

**Doctorate Regulations in the Faculty
of Philosophy and the Faculty of Modern Languages at the
University of Heidelberg**

Dated 22 September 2006

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§ 1 The doctorate

The Faculty of Philosophy and the Faculty of Modern Languages at the University of Heidelberg award the academic degree of *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie*¹ (Dr. phil.) on the basis of work completed during the doctoral studies in the subjects offered in their academic institutions, or the honorary degree of *Doktorin/Doktor der Philosophie ehrenhalber* (Dr. phil. h.c.) on the basis of outstanding academic achievements in the field of the disciplines covered in the two faculties, including related areas. If the statutory requirements are met, the English title of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) may also be conferred.

¹ Doctor of Philosophy

§ 2 Purpose of doctorate, work completed during the doctoral studies, proceedings for conferral of doctorate

- (1) The conferral of a doctorate is proof of the candidate's aptitude for independent academic work.
- (2) This proof is based on the submittal of an academic paper (dissertation) in the subject of the doctoral studies and an oral examination (viva) in this subject.
- (3) The bodies in the respective faculty responsible for the proceedings for the conferral of a doctorate are the Doctoral Committee (*Promotionsausschuss*) and an examining committee deployed by the Doctoral Committee for each conferral of a doctorate.

§ 3 Doctoral Committee

- (1) The Doctoral Committee ensures that the doctoral studies proceed as they should. In particular, it decides on the acceptance for doctoral studies and on the admission of doctoral students, on the appointment of assessors and on the composition of the examining committee. It can assign responsibility for performing these duties to its chair.
- (2) The members of the Doctoral Committee and a deputy for each of these members are elected by the Faculty Council for a two-year term of office. If a member or deputy leaves, his or her successor is immediately elected for the remaining term of office. Re-election is permissible.
- (3) The members of the Doctoral Committee are the dean or a vice dean as chair and four other professors or associate professors from the faculty who are employed at the University of Heidelberg as their main job.
- (4) The Doctoral Committee takes decisions on the basis of a majority vote of its members. If there are an equal number of votes, the chair has the casting vote. In a duly scheduled meeting, the Doctoral Committee can in individual cases approve exceptions from the provisions of these Doctorate Regulations with a two-thirds majority of its members, insofar as the *Landeshochschulgesetz*² does not preclude this.
- (5) The Doctoral Committee does not convene publicly. This does not affect the right of the candidate concerned to be heard.
- (6) The Doctoral Committee informs the candidate or doctoral student of its decisions in writing.

§ 4 Acceptance for doctoral studies

- (1) The basic requirement for acceptance for doctoral studies is a university degree or a degree from a comparable academic institution of higher education with at least four years of study, generally in the subject of the doctoral studies, with an overall grade of "good" or better. Completion of the degree must be verified with a *Staatsexamen, Diplom, Magister* or *Master* exam or an exam of equal standing (e.g. in postgraduate studies in closely-related subjects; this is at the discretion of

² State law on universities and colleges

the Doctoral Committee). Evidence of meeting the language requirements as set down by the examination regulations of the University of Heidelberg for the corresponding consecutive *Bachelor's/Master's*, *Diplom* or teacher training courses in the respective valid version must be provided or measures must be taken to comply with these. In the subject of German as a foreign modern language, proof must also be provided of having passed the Latinum, of having knowledge of Latin on a par with the Latinum or of having equivalent knowledge of a similar classical language. For graduates of degree programmes at technical colleges (conservatoires, art colleges), the requirements for acceptance for doctoral studies are met if the degree obtained from the technical college was graded "excellent" and proof was provided through a colloquium as described in paragraph 6, sentences 1 and 2 that the prospective doctoral student has the same aptitude for academic work as university graduates eligible for acceptance for doctoral studies. The colloquium for technical college graduates with special qualifications focuses on technical knowledge in the subject of the doctoral studies as set out in the respective valid version of the examination regulations of the University of Heidelberg for corresponding *Master* and *Magister* programmes.

- (2) If the overall grade is lower than "good", acceptance for doctoral studies can be granted if supporting statements from two professors or associate professors from the faculty testifying to the candidate's academic suitability are submitted. This also applies if there is no overall grade.
- (3) The Doctoral Committee decides on the equal standing or otherwise of exams, on the acceptance of candidates whose overall grade is lower than "good" and how to proceed if there is no overall grade.
- (4) If the subject of the doctoral studies was not the main examination subject in the preceding final examination, the candidate must prove his or her technical knowledge to the Doctoral Committee in a colloquium. In addition, publications and other written pieces of work by the candidate can be taken into account.
- (5) If the subject of the doctoral studies was not an examination subject in the preceding final examination, the candidate must demonstrate his or her technical knowledge to the Doctoral Committee by submitting publications or other similar written pieces of work and being examined in a colloquium.
- (6) The colloquium is an oral exam lasting approximately an hour. It is presided over by two examiners who are professors or associate professors from the faculty and who have been appointed by the Doctoral Committee. Through the colloquium, the candidate must demonstrate that he/she has a level of knowledge in the examination subject that corresponds to the standard of a *Master's* examination or other standard final examinations in his/her main subject (*Magister* etc.). This is the case if the overall grade awarded for the colloquium is "good" or higher. The overall grade is the arithmetical average of the individual grades awarded by the examiners; only the grades "excellent" (1), "good" (2), "satisfactory" (3), "adequate" (4) or "inadequate" (5) can be given.
- (7) Where necessary, the Doctoral Committee stipulates subject-specific procedures for acceptance for doctoral studies.

§ 5 Admission as a doctoral student

- (1) Any candidate who meets the requirements for acceptance set out in § 4 can apply to the respective deanship for admission as a doctoral student, specifying the subject of his or her dissertation. The Doctoral Committee decides whether a candidate is to be admitted. The following must be enclosed with the application:
 - a) Proofs of compliance with requirements for acceptance as defined in § 4;
 - b) Specification of the anticipated topic for the dissertation together with a brief outline of the dissertation;
 - c) A written undertaking from a professor or associate professor in the faculty to supervise the proposed dissertation project;
 - d) A curriculum vitae for the applicant setting out his or her personal and professional background;
 - e) A declaration of any previous or current attempts to study for a doctorate.
- (2) The respective Doctoral Committee decides whether a candidate is to be admitted as a doctoral student. Admission must be denied if:
 - a) Requirements for acceptance for doctoral studies are not met;
 - b) The documents are incomplete.
- (3) Admission can be denied if:
 - a) The applicant has already undertaken more than one unsuccessful attempt to study for a doctorate;
 - b) There are grounds which would justify the retraction of an academic degree or an academic degree has already been withdrawn.
- (4) A decision on the application should generally be taken within six weeks during term time. The candidate must be notified in writing if his or her application is turned down with the reasons for this decision. This also applies to the application for acceptance for the examination (§ 8).
- (5) In accepting a candidate as a doctoral student, the faculty undertakes to grade a dissertation on the specified topic as an academic piece of work and support the doctoral student in the preparation of the same.
- (6) The doctoral student is obliged to register with the university unless he or she is already a member on the basis of a contract of employment or an existing contract of employment precludes matriculation. Registered doctoral students have the same rights and duties as a student.
- (7) The doctoral studies should generally be completed within three years. A doctoral student can register for a maximum of five years.

§ 6 Academic supervision of doctoral student

- (1) The professors in the faculties involved are obliged to give doctoral students as much supervision as they possibly can, limited as this is by their research, teaching and self-administration commitments.
- (2) The doctoral student gives the Doctoral Committee the name of a professor or associate professor from the faculties involved who will act as supervisor. The Doctoral Committee appoints the designated person if he or she is prepared to take on this role and confirms that he or she would expect the dissertation to meet the purpose of the doctorate (see § 2, paragraph 1) on the basis of the outline submitted by the doctoral student.

- (3) An agreement is concluded between the doctoral student and the supervisor which sets out the subject of the doctoral studies, the duration of the doctoral studies and in particular a work schedule generally spanning three years. The progress of the dissertation project should be discussed at regular intervals.
- (4) The Faculty Council can set down guidelines for doctoral studies which may prescribe, for example, that doctoral students attend conferences for doctoral students or take part in other special programmes.
- (5) At the request of the doctoral student, the Doctoral Committee will endeavour to find a professor or associate professor from the faculties involved to supervise the doctoral student.

§ 7 Dissertation

- (1) The dissertation must meet the academic standards and demonstrate the doctoral student's ability to produce independent academic work in the subject of his or her doctoral studies.
- (2) The clearly defined and separately assessable contribution of the doctoral student to a piece of group work can be submitted as a dissertation if as such it meets the requirements of a dissertation.
- (3) The dissertation is generally to be written in German, Latin, English or French. On presentation of a written application, the Doctoral Committee may permit the doctoral student to submit a dissertation written in a different language if assessment by professors or associate professors in the faculties concerned is possible.

§ 8 Acceptance for examination

- (1) On completion of the dissertation, the doctoral student can submit a written application to the deanship for acceptance for the examination. The following must be enclosed with the application:
 - a) Three copies of the dissertation;
 - b) A declaration by the doctoral student that the dissertation is his/her own work, that he/she has only used the resources quoted and that quotes have been marked, or in the case of joint pieces of work a declaration indicating the sections for which he/she is responsible;
 - c) A declaration by the doctoral student indicating whether he/she has already used the dissertation elsewhere as an examination piece or submitted it to another faculty as a dissertation, either in this form or a different one;
 - d) A curriculum vitae;
 - e) Where applicable, evidence of having taken measures to comply with the language requirements as set down by the examination regulations applicable at the University of Heidelberg for the corresponding consecutive *Bachelor/Master, Magister, Diplom* or teacher training courses in the respective valid version.
- (2) In exceptional cases, an academic paper already printed can be accepted as a dissertation, subject to the consent of the Doctoral Committee.
- (3) Acceptance must be denied if:
 - a) The requirements for acceptance are not met;

- b) The documents are not complete;
- c) A dissertation already rejected by another examining body or a piece of work that has been used as an examination piece in another examination process is submitted.

- (4) Acceptance can be denied if there are grounds which would justify the retraction of an academic degree or an academic degree has already been withdrawn.

§ 9 Assessment of dissertation

- (1) Once the dissertation has been submitted, the Doctoral Committee appoints at least two assessors. The supervisor is one of the assessors
The assessors should be appointed within four weeks during term time.

- (2) The assessors must be professors or associate professors. They should generally belong to the respective faculty. Discharged or retired professors can be appointed as assessors, subject to their consent. Professors or associate professors from other faculties of the University of Heidelberg can be appointed as assessors, subject to their consent, if the dissertation covers areas that are related to their subjects. The Doctoral Committee will decide on the appointment of professors from other universities or comparable academic institutions of higher education who hold an appropriate post in terms of a professor. At least half of all the assessors must be professors, discharged or retired professors or associate professors from the faculty.

- (3) Professors from the faculties involved who are technically capable and can reasonably be expected to take on the workload may not refuse an appointment as assessor.

- (4) The assessors give reasons for their assessment of the dissertation in writing and suggest whether the dissertation should be accepted or rejected and, if they are suggesting that it should be accepted, propose one of the following grades:

summa cum laude (outstanding) (0)
magna cum laude (excellent) (1)
cum laude (good) (2)
rite (adequate) (3)

- (5) The Doctoral Committee determines the grade for the dissertation on the basis of the reports. If the referees differ in the grades they suggest, the Doctoral Committee will decide on the grade to be awarded in consultation with them. If no agreement can be reached, the Doctoral Committee will take a decision following the appointment of a further assessor, to be determined by the Doctoral Committee.

- (6) The assessors can issue conditions for publication of the dissertation in their report.

- (7) The reports should be submitted to the Doctoral Committee no later than three months after the appointment of the assessors.

§ 10 Circulation of the dissertation and reports

- (1) The four-week access period in the deanship of the faculty starts when the

Doctoral Committee receives the reports. Circulation during the month of August is precluded. The Doctoral Committee takes decisions on any written applications to reduce the access period.

- (2) All professors and associate professors in the faculty and the assessors have the right to view dissertations and reports.
- (3) The professors and associate professors in the faculty must be notified in writing of when the access period is to start, the name of the doctoral student, the title of the dissertation and the names of the assessors.

§ 11 Appointment of further assessors

- (1) During the access period, the professors and associate professors of the faculties concerned have the right to apply to the Doctoral Committee for the appointment of a further assessor. The reasons behind this request must be given in writing. The request must be granted. The appointment of a further assessor should take place swiftly within three weeks of receipt of the request, during term time; the person requesting this appointment can be appointed as a further assessor.
- (2) If an assessor turns the dissertation down, the Doctoral Committee will decide how to proceed further and on the possible appointment of further assessors.
- (3) If further assessors are appointed, § 9, paragraph 4 applies accordingly.

§ 12 Termination of proceedings for conferral of doctorate if reports recommend rejection

- (1) If both assessors have suggested that the dissertation be rejected, the chair of the Doctoral Committee terminates the proceedings for the conferral of a doctorate at the end of the access period.
- (2) If the chair of the Doctoral Committee establishes that the majority of reports recommend a rejection, the conferral of a doctorate is turned down.
- (3) If a dissertation is turned down on the first submission, the doctoral student has the right to resubmit a revised version of the dissertation within one year of the date on which the dissertation was rejected. If the doctoral student does not exercise this right to revise the dissertation or if the revised version is not submitted on time, the doctorate is rejected.
- (4) A copy of the rejected dissertation is kept on record in the faculty together with all the reports.

§ 13 Examining committee

- (1) On expiry of the access period and once all reports have been received, and provided that § 12 does not apply, the Doctoral Committee appoints an examining committee, and from this a professor or private lecture as chair. The examining committee must be appointed within three weeks during term time. The Doctoral Committee informs the doctoral student of the composition of the examining committee in writing.

- (2) The assessors plus at least one other professor or associate professor from the faculty belong to the examining committee.
- (3) The chair of the examining committee sets the date for the viva, convenes the examining committee and invites the doctoral student to attend the viva.
- (4) Decisions are taken by the examining committee by means of a majority vote. If there are an equal number of votes, the chair has the casting vote.
- (5) The examining committee notifies the Doctoral Committee of its decisions in writing immediately.

§ 14 Viva-voce

- (1) Once the dissertation has been accepted, the candidate has a viva which lasts about 75 minutes. The viva is introduced with a report by the doctoral student on the dissertation. The report should not last more than 15 minutes. The topics of the viva are made up in equal part of the research fields of the dissertation and the subject.
- (2) The viva should be held during term time, generally within six weeks, but certainly no later than within six months of the end of the access period. The chair of the examining committee must notify the other members of the examining committee and the doctoral student of the time and place of the viva and the designated subject areas in writing.
- (3) The chair of the examining committee can allow other doctoral students to sit in on the viva as silent listeners, space permitting. However, they will not be allowed to attend the discussion and announcement of the results of the examination. Public access is to be precluded where there is good cause or at the request of the candidate being examined.
- (4) The viva is led by the chair of the examining committee.
- (5) A report of the proceedings and content of the viva must be produced in note form.

§ 15 Decision on viva performance

- (1) Immediately after the viva, the examining committee decides in a closed meeting whether the doctoral student's performance in the viva should be accepted or rejected and agrees on a grade using the system defined in § 9, paragraph 4.
- (2) If the viva performance is rejected as described in paragraph 1, the doctoral student can retake the viva following a written application to be addressed to the examining committee. The examining committee must receive the application no later than within six months of the first viva. Further retakes are precluded.
- (3) If having failed a viva the doctoral student does not retake the viva, or his or her performance at the retake is rejected, the doctorate is turned down.
- (4) The chair of the examining committee informs the Doctoral Committee of the result of the viva.

§ 16 Result of doctoral studies

- (1) Assuming that the doctorate is not rejected under the terms of § 12 or § 15, the Doctoral Committee determines the overall grade on the basis of the grades obtained for the dissertation and the viva.
- (2) The overall grade is calculated as the arithmetical average of the grades for the dissertation and the viva performance. If the value is between two grades, the dissertation is the decisive element. § 9, paragraph 4 applies accordingly to the calculation of the overall grade. An intermediate grade is not permitted.
- (3) The doctoral student must be notified immediately of the results of his/her doctoral studies.

§ 17 Resubmitting

If the doctorate is turned down in accordance with § 12, the doctoral student can submit a new dissertation. Any further resubmission is precluded.

§ 18 Publication of the dissertation

- (1) The dissertation must be published no later than two years after the doctorate is awarded.
- (2) If the dissertation is not published within the appointed deadline, all rights acquired through the doctorate lapse. In special circumstances and where the doctoral student submits a reasoned application in due time, this period can be extended. The chair of the Doctoral Committee, and beyond this the Doctoral Committee, will decide whether or not to grant an extension of up to 12 months.
- (3) Publication can take the form of:
 - Printing in a series or as a self-contained book in a publishing house;
 - Publication in a scientific journal;
 - An electronic version in a data format and on a data carrier to be agreed with the university library.
- (4) The following rules apply to publication:
 - If the dissertation is published in a series, as a self-contained book or in a scientific journal, 3 copies must be submitted if evidence of a minimum circulation of 150 copies can be provided.
 - If the dissertation is published as an electronic version, 4 copies must be submitted.

If special circumstances apply, the Doctoral Committee reserves the right to decide which series, publishing houses, scientific journals or compilations are suitable for publication.

- (5) If conditions were imposed, the doctoral student must obtain written permission from his/her assessors to publish the dissertation before it is published. Changes and additions must be submitted to the assessors. The dissertation may only be printed once the last amendments have received the imprimatur of the assessors.
- (6) Any copies published after the doctorate is awarded must carry a publisher's imprint or a corresponding notice to the effect that it is a dissertation from the

University of Heidelberg. If the title is changed, reference must be made to the original title of the dissertation submitted.

§ 19 Conferral of the degree of Dr. phil.

- (1) If the doctoral student has submitted the presentation copies in due time as stipulated in § 18, paragraph 2, he/she is awarded the degree of *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie* (Dr. phil.). The last sentence of § 1, paragraph 1 applies accordingly.
- (2) The doctorate degree certificate contains the title and overall grade of the dissertation and the date of the viva as the date on which the doctorate was awarded.
- (3) The right to use the title of Doctor is only acquired on receipt of the doctorate degree certificate. Using titles such as “Dr. des.” is not permitted.

§ 20 Conferral of the degree of Dr. phil. h.c., renewal of doctorate

- (1) For outstanding academic achievements in the respective faculty’s disciplines, including related areas, the faculty concerned can award the honorary degree of *Doktor/Doktorin der Philosophie ehrenhalber* (Dr. phil. h.c.), subject to the consent of the Senate.
- (2) The conferral of this degree is subject to an application by a minimum of three professors or associate professors from the faculty. To prepare for its decision, the Faculty Council appoints two professors or associate professors from its midst as commentators. Once it has received the reports from the commentators, the Faculty Council takes a decision on the basis of a three-quarters majority of its members who are holders of a doctorate.
- (3) The degree of Dr. phil. h.c. is awarded by issuing a certificate in which the faculties honour the academic merits of the conferee.
- (4) In special cases, the faculty can renew the doctorate to mark the 50th anniversary of the date on which the doctorate was awarded. The faculty acknowledges the conferee’s academic merits and other public services of which it is aware with an appropriate tribute.

§ 21 Retraction of acceptance; invalidity of elements of doctoral studies

- (1) If it transpires before the doctorate degree certificate is presented that the candidate has lied about a requirement for acceptance or that material requirements for acceptance were erroneously supposed to be fulfilled, the Doctoral Committee can revoke the acceptance for doctoral studies upon application. The same applies if circumstances become known which according to regional law would justify the retraction of a doctorate.
- (2) If it transpires before the doctorate degree certificate is presented that the candidate has lied about an element of his or her doctoral studies, the Doctoral Committee can declare this or all previously completed elements of the doctoral studies invalid or, in serious cases, revoke the acceptance for doctoral studies.

- (3) Before a ruling is made, the candidate concerned must be heard. A written ruling must be sent to the candidate setting out the reasons behind it and instructing the candidate involved on his or her right to appeal.

§ 22 Retraction of a doctorate

- (1) The retraction of a doctorate is based on regional legal provisions. If these provisions do not stipulate which body is responsible for revoking a doctorate, the responsibility falls to the Doctoral Committee.
- (2) Before a ruling is made, the candidate concerned must be heard. A written ruling must be sent to the candidate setting out the reasons behind it and instructing the candidate involved on his or her right to appeal.

§ 23 Viewing the records

The doctoral student must be granted access to view the reports once proceedings have been completed. On request, the doctoral student must also be allowed to view the records of the proceedings once they are complete, if knowledge of these records is required to enforce or defend his or her legal interests. A request to this effect must be submitted to the dean within one year of the end of the proceedings for the conferral of a doctorate.

§ 24 Exceptions

In a duly scheduled meeting, the Doctoral Committee can in individual cases approve exceptions from the above provisions with a two-thirds majority of all members present, insofar as the *Landeshochschulgesetz* does not preclude this.

§ 25 Coming into force

These Doctorate Regulations come into force on the first day of the month following publication in the Rector's Bulletin. They simultaneously supersede the Doctorate Regulations in the Faculty of Philosophy and History, the Faculty for Oriental Studies and the Faculty of Modern Languages at the University of Heidelberg dated 28 August 1989 (*Wissenschaft und Kunst*³ 1989, page 437), last amended on 30 May 2005 (Rector's Bulletin dated 30 May 2005, page 195). Doctoral students who had already been accepted for doctoral studies at the time when these regulations came into force can request to have the previous regulations applied. For those doctoral students with no previous degree who have already been accepted by the faculty (basic doctoral studies), the regulations for the previous doctorate examination regarding the oral examination (viva-voce) apply in the version dated 3 July 2003 right through to the completion of the doctoral studies.

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Published in the Rector's Bulletin dated 25 September 2006, page 749.

³ Science and Art