accordance with Section 8.1 and 8.2 whether it is equivalent to German qualifications.

(4) If an application is submitted for a bi-national doctorate or another joint doctoral procedure (2g), the chair of the Doctorate Committee shall seek to conclude an appropriate co-operation agreement with the desired university.

(5) If there is sufficient evidence that the conditions for admission have been met pursuant to Section 8.1 and 8.2 and the documents and declarations referred to in Section 8 a. 2 have been submitted, the Doctorate Committee admits the applicant to the doctoral programme and accepts them as a doctoral candidate unless there are grounds for refusal pursuant to Section 8.3, or if it is not expected that

the applicant will be able to provide proof of their ability to conduct in-depth academic work independently during the doctoral procedure. When the applicant is admitted, they are granted the status of doctoral candidate. The candidate loses this status when they complete the doctorate or ultimately fail to complete the doctorate.

(6) After being admitted to the doctoral programme, doctoral candidates must register as doctoral students as soon as possible.

## **Section 9**

### **Doctoral thesis**

(1) The doctoral thesis must demonstrate the author's ability to conduct in-depth, independent academic work and provide proof of their contribution to scientific progress in a specific area of medicine and health sciences.

(2) The doctoral thesis must be written in either German or English. It may be stipulated by individual agreement that the doctoral thesis should be submitted in one of the two languages. In addition, an English summary must be included in German theses, and a German summary must be included in English theses. The title page should be designed in accordance with the template (Appendix 3).

(3) Several papers in the field of medicine and health sciences published or accepted for publication in a peer reviewed academic journal may also be recognised as a doctoral thesis if they meet the requirements in accordance with (1) in their entirety. The link between them shall be specifically stated in the summary pursuant to para. 2 sentence 3. The doctoral candidate should be the first author. A first authorship in accordance with these regulations also exists in the case of shared first authorship (equal contribution). It must be possible to unambiguously define and assess the doctoral candidate's own contribution as an individual scientific achievement which meets the requirements according to Section 1.1. As a rule, no more than three years should have elapsed since the last publication at the time of the doctoral application. If the doctoral thesis is submitted as an offprint of a publication, a detailed summary (consisting of an introduction, detailed discussion of the results with differentiation of the authors' individual achievements and an abstract) must be included. The accuracy of the statement must be confirmed in writing by the first supervisor.

## **Section 10**

### **Initiating the doctoral degree procedure**

(1) The doctoral candidate applies to the Doctorate Committee to initiate the doctoral degree procedure. As a rule, the application must be made one year after admission at the earliest and no later than five years after being admitted to the doctoral programme. In justified cases, these deadlines can be altered by a reasonable period of time upon request and after hearing the doctoral candidate and first supervisor. If the application to initiate the doctoral degree procedure is not made on time, or if the deadline or extended deadline is not met, the doctoral application shall be deemed to be withdrawn. The Chair of the Doctorate Committee shall inform the doctoral candidate, first supervisor of the doctoral thesis and school management of this.

(2) The following documents must be submitted when applying to initiate the doctoral degree procedure:

- a) four written copies and a digital version of the doctoral thesis written in German or English,
- b) a sworn statement that the applicant has produced the doctoral thesis "independently and without any inadmissible external help, i.e. produced without using any aids other than those stated and has identified as such the thoughts taken directly or indirectly from external sources"

- c) a declaration that the contents of the doctoral thesis have not already been used in large part in an examination component for the candidate's own Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Diplom or similar,
- d) evidence of successful completion of the accompanying curriculum (Dr. med.) or of the successful completion of the structured doctoral programme (MD-PhD). Further details are specified in the process-specific provisions in Appendix 1.
- e) evidence of keeping a logbook,
- f) if applicable, an up-to-date CV in German with details of the candidate's education, accompanied by a list of any scientific publications,
- g) a declaration stating whether clinical trials on people, epidemiological studies with personal data or tests on extracted human material with reference to individuals (Ethics Committee), experiments involving genetically modified organisms (Genetic Engineering Act) or experiments on vertebrates (animal testing approval) were carried out. If not already done at the admission stage, a copy of the approval from the competent authority shall be submitted to the Doctorate Committee, wherever applicable
- h) if applicable, suggestions for an assessor in accordance with Section 6,
- i) a declaration that you have adhered to the regulations on good academic practice at the University of Oldenburg,
- j) if necessary, proof in accordance with Section 8a.6 of enrolment as a doctoral student,
- k) a declaration that no mediation or advisory services (doctoral counselling) were used in connection with the doctoral project,
- l) in the case of a joint doctoral degree procedure or a bi-national doctorate in accordance with Section 3.2, confirmation from the co-operation partner that the doctoral project is being carried out.

(3) The Doctorate Committee initiates the doctoral degree procedure by appointing the Examination Committee in accordance with Section 5 and the assessors in accordance with Section 6 for assessment of the doctoral thesis, while taking into account the suggestions and declaration of the doctoral candidate. The Chair shall immediately inform the doctoral candidate of the committee's decisions as well as the composition of the Examination Committee.

## **Section 11**

### **Assessing the doctoral thesis**

(1) The assessors submit their report in writing, usually within four weeks, but no later than eight weeks after the doctoral degree procedure has been initiated, and recommend either accepting and continuing the procedure or amending or rejecting the doctoral thesis.

In the first instance, they propose one of the following grades at the same time:

very good	=	1
good	=	2
satisfactory	=	3

In the case of outstanding work, the thesis can also be awarded a grade 1 accompanied by "With Distinction (summa cum laude)". If the majority of assessors propose accepting the thesis, the procedure is continued in accordance with (4).

(2) If at least one assessor makes well-founded proposals for changes, the Doctorate Committee will decide by a majority of votes by its members, after hearing the doctoral candidate, whether the thesis



is to be returned for revision or whether the procedure will continue. It is only possible to return the thesis once for revision. The Chair of the Doctorate Committee notifies the doctoral candidate of the conditions in writing, stating the reasons, and appoints at least one further assessor. An appropriate time period is set for revision. After the thesis has been revised, the additional assessors will prepare a report or reports within the period specified in paragraph 1.1 after submission of the revised version; the other assessors will comment again on the revised version.

(3) If both assessors have proposed rejecting the thesis, the relevant Doctorate Committee shall reject the acceptance of the thesis. The doctoral degree procedure has thus been unsuccessful and, as such, is terminated. If one of the assessors proposes rejecting the thesis, the Doctorate Committee shall appoint an additional assessor. If the majority of assessors propose that the thesis be accepted, taking into account this report, the procedure is continued in accordance with (4). If, following submission of this additional report, the acceptance of the thesis is rejected by the majority of assessors, the doctoral degree procedure has been unsuccessful and is terminated. The rejected thesis shall be stored in the School files together with the reports.

(4) If the conditions for continuing the doctoral degree procedure have been met, the Chair of the Doctorate Committee shall inform the School's lecturers within the meaning of Section 5 (4), the members of the Doctorate Committee and the assessors of the submission of the reports and statements according to (1) - (3). At the same time, the thesis, reports and statements shall be made available to this group of persons in the School for a duration of two weeks for confidential consultation and the submission of special reports. The period of availability is extended to up to four weeks insofar as it falls partly or fully outside of lecture periods.

(5) When receiving special reports, the relevant Doctorate Committee may obtain further reports within four weeks. The Doctorate Committee decides on the consideration of special reports including any further reports for evaluating the thesis with a simple majority of lecturers or, if applicable, habilitated members or associates. If special reports are considered, the thesis, the reports, the special reports under consideration and any further reports obtained shall be made available again for two weeks.

(6) Once the deadline has passed, the relevant Doctorate Committee shall decide whether to accept or reject the thesis, taking into account all reports and the special reports under consideration. The Chair of the Doctorate Committee shall immediately inform the doctoral candidate of this decision in writing.

(7) If all assessors have proposed accepting the thesis, the overall grade awarded for the thesis is calculated from the arithmetic mean of the individual grades in accordance with Section 11.1.2 as follows:

from 1.0	to less than	1.5	=	very good	=	magna	=	1
						cum laude		
from 1.5	to less than	2.5	=	good	=	cum laude	=	2
from 2.5	to	3.5	=	satisfac- tory	=	rite	=	3

If all assessors have proposed a grade 1 accompanied by 'With Distinction', the overall grade awarded for the thesis is "With Distinction (summa cum laude)". In this case, the thesis with grade 1.0 is included in the overall evaluation of the doctoral assignment in accordance with Section 13. If the thesis was rejected by one assessor or returned for revision or if special reports were submitted in accordance with (3), the Doctorate Committee decides whether and to what extent the return of the thesis and the special reports shall be taken into account when awarding a grade. The rejection is included in the overall grade with a grade of 4.0.

## Section 12

## Thesis defence

(1) After the thesis has been accepted, the Doctorate Committee appoints the Examination Committee in accordance with Section 5. All selected members of the Examination Committee must be present in order to carry out the examination and evaluation. The Chair of the Examination Committee informs the doctoral candidate of the composition of the Examination Committee. The Chair of the Doctorate Committee must arrange the thesis defence immediately. The thesis defence should take place within four weeks following acceptance of the thesis unless there are significant personal reasons (e.g. illness, pregnancy, childcare, caring for relatives) that prevent this. Subject to the consent of the doctoral candidate, the Examination Committee may, in well-founded exceptional cases, unanimously decide to conduct the components of the thesis defence referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 electronically using visual and audio procedures that have been approved by the Presidential Board. The Chair of the Examination Committee shall inform the Doctorate Committee of the decision. In deviation from Section 2, paragraph 2, the Doctorate Committee does not vote on such cases. These procedures must ensure that all aspects of the examination process can be followed. A stable connection must be ensured for the entire duration of the thesis defence. It is also possible to allow only one examiner or only the doctoral candidate to join the thesis defence remotely.

(2) The Chair of the Examination Committee convenes the doctoral candidate and members of the Examination Committee to the thesis defence and announces the date to the School.

(3) The thesis defence consists of a public presentation about the aims, methods and results of the thesis or a sub-area thereof and a subsequent discussion led by the Chair of the Examination Committee. Further details are specified in the process-specific provisions in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. The discussion covers the entire subject area in connection with the topic. The expert reports on the thesis can also be included in the discussion. For this purpose, the doctoral candidate shall be granted access to the reports once they are notified of the acceptance of the thesis, notwithstanding the provisions set out in Section 19. Part of the discussion can take place non-publicly with the Examination Committee if the doctoral candidate so requests.

(4) The Examination Committee decides whether the oral examination has been passed in a private meeting held immediately after the oral examination. If it has been passed, the Examination Committee determines the overall grade of the oral examination in accordance with Section 11.1.1 and 11.7.1. The Chair of the Examination Committee shall notify the doctoral candidate of the result of the thesis defence immediately.

(5) If the doctoral candidate has not passed the thesis defence, they must be informed at the time of notification of the result of the thesis defence that they have the option to re-defend their thesis once if they make a written application to the Chair of the Doctorate Committee within one month. The oral examination can be retaken after four weeks at the earliest and must be retaken within one year at the latest.

(6) If the doctoral candidate fails to attend the thesis defence without providing an excuse, the examination is deemed to have been failed. In the event of an authorised absence, a new date shall be set in accordance with (1). The Examination Committee shall decide whether to accept the excuse.

(7) The Chair of the Examination Committee shall produce a record detailing the course of the oral examination and containing the essential subject matter and results of the thesis defence.

## Section 13

### Assessing the doctoral assignments, completing the doctorate

(1) Following the thesis defence, the Doctorate Committee decides how to evaluate the doctoral assignments of the doctoral candidate overall. The evaluation is calculated from the arithmetic mean of the unrounded result of the thesis defence, which counts once, and the unrounded result of the thesis, which counts twice. The following marks can be awarded as an overall grade:

from 1.0 to less than 1.5 = very good = magna cum laude = 1

from 1.5 to less than 2.5 = good = cum laude = 2

from 2.5 to 3.5 = satisfactory = rite = 3

(2) The Chair of the Doctorate Committee informs the doctoral candidate of the evaluation of the thesis and thesis defence and the overall grade.

(3) The doctorate is completed with the publication of the thesis in accordance with Section 14.

(4) The overall grade of "Passed with distinction" ("summa cum laude") can be awarded for doctoral assignments on the recommendation of the Examination Committee for particularly outstanding work. This recommendation is only valid if all the individual grades of the oral and written doctoral assignments are 1 and all assessors agree with the additional award of "Distinction". The recommendation must be justified in detail. At least one of the reports must have been drawn up by an external assessor. It may be necessary to request an additional external report. Assessors who are not present at the thesis defence shall submit their vote in writing. The relevant Doctorate Committee makes a decision about the recommendation, wherein only the representatives of the lecturers and, if applicable, habilitated members or associates are entitled to vote. The result of this decision does not need to be justified.

## Section 14

### Publication of the doctoral thesis

(1) The doctoral candidate shall make the thesis available to the scientific community in an appropriate manner by means of reproduction and distribution within one year of the successful thesis defence. For this purpose, the doctoral candidate must provide the University of Oldenburg's library and information system with the following, free of charge:

- a) three copies of the thesis in book or photocopy form as well as proof of publication of the thesis in a journal or of its essential parts in scientific journals **or**
- b) three copies of the thesis in book or photocopy form as well as proof of distribution via a bookstore by a commercial publisher with a minimum circulation of 150 copies; on the back of the title page, the publication must be identified as a thesis, stating the place of the thesis, **or**
- c) an electronic version, the data format and data carrier of which are to be agreed with the university library, as well as two printed and permanently bound copies of the thesis **and**
- d) two brief summaries approved by the first supervisor, written in German and English and each containing no more than 1,000 characters,
- e) if applicable, a declaration that the printed and electronic version are identical in terms of content and form.

In the case of c), the doctoral candidate shall grant the University of Oldenburg the right to produce and distribute additional copies of the thesis or make them available in data networks within the framework of the legal duties of the university libraries. The copyrights of the author remain otherwise unaffected.

(2) The supplied copies are to be provided with a title page, the front and back of which must be designed according to the template in Appendix 3.

(3) A brief description of the doctoral candidate's academic education can be included at the end of the thesis.

(4) The final print copy shall be submitted to the Chair of the Doctorate Committee. They will grant approval for printing. The doctoral candidate must seek permission from the Doctorate Committee for any discrepancies in content from the thesis prior to printing, stating the exact changes and corresponding reasons.

(5) In especially justified circumstances, the Chair of the Doctorate Committee can, upon request, extend the deadline for publication in accordance with (1).

## **Section 15**

### **Concluding the doctorate**

(1) The doctorate concludes with the issuing of the doctoral certificate by the management of the School. Prior to this, the doctoral candidate is not entitled to use the title of Doctor.

(2) Notwithstanding the above, the Doctorate Committee declares, at the request of the doctoral candidate, that the thesis and thesis defence have been completed and passed (Section 13).

(3) The doctoral certificate bears the date of publication of the thesis and is issued following publication of the thesis as the last part of the doctoral assignment and in accordance with the template in Appendix 4. In the case of a bi-national doctorate, a certificate is issued in accordance with Appendix 5; in the case of a bi-national doctorate with the University of Groningen, a certificate is issued in accordance with Appendix 6. The doctoral certificate is issued once the publication requirement has been met in accordance with Section 14.

## **Section 16**

### **Unsuccessful termination of the doctoral degree procedure**

(1) The doctoral degree procedure is terminated unsuccessfully if the thesis has been definitively rejected or the thesis defence definitively failed. The Chair of the Doctorate Committee informs the doctoral candidate of the result in writing.

(2) Candidates can only apply again for a doctorate once and only after one year. This is also the case if the first unsuccessful doctoral application took place at another university of science or institution authorised to award doctoral degrees either in Germany or abroad. A rejected thesis must not be submitted again in identical or substantially unchanged form for the purpose of obtaining a doctorate.

## **Section 17**

### **Withdrawal of the doctoral application**

A doctoral application may be withdrawn as long as the thesis has not been submitted by the doctoral candidate for assessment. After this time, withdrawal is only possible for significant personal reasons unrelated to the doctoral degree procedure. The Doctorate Committee will make a decision on this if a written application is submitted. Re-initiation can subsequently be requested in a similar way.

## **Section 18**

### **Invalidity of the doctoral assignments**

(1) If it transpires before the doctoral certificate is issued that the doctoral candidate is guilty of cheating, threat or bribery in their doctoral assignments or in relation to the requirements for admission to the doctoral programme or initiation of the doctoral degree procedure, or that essential requirements

for the doctorate have been erroneously assumed to be met, the Doctorate Committee can declare the doctoral assignments to be invalid after hearing the affected party.

(2) If the circumstances pursuant to (1) become known after the doctoral certificate is issued, (1) shall apply accordingly and the School Council decides, at the suggestion of the Doctorate Committee and in compliance with the statutory provisions, whether to revoke or withdraw the conferment of the degree of Doctor. Section 48 and 49 of the Administrative Proceduäres Act (VwVfG) shall remain unaffected and shall apply in addition. The conferment of the university degree can also be revoked if the holder has severely violated the dignity bestowed by the university degree, e.g. in the case of a final conviction for a criminal offence which leads to the loss of civil servant status for civil servants in the state of Lower Saxony, or if the holder has violated the commitment to academic integrity associated with the university degree.

(3) If the prerequisites for admission to the doctoral programme (Section 8) or for initiation of the doctoral degree procedure (Section 10) were not fulfilled without the doctoral candidate attempting to deceive, and if this fact only emerges after the doctoral certificate has been issued, this shortcoming will be rectified by passing the doctorate.

(4) The affected party will have the opportunity to make a statement to the Doctorate Committee before a decision is taken. The first supervisor of the work is entitled to attend this meeting and make a statement.

(5) The incorrect doctoral certificate will be withdrawn and, if necessary, replaced by a corrected certificate.

## **Section 19**

### **Access to doctoral records, period of retention**

(1) After completion of the doctoral degree procedure, the doctoral candidate is granted access to the doctoral records, upon request.

(2) The doctoral documents shall be retained for 50 years. Even after this period, it must be ensured that information about the result of the respective doctorate can be provided from registers.

## **Section 20**

### **Appeal**

(1) Negative decisions made in accordance with these doctoral degree regulations shall be justified in writing, contain information on candidates' right of appeal and shall be disclosed in accordance with Section 41 VwVfG.

(2) Appeals against examination decisions based on an evaluation of performance can be lodged with the Chair of the Doctorate Committee in writing or for the record within one month of receipt of the decision in accordance with Sections 68 et seq. of the Administrative Procedures Act (VWGO); otherwise, legal action shall be taken. In the honorary doctorate procedure (Section 21), appeals are not possible. The appeal shall be substantiated within one month of being lodged.

(3) The Doctorate Committee will decide on the appeal as the appeals board. It is responsible for conducting the appeals procedure. There is no charge for the appeals procedure.

(4) If the grounds for appeal are directed against a decision of the Examination Committee, the Chair of the Doctorate Committee shall forward the appeal to the Examination Committee for review. If the grounds for appeal are directed against the decision of an assessor, the Chair of the Doctorate Committee shall forward the appeal to the assessor. The result of the review shall be forwarded to the Doctorate Committee.

(5) If the Examination Committee or assessor changes their decision as a result of the appeal, the Doctorate Committee will uphold the appeal. Otherwise, the Doctorate Committee reviews the examination decision in full to determine in particular whether

- a) the examination was conducted in a proper manner,
- b) the grading was based on incorrect information,
- c) general marking principles were adhered to,
- d) an acceptable solution substantiated by consistent and sound arguments was judged to be incorrect,
- e) the assessor was influenced by irrelevant considerations.

**(6)** The Doctorate Committee can appoint an assessor for the appeals procedure ex officio; an assessor shall be appointed at the request of the appellant. The assessor must hold the qualification in accordance with Section 5.4. The appellant may be given the opportunity to comment before the final decision on the appeal is taken by the Doctorate Committee.

**(7)** If the Doctorate Committee determines fault in accordance with para. 5 sentence 2, but does not uphold the appeal at this stage of the procedure, examination components shall be re-evaluated by examiners not previously involved in conducting this examination, or the thesis defence shall be repeated.

**(8)** A final decision on the appeal shall be made within three months of it being lodged. If the appeal is not upheld, the negative decision shall be substantiated and contain information on candidates' right of appeal.

**(9)** An appeal procedure cannot lead to a lowering of the examination grade.

## **Section 21**

### **Honorary doctorate**

(1) In recognition of outstanding individual scientific achievements, characterised by research work that has made a significant contribution to the development of a subject area in the School, the School can award the title of Doctor or Doctor of Medicine honoris causa (Doctor medicinae honoris causa, for short: Dr Med. h. c.) as a rare distinction.

(2) At least three university lecturers from the School are required to nominate someone for an honorary doctorate. The application shall outline the scientific achievements and must include the professional and/or scientific curriculum vitae and a list of publications of the individual to be awarded an honorary doctorate.

(3) The application is considered by an honours committee appointed by the School Council. The Dean is Chair of the committee. The committee is made up of at least three additional members, who must be university lecturers within the meaning of Section 5.4. The committee draws up a written report on the personality and scientific achievements or specific accomplishments of the individual nominated for an honorary doctorate. At least two external scientific opinions must be obtained.

(4) The Dean announces at the School Council meeting preceding the resolution that a decision will be taken on an application for an honorary doctorate. At the same time, they point out that the application, the expert reports and the report drawn up by the honours committee are available in the Dean's Office for confidential consultation by the members of the School Council and university lecturers in the sense of Section 5.4 in the School.

(5) The School Council conducts two readings. At the first of these two readings, all university lecturers in the School within the meaning of Section 5.4 are invited in an advisory role. Following the second reading, the School Council makes a decision about the honorary doctorate in a secret ballot. A 4/5 majority of the members of the School Council with a doctorate who are entitled to vote is required for approval of the application for an honorary doctorate.

(6) Following acceptance of the application, the Dean of the School concludes the honorary doctorate by issuing a certificate in accordance with Appendix 7. The Dean issues an invitation to the award ceremony and appoints the speaker of the laudation.

(7) The persons who have made the nomination shall be informed of a negative decision.

(8) The conferment of the title Dr Med. h.c. can be withdrawn. Section 18 will apply mutatis mutandis.

## **Section 22**

### **Entry into force**

These regulations will enter into force after their approval by the Presidential Board on the day following their publication in the official notices of the University of Oldenburg. At the same time, the previously applicable doctoral degree regulations of School VI - Medicine and Health Sciences of the University of Oldenburg for awarding the title of "Doctor of Medicine (Dr Med.)" and "Medical Doctor - Doctor of Philosophy (MD-PhD)" in the version dated 08/03/2014 (Official notices / 33rd volume – 1/2014, pp. 135-146) shall no longer apply.

## **Section 23**

### **Transitional provisions**

Doctoral candidates who, at the time of the entry into force of the regulations dated 12 October 2021, have already registered their doctoral project in accordance with Section 1.6 of the doctoral degree regulations of School VI - Medicine and Health Sciences of the University of Oldenburg for awarding the title of "Doctor of Medicine (Dr Med.)" and "Medical Doctor - Doctor of Philosophy (MD-PhD)" in the version dated 08/03/2014 via the Doctorate Committee and have received confirmation from the Doctorate Committee, and apply to initiate the doctoral degree procedure in accordance with Section 10 within five years of the entry into force of these regulations or already applied before these regulations entered into force, can request that the previously applicable doctoral degree regulations of School VI - Medicine and Health Sciences of the University of Oldenburg for awarding the title of "Doctor of Medicine (Dr Med.)" and "Medical Doctor - Doctor of Philosophy (MD-PhD)" in the version dated 08/03/2014 (Official notices / 33rd volume – 1/2014, pp. 135-146) are applied.

## Appendix 1

### Dr. med. Process-specific provisions

regarding Section 1.2 c):

Successful completion of the accompanying curriculum for the acquisition of scientific skills totalling 6 credit points is a requisite component of the doctoral programme.

The accompanying Dr. med. curriculum furnishes doctoral candidates with specialist, methodological and practical skills, with the aim of enabling them to successfully complete the doctorate and start an entry-level, science-based job. The aim is to provide doctoral candidates with an in-depth education in the fields of knowledge and scientific methods of the respective subject area and to impart interdisciplinary skills.

(1) During their doctoral phase, the Dr. med. doctoral candidates complete the departmental Dr. med. accompanying curriculum and provide evidence of their participation in courses or achievements amounting to 6 credit points. The credit points are distributed among the following subject areas:

- 2-3 credit points in subject area 1: “Broadening and deepening of specialist knowledge”  
(specialised scientific knowledge)  
In these courses, the doctoral candidates broaden and deepen their knowledge in the context of their research project and acquire the necessary skills to carry out the practical research work. Furthermore, they actively take part in research colloquia, conferences, scientific summer schools etc.
- 1-2 credit points in subject area 2: “Communication and knowledge transfer”  
(communicative competence)  
In this area, the doctoral candidates acquire and practise their communication and presentation techniques and learn to convey their acquired knowledge in a targeted manner.
- 1-2 credit points in subject area 3: “Interdisciplinary skills”  
(interdisciplinary competences and transferable skills)  
In this area, doctoral candidates can focus on their (research) career, but also acquire general research-related skills: core topics include, for example, data handling (statistics), project management, academic writing, publishing your own research results, applying for research funding, etc.

(2) The accompanying Dr. med. curriculum is offered as an elective curriculum by School VI and covers the following topics:

General principals/framework conditions of academic work:

- Good academic practice
- Academic integrity: Self-image and responsibility
- Handling research data
- Scientific publishing
- Animal testing
- Applying for research funding

General skills in academic work:

- How should I organise and write my doctorate?
- Scientific presentations
- Academic writing
- Literature research and using literature
- Evaluating data

Research methods:

- Subject-specific methodology courses
- Practicals

Specific subject-related topics:



- Clinical epidemiology and biometry
- Transfer of research into everyday clinical practice (critical appraisal)
- Subject-specific research colloquia

The range of courses offered is listed each semester in the university's course catalogue.

- (3) The doctoral candidates keep a cumulative course result sheet, recording information on their performance. This information must be certified either with a certificate of attendance or a signature provided by the certifying body or lecturer and, if applicable, a course programme.
- (4) It is possible to request recognition of external activities (e.g. attendance at conferences, publications, participation in summer schools, lab visits and/or events attended outside of the university). Only activities completed during the qualification phase of the doctorate are recognised. This phase usually comprises the period from acceptance to submission of the thesis or the last five years prior to submission.
- (5) Students of the module course in Human Medicine who have successfully completed at least four courses in the area of "Research and Science" as part of the PE Year 5 curriculum and have passed their Year 5 research work can be credited with 2 credit points upon request.

regarding Section 7.4:

Deviating from this, the procedure according to Section 7.4 may be adopted upon application to the Doctorate Committee provided that the research thesis was registered within the framework of the Human Medicine degree programme at the University of Oldenburg or provided that the Master's thesis was registered within the framework of the European Medical School Oldenburg-Groningen in the degree programme "Geneeskunde" (Medicine) at the University of Groningen (UG) or provided that the M2 examination was successfully passed. The application for admission shall be made in this case within one year of meeting the requirements in accordance with Section 8.1 and 8.2.

regarding Section 9.3:

Deviating from this, a paper in the field of medicine and health sciences published or accepted for publication in a peer reviewed academic journal may also be recognised as a doctoral thesis if it meets the requirements in accordance with Section 9.1.

regarding Section 10.2 d):

Proof of successful completion of the accompanying curriculum in accordance with Section 1.2 c),

regarding Section 12.3:

The thesis defence lasts a total of up to sixty minutes and consists of a public presentation lasting around twenty minutes about the aims, methods and results of the thesis or a sub-area thereof and a subsequent discussion led by the Chair of the Examination Committee.

## Appendix 2

### MD-PhD Process-specific provisions

regarding Section 1.2 c):

Successful completion of the structured doctoral programme “Medicine and Health Sciences” at the Graduate School of Science, Medicine and Technology totalling 30 credit points is a requisite component of the doctoral programme.

The admission requirements for the structured doctoral programme “Medicine and Health Sciences” are set out in the “Regulations on special entrance and admission requirements for the doctoral degree programmes and structured doctorate programmes of School V - School of Mathematics and Science and School VI - School of Medicine and Health Sciences at the Graduate School of Science, Medicine and Technology of the University of Oldenburg” in the currently applicable version.

The contents of the structured doctoral programme “Medicine and Health Sciences” are set out in the “Regulations on the curriculum and examinations of the doctoral degree programmes and structured doctoral programmes of School V - School of Mathematics and Science and School VI - School of Medicine and Health Sciences at the Graduate School of Science, Medicine and Technology of the University of Oldenburg” in the currently applicable version.

regarding Section 10.2 d):

Proof of the successful completion of the structured doctoral programme "Medicine and Health Sciences" at the Graduate School of Science, Medicine and Technology of the University of Oldenburg.

regarding Section 12.3:

The thesis defence consists of a public presentation lasting around thirty minutes about the aims, methods and results of the thesis or a sub-area thereof and a subsequent discussion led by the Chair of the Examination Committee lasting for 30 up to a maximum of 60 minutes.

**Appendix 3**  
regarding Section 9.2, Section 14.2

**Template of the title page of the thesis**

**Front:**

.....  
(Title of the thesis)

At the University of Oldenburg – School of Medicine and Health Sciences – for attaining of the degree  
of

.....  
(Name of degree) (Abbreviation)

approved thesis

by Ms/Mr \*) .....  
(First name, last name)

born on ..... in .....

**Rear:**

Assessor .....

Second assessor(s)

.....

.....

Date of thesis defence: .....

---

\*Insert as applicable

**Appendix 4**  
regarding Section 15.3

Die Fakultät .....  
der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg  
verleiht mit dieser Urkunde

The School.....  
of the University of Oldenburg (Germany)  
hereby confers on

Frau/Herrn\*) / Ms/Mr \*) .....

geboren am: .....  
in .....

born on.....  
in.....

den Grad einer/eines\*)

the degree of

**Doktorin/Doktor der Medizin (Dr. med.) \*/ *Doctor of Medicine (Dr. med.)\****

**Medical Doctor – Doctor of Philosophy (MD-Ph.D.)\***

nachdem sie/er\*) in einem ordnungsgemäßem  
Promotionsverfahren durch ihre/seine\*) mit  
dem Prädikat ....<sup>1)</sup> beurteilte Dissertation mit  
dem Thema

following him/her\*) having proved his/her\*) sci-  
entific ability in a regular doctoral procedure by  
submitting their doctoral thesis entitled

.....  
.....  
sowie durch die mit ....<sup>2)</sup> beurteilte Disputation  
ihre/seine\*) wissenschaftliche Befähigung er-  
wiesen und dabei das Gesamturteil ...<sup>3)</sup> erhal-  
ten hat.

.....  
.....  
which was awarded the grade ...<sup>1)</sup> and having  
passed an oral defence which was awarded  
the grade ...<sup>2)</sup>. The overall grade achieved by  
the candidate was ...<sup>3)</sup>.

Oldenburg, [DD/MM/YYYY] .....

Die Dekanin/Der Dekan\*) der Fakultät / *Dean*  
*of the School*

Die/Der\*) Vorsitzende des Promotionsaus-  
schusses der Fakultät / *Chair of the Doctorate*  
*Committee*

Rechtlich bindend sind die deutschsprachigen Formulierungen.  
*Please note: Only the German wording is legally binding.*

\*) Insert as applicable, delete as applicable

<sup>1)</sup> Prädikate: ausgezeichnet (summa cum laude), sehr gut (magna cum laude), gut (cum laude),  
genügend (rite) / *Grades: summa cum laude (distinction), magna cum laude (very good),*  
*cum laude (good), rite (satisfactory)*

<sup>2)</sup> see footnote 1)

<sup>3)</sup> see footnote 1)

**Appendix 5**

regarding Section 15.3

Die Fakultät .....  
der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg  
and

The School.....  
of the University of Oldenburg (Germany)  
and

.....  
verleihen mit dieser Urkunde gemeinsam

.....  
hereby jointly confer on

Frau/Herrn\*) / Ms/Mr .....

geboren am: .....  
in .....

born on.....  
in.....

den Grad einer/eines\*)

the degree of

**Doktorin/Doktor der Medizin (Dr. med.) \*/ Doctor of Medicine (Dr. med.)\***

**Medical Doctor – Doctor of Philosophy (MD-Ph.D.)\***

nachdem sie/er\*) in einem ordnungsgemäßem,  
von beiden Fakultäten betreuten Promotions-  
verfahren durch ihre/seine\*) mit dem Prädikat  
....<sup>1</sup>) beurteilte Dissertation mit dem Thema

following him/her\*) having proved his/her\*) sci-  
entific ability in a regular doctoral procedure  
supervised by both schools by submitting their  
doctoral thesis entitled

.....  
.....

.....  
.....

sowie durch die mit ....<sup>2</sup>) beurteilte Disputation  
ihre/seine\*) wissenschaftliche Befähigung er-  
wiesen und dabei das Gesamturteil ...<sup>3</sup>) erhal-  
ten hat.

which was awarded the grade ...<sup>1</sup>) and having  
passed an oral defence which was awarded  
the grade ...<sup>2</sup>). The overall grade achieved by  
the candidate was ...<sup>3</sup>).

Oldenburg, [DD/MM/YYYY] .....

Die Dekanin/Der Dekan\*) der Fakultät / *Dean*  
*of the School*

Die/Der\*) Vorsitzende des Promotionsaus-  
schusses der Fakultät / *Chair of the Doctorate*  
*Committee*

[Place], [DD/MM/YYYY] .....

Die Dekanin/Der Dekan/  
Die Präsidentin/Der Präsident\*)  
der Fakultät/der Universität\*) /  
*The Dean/President/ Chancellor\*)*  
*of the School/University\*)*

Rechtlich bindend sind die deutschsprachigen Formulierungen.

*Please note: Only the German wording is legally binding.*

\*) Insert as applicable, delete as applicable

<sup>1</sup>) Prädikate: ausgezeichnet (summa cum laude), sehr gut (magna cum laude), gut (cum laude), genügend (rite) /  
*Grades: summa cum laude (distinction), magna cum laude (very good),*  
*cum laude (good), rite (satisfactory)*

<sup>2</sup>) see footnote 1)

<sup>3</sup>) see footnote 1)

## Appendix 6

### Bi-national doctoral programmes with Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG)

#### 1

##### Precedence, binding character, advice

(1) Joint bi-national doctoral degree procedures carried out in the form of cotutelle procedures between the University of Oldenburg (UOL) and Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) will primarily follow the special regulations outlined below. The general provisions of the doctoral regulations shall additionally apply, unless they contradict these special regulations.

(2) Before a bi-national procedure with the RUG is initiated, the doctoral candidate must be informed and advised on the special regulations below. Provided they agree with the special regulations, a "Cotutelle Agreement for the Joint Supervision leading to a Double Doctorate" (attached as template A to this Groningen Annex) is concluded with the doctoral candidate regarding the bi-national doctorate project. This agreement may also include different or additional provisions. This agreement must be entered into before a bi-national doctoral degree procedure can be carried out with RUG.

(3) If the candidate does not consent to the special regulations outlined below, the doctoral project cannot be carried out as a bi-national procedure with RUG but only as a national doctoral degree procedure based on the general provisions of the applicable UOL doctoral degree regulations.

#### 2

##### Doctoral performance

(1) The thesis must be written in English. The proposal should be written in English, Dutch and German.

(2) Based on the scientific requirements and the supervision needs, the thesis will be worked on alternately at both partner universities.

(3) The doctoral candidate must meet the requirements of both partner universities regarding admission, progress and performance.

#### 3

##### Enrolment, fees, insurance

(1) The doctoral candidate should be enrolled in both partner universities according to the regulations at the respective university.

(2) UOL charges semester fees in accordance with the regulations of the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (NHG). As far as legally possible, the doctoral candidate will be exempted from paying tuition and semester fees to RUG.

(3) The doctoral candidate must provide proof of health insurance and private liability insurance for the duration of the stay in Groningen and in Germany.

#### 4

##### Responsibilities, procedures

(1) The doctoral procedure is carried out in accordance with the legal regulations of both partner universities.

(2) Any costs incurred (travel expenses, etc.) by the supervisors or by members of the Examining Committee will be borne by their respective nominating partner university.

(3) The results of the individual procedural steps mentioned below are recorded in the PhD Project Monitoring System of RUG ("Hora Finita") and are also accessible there for anyone involved at UOL. If information required

by UOL should not be accessible on Hora Finita, the responsible graduate school at RUG will inform UOL using other channels.

## **5 Publication**

The thesis shall be published according to the regulations of both partner universities. The doctoral candidate's copyrights with regard to their thesis shall remain unaffected. The partner universities shall inform the doctoral candidate about the rules of the respective partner university regarding the publication of the dissertation.

## **6 Intellectual property**

(1) All rights concerning the dissertation thesis belong to the doctoral candidate.

(2) New knowledge and intellectual property rights (immaterial property rights, in particular inventions) arising from a joint project (foreground intellectual property rights) shall be jointly owned by both partner universities. They will enter into a separate written agreement to decide whether intellectual property protection should be applied for, how the application and any patents granted should be maintained or defended, how costs arising in the process should be handled, and how commercial use could be made of these rights.

## **7 Supervision**

(1) The doctoral candidate shall be jointly supervised by a RUG supervisor and a UOL supervisor during the preparation of their thesis.

(2) The supervisors regularly consult with the doctoral candidate with regard to the progress of their academic work. Supervision is provided in equal proportions by both partner universities. The assigned supervisors will each bear an equal share of the supervision work. Day-to-day supervision and academic mentoring are provided by the supervisor at the site where the dissertation is currently being worked on.

(3) A positive evaluation of the thesis by the supervisors is a prerequisite for submitting it to the Assessment Committee.

## **8 Assessment Committee**

(1) Following a positive evaluation of the thesis by the supervisors, it is submitted to the Assessment Committee.

(2) The Assessment Committee has four members, of which at least one professor from each RUG and UOL. Members of the Assessment Committee must be professors who did not participate as co-authors of the thesis.

(3) The Assessment Committee shall be appointed by the partner universities by mutual agreement and in accordance with the applicable regulations of the respective partner university. At UOL, this is the responsibility of the doctoral committee.

(4) In accordance with the requirements of the UOL doctoral regulations, two members of the Assessment Committee are appointed as assessors of the thesis. The two assessors are appointed by the UOL, and the remaining two members of the Assessment Committee are appointed by the RUG. The assessors each prepare an individual review in which they suggest a grade for the thesis in accordance with the relevant regulations of the UOL.

(5) All members of the Assessment Committee provide a reasoned assessment on the dissertation via Hora Finita. Provided that both assessors and the Assessment Committee as a whole approve the admission of the

thesis, the Assessment Committee decides by formal resolution that the doctoral candidate will be admitted to the defence and the assessors assign a grade based on their reviews. The decision must be communicated immediately to the appropriate doctoral committee of the UOL.

(6) The grades mentioned in the above paragraphs 4 and 5 and in Section 10(3) refer exclusively to the award of the doctoral degree of the UOL, whose legal remedies shall be applied in accordance with the relevant doctoral regulations in the case of dissent over the award of grades. No grade is awarded in the conferral of the RUG doctoral degree unless the supervisors or Assessment Committee members propose that the award be "cum laude" (in the Dutch legal sense), in which case the Dutch procedure for conferring the "cum laude" award is followed.

(7) After a positive evaluation, the Assessment Committee forwards the dissertation to the Joint Examining Committee (Section 9).

## 9 Examining Committee

(1) The partner universities shall, by mutual agreement and in accordance with the provisions of their respective doctoral regulations, establish a joint Examining Committee, which shall be composed of equal numbers of members from both partner universities. The relevant doctoral committee is responsible for the nomination on the part of the UOL.

(2) The Examining Committee shall consist of at least five, but no more than nine persons:

- a) Professors from both partner universities;
- b) a maximum of two university members not holding a doctorate;
- c) the members of the Assessment Committee;
- d) the chairperson.

## 10 Thesis defence

(1) The disputation is usually held at the RUG and should comply with RUG doctoral regulations and, as far as possible, with the relevant UOL doctoral regulations.

(2) The doctoral disputation shall be conducted in English in the form of a public ceremony at the RUG, which shall be transmitted virtually to UOL in order to allow the UOL members to attend, and which shall be recognised by the UOL as a proper disputation.

(3) Immediately following the oral examination, the Examination Committee will decide in closed session whether the candidate has passed the oral examination. Following the disputation, the Examining Committee will determine the grade for the disputation as well as the overall grade for the UOL doctoral degree in accordance with relevant UOL doctoral regulations.

## 11 Award of degree certificate

(1) Upon successful completion of the doctoral degree procedure, the partner universities shall confer their respective doctoral degrees in accordance with the rules and regulations in force at their respective universities. UOL awards the title "Dr.....(*plus name of subject*)" in accordance with the relevant doctoral regulations. RUG awards the title "Doctor of Philosophy" (PhD). The doctoral degree may be used either as awarded by UOL or as awarded by RUG. According to the relevant UOL doctoral regulations, the German doctoral degree is awarded only after publication of the thesis.

(2) Both universities confer their doctoral degrees by means of a separate certificate in each case (cf. attached samples 7B1 and 7B2 to this Groningen Annex). Each university signs and seals its certificate, referring to the binational nature of the doctoral process, which leads to two doctoral degrees. The certificates clearly state that the doctoral candidate is only entitled to use either the Dutch or the German title. If one of the two universities



does not confer its doctoral degree, this shall not prevent the other university from conferring its doctoral degree as a purely national degree.

## 12

### **Scientific misconduct (deception, plagiarism)**

(1) If, during or after the completion of the binational doctoral procedure, circumstances become known that give rise to scientific misconduct (deception, plagiarism) or the suspicion of scientific misconduct, each university shall decide independently whether to initiate an appropriate investigation procedure in accordance with the regulations in force at its university.

(2) The partner universities shall inform each other about any procedures they initiate according to paragraph 1 and their results.

(3) Both universities may withdraw their doctoral degree without regard to whether the partner university does likewise.

## 13

### **Early termination of the binational doctoral degree procedure**

(1) The progress of the binational doctoral degree procedure shall be reviewed annually; it can be terminated by the participating universities with a 3-month period of notice by terminating the contract on joint supervision mentioned in Section 1(2) (cf. Model A), if there is an objective reason. As long as the bi-national doctoral degree procedure based on the above agreement exists, the universities involved will support the candidate in successfully completing the Cotutelle procedure.

(2) An objective reason within the meaning of paragraph 1 above may also consist in a failure of the examination performance (dissertation, disputation) or a dispute about the execution of the binational doctoral procedure including the decisions of the Examining Committee, the Assessment Committee or the supervisors/assessors.

(3) The bi-national doctoral degree procedure shall also end if the candidate terminates the agreement referenced in Section 1(2) with a notice period of 1 (one) month.

(4) In case of discontinuation of the binational doctoral procedure, the candidate is entitled to apply for continuation of their doctoral project at the UOL and to submit their dissertation for re-evaluation according to the relevant doctoral regulations.

## Appendix 6A

For Annex 6

### Cotutelle Agreement for the Joint Supervision leading to a Double Doctorate

between

the **University of Oldenburg** represented by its President Prof. Dr. Ralph Bruder, Ammerländer Heerstr. 114-118, 26129 Oldenburg (Germany),

implementing entity: School of..... , represented by the Dean, Prof. Dr. ....

- hereinafter referred to as the "UOL" -

and

the **University of Groningen**, Broerstraat 5, 9712 CPSL Groningen (the Netherlands), represented by President Prof. Dr. Jouke de Vries,

- hereinafter referred to as the "UG" -

hereinafter collectively referred to as "**Universities**"

#### **In due observance of the following**

- the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek);
- the PhD Regulations of the University of Groningen (Promotiereglement);
- the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (Niedersächsisches Hochschulgesetz)
- the PhD regulations of the School .... (Promotionsordnung der Fakultät ....)

#### **agree as follows:**

##### **Section 1 – Doctorates**

(1) This agreement regulates the cooperation and the respective responsibilities of the Universities involved in the double doctorate of \_\_\_\_\_, born on and residing at \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) The topic of the dissertation is \_\_\_\_\_.

The dissertation will be written in English. The abstract shall be written in English, Dutch and German.

(3) The doctorate is expected to take \_\_ years to complete, commencing from \_\_. If necessary, such term can be prolonged in accordance with the rules in force at both of the institutions. The dissertation will be completed in alternating periods at the two Universities, based on scientific and supervision needs.

(4) The doctoral candidate must meet the relevant requirements of both Universities regarding admission to the doctoral programme, progress and examination.

### **Section 2 – Enrolment, Fees, Insurance**

(1) The doctoral candidate shall enroll at both Universities in accordance with each of the University's regulations. The enrolment is effective from \_\_\_\_.

(2) UOL will charge the fees and contributions stipulated in the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (Niedersächsisches Hochschulgesetz). To the extent legally admissible the doctoral candidate will be exempt from paying fees and contributions to the UG.

(3) The doctoral candidate must prove sufficient health insurance coverage for the full period of her or his stay in the Netherlands and in Germany as well as a personal liability insurance.

### **Section 3 – Responsibilities**

(1) The doctorate will be realized in accordance with the legal provisions of both universities.

(2) Any costs incurred (travel expenses, etc.) by the supervisor or the members of the Examination Committee shall be borne by their respective university.

(3) The results of the following procedural steps shall be documented in the PhD Project Monitoring System of the RUG ("Hora Finita") and be accessible to the members of University of Oldenburg being duly involved in the joint supervision of this doctorate. If the information needed by UOL is not registered in Hora Finita, the Graduate School will inform UOL in a different way.

### **Section 4 – Publication**

The thesis will be published according to the doctoral regulations of both implementing Universities. The intellectual property rights of the doctoral candidate regarding his or her dissertation shall remain unaffected by its publication. Both Universities will instruct the doctoral candidate to follow the rules of both institutions concerning the registering, the description and the reproduction of the thesis.

### **Section 5 - IP**

(1) Any rights related to the thesis will be held by the doctoral candidate.

(2) Foreground intellectual property rights shall be the property of both Universities. The Universities shall jointly apply to obtain and/or maintain the relevant intellectual property rights and shall strive to set up appropriate agreements in order to do so.

### **Section 6 – Supervision (Betreuer)**

(1) The doctoral candidate shall research and write the thesis under the joint supervision of the thesis supervisor at UG, \_\_\_\_\_, and the thesis supervisor at UOL, \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) The supervisors will consult regularly on the research progress of the doctoral candidate. The supervision is equally divided between both Universities. Each University will invest 50% of the allotted time for supervision. The daily supervision and scientific mentoring resides with the supervisor located where the research work is being undertaken at that particular moment.

(3) The positive assessment of the supervisors shall be a necessary prerequisite for admission to the final examination.

## **Section 7 – Assessment Committee**

(1) After the positive assessment of the supervisors, the thesis can be submitted to the Assessment Committee.

(2) The Assessment Committee consists of four persons of which at least one professor from the UG and one professor from the UOL. Only full professors employed by a university who have not co-authored with the doctoral candidate may be members of the Assessment Committee.

(3) The Assessment Committee shall be composed by mutual consent between the Universities, in accordance with the regulations in force at the Universities.

(4) In order to meet the criteria of the doctoral regulations in force at UOL, two members of the Assessment Committee are appointed as reviewers for the thesis. These two members of the Assessment Committee will be appointed by UOL, the other two by UG. The reviewers each draw a report and propose a grade for the thesis according to the regulations of the UOL.

(5) All members of the Assessment Committee will provide a substantiated opinion of the PhD thesis in writing via Hora Finita. If both reviewers and the full Assessment Committee support the admission of the thesis, the Assessment Committee formally decides on the admission of the doctoral candidate to the defense and the reviewers decide on the grade for the thesis, based on the reports of the reviewers. The report and the decision will be communicated promptly to the doctoral committee of the ... School of XX of UOL.

(6) The grades mentioned under subsections 4 and 5 above and in Section 9 subsection 3 only apply to the awarding of the degree by UOL whose appeal procedures solely apply in case of any disputes on grades. At UG no grade will be given, unless the supervisors or members of the Assessment Committee propose to award the "cum laude" distinction; then the procedure for the awarding of the "cum laude" distinction for UG degree will be followed.

## **Section 8 – Examining Committee**

(1) Both Universities mutually consult each other to compose a joint Examining Committee that equally represents members of both Universities, in accordance with their respective PhD regulations.

(2) After the positive assessment of the Assessment Committee, the thesis can be submitted to the joint Examining Committee.

(3) In accordance with the PhD regulations of the UG, the Examining Committee at UG shall consist of at least five persons;

- full professors, both from the UG and from UOL, and;
- a maximum of 2 University Readers/Associate Professors or Lecturers/Assistant Professors with PhDs;
- the members of the Assessment Committee;
- the chair.

## **Section 9 – Disputation**

(1) The defense of the thesis will take place at UG in a form compatible with both PhD regulations.

(2) The thesis will be defended in English during a public ceremony at the UG to be digitally transmitted to the UOL in order to allow participation of interested university members, and which is duly recognized by the UOL.

(3) After the Examining Committee has given a favourable recommendation it will have to agree on a grade for the defence as well for an overall grade according to the regulations in force at UOL.

## **Section 10 – Dual Award**

(1) Upon successful completion of the examination procedure, both universities will confer their doctoral degrees according to the rules and regulations in force at their institutions. UOL will award the degree of “Dr. ....”. UG will award the degree "Doctor" (*translated into English as: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)*). The title may be used either in the form conferred by UG or in the form conferred by UOL. According to the regulations in force at UOL, the degree can only be awarded after the successful publication of the thesis.

(2) Both universities will award their respective degrees in two separate certificates according to Enclosures 7B1 and 7B2. Each University signs and seals its respective certificate and makes reference to the joint nature of the supervision by the Universities, leading to the two doctoral degrees. The certificates shall make clear that the doctoral candidate is entitled to use either the Dutch or the German title. A decision by one University not to award the degree does not preclude the other partner from awarding the degree as a solely national degree.

## **Section 11 – Fraud and Plagiarism**

(1) In the event that (a suspicion of) fraud or plagiarism is discovered during or after completion of the PhD trajectory, both universities can decide for themselves whether to take action and both will follow their own procedure regarding scientific integrity.

(2) The Universities will keep each other informed about the procedure on scientific integrity and its outcome.

(3) A decision by one institution to strip the doctoral candidate of the degree does not hinder the other partner from upholding its doctoral degree as a solely national degree.

## **Section 12 – Entry into Force, Term and Termination, Failure, Final Provisions**

(1) The present agreement holds as long as necessary for the completion of the doctoral degree. The agreement may be reviewed on an annual basis by each University and may be terminated with a three months notice if good reason is found to do so. As long as the agreement is in force the Universities commit themselves to supporting the doctoral candidate in continuing the project.

(2) As a ‘good reason’ in the meaning of Subsection 1 may be seen e.g. a non-approval of the dissertation or any other dispute arising in connection with the implementation of the provisions or the appendices of this agreement concerning a decision by the Examining Committee, the Assessment Committee or the supervisors,

(3) In addition, the agreement may be terminated by the initiative of the doctoral candidate or following collegial advice from the doctoral supervisors with a one month notice.

(4) After premature discontinuation of the double doctorate the doctoral candidate may request to proceed the doctoral research at one of the Universities and have her or his dissertation re-evaluated in accordance with the doctoral regulations at that university.

(5) There are no oral side agreements. Any amendments or supplements to this agreement, including the annulment of this written form clause, shall require written form.

(6) The ineffectiveness or unenforceability of one or more provisions hereunder shall not affect the effectiveness of the remainder of the Agreement. The Universities undertake to replace the ineffective or unenforceable provision with an effective and enforceable provision, which comes as close as possible to the purpose of the ineffective or unenforceable provision. The same shall apply to any gaps herein.

University of Oldenburg

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Name of President

---

Signature of President

---

Place, date

---

Name of Dean

---

Signature of Dean

---

Place, date

---

Name of Chair of doctoral committee

---

Signature of Chair of doctoral committee

---

Place, date

---

Name of Supervisor and Advisor or Co- Advisor

---

Signature of Supervisor and Advisor or Co- Advisor

---

University of Groningen

---

Name of President

---

Signature of President

---

Place, date

---

Name of Dean

---

Signature of Dean

---

Place, date

---

Name of Director of Graduate School

---

Signature of Director of Graduate School

---

Place, date

---

Name of Supervisor and Advisor or Co- Advisor

---

Place, date

---

Signature of Supervisor and Advisor or Co-  
Advisor

---

Name of doctoral candidate

Place, date

---

Signature of doctoral candidate

---

Place, date

**Anlage 6B1**

Zu Anlage 6

Promotionsurkunde<sup>2</sup>

Fakultät -X-

Bezeichnung der  
Fakultät

# PROMOTIONSURKUNDE

Die Fakultät für [...] der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg verleiht mit dieser Urkunde

Frau/Herrn<sup>1</sup> Vorname Nachname

geboren am ... in ... (Ort, Land),

nachdem sie/er\* in einem ordnungsgemäßen binationalen Promotionsverfahren durch ihre/seine\* Dissertation mit dem Thema

„Titel“

und durch Bestehen der Disputation ihre/seine\* wissenschaftliche Befähigung erwiesen hat,

den Grad einer/eines

Doktorin/Doktors der ... (Fachbezeichnung)

Prädikat Dissertationsschrift<sup>2</sup>: ...

Note Disputation<sup>2</sup>: ...

Gesamturteil<sup>3</sup>: ...

Die Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg und die Rijksuniversiteit Groningen haben die Dissertation gemeinsam betreut und verleihen im Rahmen dieser Doppelpromotion zwei Doktorgrade. Von der Rijksuniversiteit Groningen wird der Grad verliehen: „Doctor“ oder „.....“. Es darf sowohl der niederländische als auch der deutsche Grad geführt werden, aber jeweils nur alternativ einer von beiden<sup>4</sup>.

Oldenburg, Datum

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[Name]

Dekan/in der Fakultät für

[Name]

Vorsitzende/r des Promotionsausschusses der  
Fakultät für ...

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<sup>2</sup> Die Struktur und Formatierung der Urkundenvorlagen in Anlage 7 weicht aufgrund der speziellen Anforderungen und der gemeinsamen Erarbeitung der Anlage 7 mit der Rijksuniversiteit Groningen von den übrigen Urkundenvorlagen dieser Ordnung ab.

<sup>1</sup> Unzutreffendes streichen.

<sup>2</sup> Noten: magna cum laude (sehr gut), cum laude (gut), rite (genügend)

<sup>3</sup> Prädikate: summa cum laude (ausgezeichnet), magna cum laude (sehr gut), cum laude (gut), rite (genügend)

<sup>4</sup> ‚Cotutelle de thèse‘-Verfahren



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**Annex 6B2**

For Annex 6

English translation of the doctoral certificate<sup>3</sup>

School -X-  
Designation of the  
School

# CERTIFICATE (Official Translation)<sup>1)</sup>

The School of ... of the Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg (Germany) hereby confers on

Name

Born on ... in ... (place, country)

having presented her/his doctoral thesis entitled

„Title“

and having passed the oral examination

the Degree of

Doctor of ... (discipline....)

Doctoral thesis grade<sup>2)</sup>: ...

Oral examination grade<sup>2)</sup>: ...

Overall grade<sup>3)</sup>: ...

The Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg and the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen have jointly supervised the dissertation and awarded the double doctorate. The degree awarded by the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen is: “Doctor” or “....”. Both the Dutch and German degree may be used, but only one at a time.

Oldenburg, date

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Name  
Dean of the School of

Name  
Chair of the Doctoral Committee

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<sup>3</sup> The structure and the layout of the document templates and their translations in Annex 7 deviates from the other document templates in these Regulations due to the special requirements and the joint development of Annex 7 with the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.

<sup>1)</sup> It is hereby certified that this is an official English translation of the original German certificate.

<sup>2)</sup> Grades: magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)

<sup>3)</sup> Overall grades: summa cum laude (high distinction), magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)

<sup>1)</sup> It is hereby certified that this is an official English translation of the original German certificate.

<sup>2)</sup> Grades: magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)

<sup>3)</sup> Overall grades: summa cum laude (high distinction), magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)

**Appendix 7**  
relating to Section 21.6

Die Fakultät .....  
der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg  
verleiht mit dieser Urkunde

The School.....  
of the University of Oldenburg (Germany)  
hereby confers on

Frau/Herrn\*) / Ms/Mr .....

geboren am: .....  
in .....

born on.....  
in.....

in Anerkennung persönlicher hervorragender  
wissenschaftlicher Leistungen, gekennzeichnet  
durch Forschungsarbeiten, die wesentlich zur  
Entwicklung des Fachgebietes .....der  
Fakultät .....beitragen  
haben, oder in Anerkennung ausgezeichneter  
Verdienste um die Wissenschaft den Grad ei-  
ner/eines\*)

in recognition of outstanding personal scholarly  
achievements characterised by research that  
has made an essential contribution to the de-  
velopment of the field of studies of ..... of the  
School..... or in recognition of outstanding ser-  
vices for science the degree of

**Doktorin/Doktors der Medizin ehrenhalber (Dr. med. h.c.) / Honorary Doctor of Medicine (Dr  
Med. h.c.)**

Oldenburg, [DD/MM/YYYY] .....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Die Dekanin/Der Dekan\*)  
der Fakultät /  
*Dean of the School*

Rechtlich bindend sind die deutschsprachigen Formulierungen.  
*Please note: Only the German wording is legally binding.*

<sup>1)</sup> It is hereby certified that this is an official English translation of the original German certificate.

<sup>2)</sup> Grades: magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)

<sup>3)</sup> Overall grades: summa cum laude (high distinction), magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)

\*Insert as applicable

Please note: This is an unofficial translation provided for your convenience only. It does not have any legally binding effects. Only the German version is legally binding!"