

Please note that this document is a non-binding convenience translation. Only the German version of the document entitled "Promotionsordnung der Universität Heidelberg für die Medizinischen Fakultäten zur Promotion zum Doctor scientiarum humanarum (Dr.sc.hum.)" [published in the Rector's Bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt des Rektors) dated 25 September 2006, page 735] has legal validity.

## Doctoral Regulations of Heidelberg University for the Medical Faculties for the Conferral of the Degree of Doctor scientiarum humanarum (Dr.sc.hum.)

of 22 September 2006

- Section 1** Types of doctoral degree, purpose of the doctorate, responsible faculties
- Section 2** Doctoral components
- Section 3** Doctoral committee
- Section 4** Admission requirements
- Section 5** Acceptance of doctoral candidates
- Section 6** Academic guidance for doctoral candidates
- Section 7** Dissertation
- Section 8** Acceptance of dissertation
- Section 9** Dissertation evaluation
- Section 10** Examination committee and oral examination
- Section 11** Decision on conferral of doctorate
- Section 12** Resubmission
- Section 13** Publication
- Section 14** Use of doctoral title, doctoral degree certificate
- Section 15** Revocation and withdrawal of admission; nullification of doctoral results
- Section 16** Revocation of doctoral degree
- Section 17** Entry into force, transitional provisions

### **Section 1** Types of doctoral degree, purpose of the doctorate, responsible faculties

- (1) The Medical Faculties confer the academic degree of Doctor scientiarum humanarum (Dr.sc.hum.) on the basis of work completed during the doctoral programme.
- (2) The doctorate serves to demonstrate the candidate's ability to undertake independent academic research.
- (3) The Medical Faculty Heidelberg and the Medical Faculty Mannheim will be in charge of administering doctoral degree procedures.
- (4) The Medical Faculties are committed to the recommended guiding principles on the promotion of junior researchers issued by the Senate of Heidelberg University and will implement those recommendations appropriately.

---

**Section 2 Doctoral components**

The doctorate consists of:

1. A dissertation marked "adequate" or better;
2. Successful completion of an oral examination in one main subject and two subsidiary subjects.

**Section 3 Doctoral committee**

- (1) The members of the board of the competent faculty entitled to vote elect a doctoral committee (Promotionsausschuss). This committee is the competent body for all matters arising from these doctoral regulations, and ensures that its provisions are observed.
- (2) The doctoral committee consists of a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 13 professors or associate professors from the relevant faculty, professors constituting the majority. The doctoral committee elects the chair and vice chair from its membership.
- (3) The doctoral committee is elected for a two-year term. Members may be re-elected. The term of office begins with the date of the election.
- (4) The doctoral committee's day-to-day business is managed by the chair.
- (5) The doctoral committee takes decisions by a majority vote of its members. If there are an equal number of votes, the chair has the casting vote.

**Section 4 Admission requirements**

- (1) Only candidates who completed a course of study (Diplom, Staatsexamen, master's degree) with a minimum standard study period of 4 years in one of the following subjects at a university or higher education institution of a comparable academic standard will be admitted to the doctoral programme.

Medical informatics  
Physics  
Chemistry  
Mathematics  
Biology  
Microbiology  
Psychology  
Biochemistry  
Computer science  
Pharmacy

- (2) Additionally, the responsible doctoral committee may upon application admit applicants with a Diplom or master's degree in a different subject if the applicant's field of study is relevant to medicine and the intended dissertation. The degree must have been obtained at a university or higher education institution of a comparable academic standard. Applicants with a degree from a university of applied science may also be admitted to the doctoral programme if they:

- a) achieved an above-average final result and; and
- b) complete an aptitude assessment procedure successfully (Eignungsfeststellungsverfahren).

The responsible doctoral committee oversees the aptitude assessment procedure, which serves to demonstrate that the student has appropriate ability and is qualified to undertake doctoral research in the intended dissertation subject. The doctoral committee determines the level of achievement required. As a rule, the aptitude assessment procedure is to be concluded within three semesters of the date of the request for admission. If a candidate fails one or more examinations that are part of the aptitude assessment procedure, the first retake must take place no earlier than 14 days following the examination. Retakes are granted twice. If the candidate fails the second retake, he or she fails the aptitude assessment procedure as a whole.

- (3) The relevant doctoral committee decides upon recognition of certificates and degrees obtained from academic higher education institutions abroad after hearing the Central Office for Foreign Education at the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen der Kultusministerkonferenz).
- (4) Candidates who already hold a doctorate will not be accepted into the doctoral programme to obtain the degree of Dr.sc.hum., unless they hold a second graduate degree in one of the subjects set forth under subsection 1.
- (5) Doctoral candidates must work at a medical clinic or at an institute of medical of the responsible faculty, or in a co-opted research institution or academic teaching hospital at the university for a minimum of two years. The candidate must provide proof of an employment contract with the relevant establishment. Employment of doctoral candidates at other institutions is subject to the consent of the doctoral committee. Only candidates who obtained a Diplom or master's degree in medical informatics from the Medical Faculty of Heidelberg University are exempt from this provision.
- (6) The dissertation topic must be derived from one of the subjects represented at the relevant medical faculty.

## Section 5 Acceptance of doctoral candidates

- (1) Applicants seeking acceptance as a doctoral candidate must submit a request to this effect to the competent doctoral committee. The following must be enclosed with the application:
- a) University degree certificate or degree certificate from an academic higher education institution of a comparable academic standard and, where applicable, proof of successful completion of the aptitude assessment procedure (section 4);
  - b) Specification of the intended field of research (main subject) and the two subsidiary subjects according to section 9, paragraph 3, including examiners' names;
  - c) A statement by a professor or associate professor belonging to the

faculty concerned that he or she will act as the academic supervisor; the supervisor must hold a *venia legendi* (teaching permission) for the main subject;

- d) Specification of the provisional working title of the dissertation together with a brief outline of the research project;
  - e) A statement by the candidate declaring that he or she has not submitted an application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate or admission to a doctoral degree procedure elsewhere.
- (2) Decisions as to the acceptance or rejection of applicants are made by the doctoral committee. Applicants will be notified of the decision in writing. If the applicant is accepted, the doctoral committee may set down conditions for him or her as to how he or she is to gain familiarity with the main and subsidiary subjects, or conclude additional agreements with him or her in writing. Negative decisions must be substantiated in writing, and contain instructions for appeal.
- (3) Upon admitting a doctoral student, the faculty concerned undertakes to examine a final scientific dissertation with the theme already provided, and to support the doctoral candidate in his or her dissertation work.
- (4) The candidate must enrol at the university unless he or she is already a member of the university by virtue of an employment contract. Registered doctoral candidates have the same rights and obligations as students.
- (5) As a rule, the doctoral project should be completed within three years. The maximum enrolment period is five years.
- (6) As a rule, the dissertation is to be completed at an academic institution of the faculty concerned or at another research institution co-opted by the faculty concerned, or at an academic teaching hospital of the university. The doctoral committee must approve any exemptions.
- (7) In exceptional cases, the doctoral committee may agree to a change of supervisor upon substantiated request.

## **Section 6 Academic guidance for doctoral candidates**

- (1) The faculty's professors are obligated to supervise doctoral candidates within the limits imposed by their tasks related to research, teaching, and academic self-government.
- (2) With respect to the supervisory relationship between doctoral students and their supervisor, reference is made to the recommended guiding principles on the promotion of junior researchers issued by the Senate.

---

**Section 7 Dissertation**

- (1) The dissertation must be of an adequate scientific standard, be a product of the candidate's own research, and contribute to the advancement of science. Contributions to group papers, which can be unequivocally attributed to the candidate and evaluated separately, may be submitted as a dissertation if they meet the dissertation requirements.
- (2) Findings of the dissertation may, with the agreement of the candidate's supervisor, be published in full or in part before admission to the examination procedure.
- (3) The dissertation must be written in German or English. In exceptional cases, the doctoral committee may allow candidates to submit dissertations written in another language if faculty evaluators are able to evaluate the dissertation in this language.

**Section 8 Acceptance of dissertation**

- (1) On completion of the dissertation, the doctoral candidate addresses a written request to the doctoral committee applying for acceptance to take the doctoral examination. The doctoral committee decides whether the candidate should be admitted.
- (2) The following must be enclosed with the application:
  - a) Copies of the dissertation in the quantity requested by the faculty concerned
  - b) An affidavit stating that the candidate is the sole author of the submitted dissertation and that he or she has not made use of any sources or resources apart from those indicated;
  - c) A statement declaring whether or not the applicant has applied for permission to enter the examination procedure at another institution;
  - d) A tabular curriculum vitae listing notably the candidate's previous course of study and his or her nationality;
  - e) Study records and certificates for previous state or academic examinations and, where applicable, supporting documents as set forth under section 4, subsection 2;
  - f) Specification of the subsidiary subjects according to section 10 subsection 3;
  - g) Evidence of at least two years of employment in any of the institutions set forth under section 4 subsection 5;
  - h) A certificate of good conduct issued in accordance with the German Central Registration Registry Regulations (Bundeszentralregistergesetz - BZRG)

Acceptance must be denied if the requirements set forth under section 4 are not met or if the documents listed under a) to g) are incomplete. Acceptance can be denied if reasons exist which would justify revocation of an academic degree or if an academic degree has been revoked.

## Section 9 Dissertation evaluation

- (1) Once the dissertation and the supervisor's report have been submitted, the committee verifies compliance with the formal criteria for the dissertation and the proposed assessment. It immediately appoints two professors or associate professors as evaluators, one of whom must belong to the faculty. The doctoral committee may approve exemptions to this provision. The doctoral candidate or supervisor may nominate evaluators, however without any binding effect on the doctoral committee. Written evaluations of the doctoral dissertation are to be made independently by the evaluators.
- (2) The evaluators propose either acceptance or rejection of the dissertation and, if the dissertation is to be accepted, award a mark in accordance with section 11 subsection 2. Written evaluations should be submitted within six weeks of receipt of the dissertation.
- (3) Following the receipt of all evaluations, the doctoral committee decides whether the dissertation should be accepted. The committee is entitled to stipulate corrections. The members of the faculty board with a voting right are informed of the committee's decisions and the reports are made available for inspection at the dean's office for a 14-day period.
- (4) If a written evaluation suggests that the dissertation be rejected, the doctoral candidate has the right after viewing the evaluations to propose a third evaluator. In this case, the doctoral committee appoints the designated evaluator plus a further evaluator. All evaluations are given equal consideration when a mark is awarded.
- (5) If the majority of evaluators suggest that the dissertation be rejected, the doctorate is rejected as a whole and the proceedings for the conferral of a doctorate are deemed as terminated. The dean issues a written and substantiated notice to this effect along with instructions for appeal.
- (6) Once the dissertation has been rejected, the application for the conferral of a doctorate may no longer be withdrawn.

## § 10 Examination committee and oral examination

- (1) If the conferral of a doctorate is not turned down as set forth under section 9 subsection 5, the doctoral committee appoints an examination committee consisting of at least four professors or associate professors. The membership of the committee is made up of the supervisor as representative of the main subject, and the evaluators and examiners for the two subsidiary subjects as specified under section 9, subsection 3. The doctoral candidate is entitled to propose the members of the examination committee, whose members must represent different disciplines; proposals have no binding effect on the doctoral

---

committee. A member of the relevant doctoral committee chairs the examination committee.

- (2) The doctoral committee sets the date of the oral examination in consultation with the members of the examination committee and the candidate.
- (3) In the oral examination before the examination committee, the doctoral candidate must demonstrate knowledge in one main subject and two subsidiary subjects. The main subject is the subject area from which the theme dissertation has been taken. The doctoral candidate chooses the subsidiary subjects from the clinical and theoretical medical subjects represented at the faculty concerned.
- (4) The oral examination should last approximately one hour. A written record of the oral examination must be prepared.
- (5) Upon request and as far as space limitations allow, the doctoral committee may allow other "Dr. sc.hum." candidates from the faculty to attend the oral examination as spectators. Spectators are not allowed while the committee debates and announces the result of the oral defence. The examination may be made non-public or the number of spectators may be restricted upon the candidate's request or if good reasons exist.
- (6) After the oral examination, the examination committee decides whether the doctoral candidate has passed the oral examination. Candidates who failed the oral examination may retake it once. The examination committee sets the date for the retake; the "Dr.sc.hum" doctoral committee can call further professors into the exam as required. If the candidate fails the retake is not passed, the doctorate is rejected and the proceedings for the conferral of a doctorate are deemed as terminated.

## Section 11 Decision on conferral of doctorate

- (1) If the candidate passes the oral examination, the examination committee he determines the overall mark on the basis of the marks recommended by the supervisor and the evaluators for the dissertation and the oral examination.
- (2) The following marking key is applied:
  - for outstanding achievement - summa cum laude;
  - for excellent achievement - magna cum laude;
  - for good achievement - cum laude;
  - for adequate performance - rite
- (3) The candidate must be notified of the doctoral result immediately.
- (4) The award the overall mark of "summa cum laude" requires that two additional written evaluations by external professors award the mark "summa cum laude" for the dissertation.

---

**Section 12 Resubmission**

If the dissertation was rejected in accordance with subsection 9 subsection 5 or if the conferral of a doctorate has been turned down in accordance with the final sentence of section 10 subsection 6, the doctoral candidate may submit a new dissertation topic and submit a new request in accordance with section 5. Approval for resubmission may be granted only once.

**Section 13 Publication**

(1) The dissertation must be published. Publication takes place in consultation with the supervisor. The publication requirement is deemed to be met if the candidate submits

a) 150 letter-press or photographic-print copies for circulation purposes;

or

b) six copies if the dissertation is to be published in a journal;

or

c) six copies if a commercial publisher undertakes distribution through the publishing trade, and proof of a minimum print-run of 150 copies can be provided;

or

d) three copies in a reproducible typescript together with the master copy, and 150 microfiches copies; in this case, the doctoral candidate transfers to the university the right to produce and distribute further microfiche copies of his or her dissertation;

or

e) a digital version of the dissertation digital copy of the dissertation, whose data format and carrier must be approved by the university library, plus the minimum number of bound and typewritten copies of the dissertation required by the faculty,

and

an abstract of the dissertation approved by the supervisor on an electronic data carrier for publication by the faculty. A fee may be charged for publications by the faculty.

(2) If the dissertation is not published within two years of conclusion of the doctoral degree procedure, all rights acquired with the doctorate are forfeited. In special cases, the time limit may be extended upon timely and substantiated request by the candidate. The chair of the doctoral committee decides on extensions of up



---

to 6 months; for extensions exceeding this period, the decision is made by the doctoral committee.

#### **Section 14 Use of doctoral title, doctoral degree certificate**

- (1) Once all doctoral components are concluded and the publication requirement has been satisfied, the dean of the Medical Faculty concerned issues the doctoral certificate. The right to use the title of "Doctor" is acquired only upon receipt of the doctoral certificate.
- (2) The doctoral certificate records the title of the dissertation, the overall mark, and states the date of the award of the overall mark as the date of degree award.

#### **Section 15 Revocation and withdrawal of admission; nullification of doctoral results**

- (1) If, prior to the execution of the doctoral certificate, it emerges that the candidate met the conditions of admission through deception, or essential conditions of admission were mistakenly taken to have been satisfied, the doctoral committee may revoke the admission of a doctoral candidate or admission to the examination procedure. The same applies if facts become known that would justify the withdrawal of a doctoral degree under state law.
- (2) If, before the doctoral certificate is issued, it emerges that the candidate used deception in order to meet one of the requirements for the doctorate, the doctoral committee may nullify either this particular achievement or all prior achievements. In severe cases the committee may revoke admission to the examination procedure.
- (3) The candidate concerned must be heard before a decision is taken. The reasons for the decision must be substantiated in writing.

#### **Section 16 Revocation of doctoral degree**

- (1) Revocation of doctoral degrees is governed by state law. If state law does not specify otherwise, the faculty board is the competent body to administer revocation of doctoral degrees. It decides whether and to what extent the doctoral committee is to be consulted with respect to the revocation of the doctoral degree.
- (2) The candidate concerned must be heard before a decision is taken. The reasons for the decision must be substantiated in writing.

---

**Section 17 Entry into force, transitional provisions**

- (1) These doctoral regulations come into force on the first day of the month following publication in the Rector's Bulletin. They simultaneously supersede the doctoral regulations for the Medical Faculties of Heidelberg University for the conferral of the degree of Doctor scientiarum humanarum (Dr. sc. hum.) of 4 October 1982 (Wissenschaft und Kunst - Science and art, dated 17/01/1983, page 15), amended on 25 March 1996 (Wissenschaft und Forschung - Science and Reserach, dated 20/05/1996, page 155).
- (2) Candidates who took up a doctoral programme prior to these doctoral regulations becoming effective may upon request continue the doctorate according to the previously applicable provisions if said provisions are not in conflict with the Act on Higher Education of the Land of Baden-Württemberg (LHG).

=====  
**Please note that this document is a non-binding convenience translation. Only the German version of the document entitled "Promotionsordnung der Universität Heidelberg für die Medizinischen Fakultäten zur Promotion zum Doctor scientiarum humanarum (Dr.sc.hum.)" [published in the Rector's Bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt des Rektors) dated 25 September 2006, page 735] has legal validity.**