

Formal requirements and recommendations for a dissertation

Publication- or (monography) book-based dissertation

When the dissertation is submitted, it should be indicated what type of dissertation is handed in; publication-based or book-based.

A book-based dissertation should have an elaborate introduction at the beginning of the thesis that serves as an introduction to all chapters. A book-based dissertation should end with a discussion / conclusion that should describe comprehensively how the chapters fit together. Here a length of at least 10 000 words is recommended for introduction and discussion / conclusion together.

In a publication-based dissertation the introduction can be more concise but should detail how the different publications are related to one-another. Here a length of at least 2500 words is recommended. A publication-based dissertation should consist of at least two accepted peer reviewed journal publication for which the full manuscript has been subject to a peer review process. In all other cases, the dissertation will be a book-based dissertation. A publication-based dissertation should end with a general discussion / conclusion of the publications. The discussion / conclusion should describe comprehensively how the publications fit together. Here a length of at least 2500 words is recommended.

Attribution of authorship for a publication-based dissertation

For a publication-based dissertation one should be first author and the first authorship should not be shared with another author. In case a shared first authorship or a none-first authorship is to be counted in order to submit a publication-based dissertation, the Promotionsausschuss has to decide whether this is granted. It is recommended to inform the Promotionsausschuss well in advance such that it will be easier to adjust in case the publication-based status of the dissertation is not granted.

Requirements and guidelines for the composition of the dissertation

The dissertation should be written in either German or English. The summary should be provided both in German and English.

For the formatting of the dissertation it is strongly recommended that:

- Standard fonts are used; e.g. Arial, left aligned,
- character size is at least 10pt and maximal 12pt, line spacing 1.0 - 1.5,
- page size is DIN A4, page margins are 2 cm towards all directions.

Page numbering is mandatory and should be incremental across the whole dissertation.

Peer-reviewed papers may either be included in their original formatting, but should then comply with the incremental page numbering in the whole dissertation, or may be reformatted to be in the same format as the rest of the dissertation. The content must not differ from the peer reviewed paper.

Figures and tables should be presented as part of the running text and should be self-explanatory. Except in case publications are included without reformatting, tables and figures should be numbered in incremental order across the whole dissertation. Captions should be provided above tables and below figures. Tables and figures should be referred to in the text.

Components of the dissertation

The following components are mandatory for a dissertation:

Title page (differs between submitted and published version, see website), table of contents, summary, introduction, chapters documenting the scientific work, discussion / conclusion, reference list, statement on own contributions

Additional recommended components are:

Curriculum vitae (should be submitted as a separate document if not included in the PhD thesis), acknowledgements, statement on good scientific practice (is also part of the form to initiate a 'Promotionsverfahren').

Further components can be (but are not limited to):

List of symbols, list of tables and figures, appendices

In the following, requirements for some components are given.

Title Page:

The title page that needs to be used for the PhD thesis that is submitted to the Promotionsausschuss and the reviewers is different from the title page that is to be used for the final version of the PhD thesis that is to be submitted to the library.

The precise content of the title page for submission can be found here: http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/fileadmin/user_upload/medizin/Promotion/Mustertitelblatt_Diss_Dr.rer.nat._Einreichung.docx

The precise content of the title page for the final version can be found here: http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/fileadmin/user_upload/medizin/Promotion/Mustertitelblatt_Diss_Dr.rer.nat._Veroeffentlichung.docx

Summary:

The summary should be provided in English and German and should have the same content. Each should cover no more than one page and must be understandable on its own.

Introduction:

The introduction should clarify why the work is of scientific interest to a reader who is not an expert in the topic of the dissertation. The introduction should clearly and concisely formulate the research question and the aim of the research.

The introduction can be divided in multiple chapters.

Chapters documenting the scientific work:

An accepted full-paper peer reviewed manuscript can be used as a chapter in the thesis. Otherwise the chapters together should provide a level of documentation that allows understanding the content in full detail, to judge the merits of the content, and to reproduce the work.

Discussion:

In the discussion the following typical components can be expected:

- A short summary of the essential findings of the dissertation
- In case of a publication based dissertation a comprehensive and summarizing discussion
- Comparison of relevant own findings to those of other researchers
- Critical discussion of the own findings considering possible limitations in the generality of the findings
- Conclusion
- Implications for further research
- Possible application of the research

Reference List:

The reference list should only contain literature that is also accessible externally (outside the university) and should be listed in a consistent manner complying with conventions that are common in scientific literature.

In case internet sources are used, the URL and the day that this URL was accessed need to be listed. Published abstracts can be listed in the reference list. Personal communication, non-accepted publications, and internal reports should not be included in the reference list but may be referred to in the running text.

Statement on own contributions:

Own contributions to the PhD thesis should be given on a separate page. This statement should detail what the own contributions were (e.g. I designed the experiments, I analyzed the experimental

results, I developed the research question, etc.). In case of shared first authorships or second authorships this statement needs to be more detailed.

The statement needs to be confirmed by the PhD supervisor. Please find an example below.

Statement on good scientific practice:

The statement on good scientific practice can be presented as part of the dissertation but is part of the form to be handed in to initiate a 'Promotionsverfahren'.

Recommended reading

1. PhD regulations can be found here: <https://www.uni-oldenburg.de/medizin/promotion/>
2. Universität Oldenburg x. Amtliche Mitteilungen: Leitlinien guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis an der Carl von Ossietzky Universität 2002 [cited 2015 16.4.2015]. Available from: http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/uni/amtliche_mitteilungen/dateien/AM2002-04_Leitlin.pdf
3. Kommission Selbstkontrolle in der Wissenschaft Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. Vorschläge zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis: Empfehlungen der Kommission "Selbstkontrolle in der Wissenschaft"; Denkschrift: Wiley-VCH; 1998.

05 December 2017

PhD committee

FKVI – Medicine and Health Science

Publication-based dissertation

Example for the description of the own contribution

Declaration

I hereby confirm, that (doctoral candidate) contributed to the aforementioned studies as stated below:

Article:

Doctoral candidate, second author, third author,... (Reference)

Author Contributions:

(doctoral candidate) formulated the research question, participated in the study design, carried out the experiments, analyzed the data and wrote the final paper. (Second author) participated in the study design data analysis and writing of the final paper. (Third author) participated in data collection, analysis and writing of the final paper. (Supervisor) formulated the research question, guided the study design and data analysis and wrote the final paper.

Article:

Doctoral candidate, second author,... (Reference)

Author Contributions:

Detailed description

(name)
Supervisor

Date