

Regulations of the Faculty of Civil Engineering

Governing Doctoral Studies

Dated December 20, 2007

In the Sixth Revised Version of the Regulations

**Dated January 18,
2021**

Published as a Complete Version

Please note: This publication is an English translation of the Regulations Governing Doctoral Studies. Only the German original of these regulations as published in the Official Announcements of RWTH Aachen University ("Amtliche Bekanntmachungen") is legally binding.

Based on § 2 (4) and 67 (3) of the Higher Education Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz; HG) in the version of the announcement dated September 16, 2014 (Law and Official Gazette of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia p. 547), most recently amended by Art. 1 of the Act Concerning Further Measures to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic in Higher Education dated December 1, 2020 (Law and Official Gazette of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia p. 1110), RWTH Aachen University (Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule) has issued the following Regulations Governing Doctoral Studies of the Faculty of Civil Engineering:

Contents

I General

- § 1 Right to Award Doctorates
- § 2 Doctoral Committee
- § 3 Doctoral Commission
- § 4 Reviewers
- § 5 Dissertation
- § 6 Grading of the Doctoral Examination
- § 7 Doctoral Degree Requirements

II Admission to Doctoral Studies

- § 8 General Admission Requirements
- § 9 Admission to Doctoral Studies Based on a Degree Awarded by an International University
- § 10 Application for Assessment of the Admission Requirements
- § 10a Data Collection, Processing, and Transfer
- § 11 Center for Doctoral Studies

III Doctoral Examination Process

- § 12 Application for Admission to the Doctoral Examination
- § 13 Initiation of the Doctoral Examination Process
- § 14 Examination of the Dissertation
- § 15 Revision of the Dissertation
- § 16 Oral Examination
- § 17 Publication of the Dissertation
- § 18 Joint Doctorate
- § 19 Doctoral Certificate
- § 20 Honorary Doctorate and Renewal of the Doctoral Certificate
- § 21 Revocation of the Doctoral Degree
- § 22 Viewing of Examination Records
- § 23 Entry Into Force and Transitional Provisions

I General

§ 1

Right to Award Doctorates

- (1) The Faculty of Civil Engineering of RWTH Aachen University has the right to award doctorates.
- (2) The doctorate establishes the candidate's ability to undertake independent academic work that exceeds the general objective of the degree program. The ability is determined based on a thesis (dissertation) of high quality demonstrating an advancement of the state of scientific knowledge and an oral examination (defense). The doctoral degree is awarded upon successful completion of the doctoral program.
- (3) The Faculty of Civil Engineering awards the degree of Doktorin/Doktor der Ingenieurwissenschaften (Dr.-Ing.) [Doctor of Engineering Sciences] and Doktorin/Doktor der Naturwissenschaften (Dr. rer. nat.) [Doctor of Natural Sciences].

§ 2

Doctoral Committee

- (1) The Faculty forms a doctoral committee. The doctoral committee is comprised of four members of the group of professors, two members from the group of researchers, and one member from the group of students. One member from the group of employees in technology and administration is an advisory member of the doctoral committee with no voting rights but with the right to speak and submit requests. A deputy will be nominated for each member of the doctoral committee. The members from the group of professors and from the group of researchers shall be appointed for a period of two years; the student members shall be appointed for one year. Re-election to the Board is possible. The chairperson of the doctoral committee is the dean. In the absence of the dean, the committee shall be chaired by the vice dean.
- (2) The doctoral committee shall perform the following tasks:
 1. determining the doctoral requirements in accordance with § 8 through 9,
 2. accepting the doctoral candidates in accordance with § 10,
 3. accepting individual cooperation contracts in accordance with § 18 for doctoral examination processes, supervised jointly with an international university (partner university) in accordance with the principles of § 8-10,
 4. appointing reviewers (determining the scientific qualification at habilitation level in accordance with § 36 (1) No. 4 HG for instructors at a university of applied sciences within the scope of a partnership with RWTH Aachen University), forming the doctoral commission,
 5. initiating or not initiating the doctoral examination process in accordance with § 13,
 6. deciding on special cases during doctoral examination processes (e.g. absence of a reviewer or a member of the doctoral commission) and appeals against decisions made by the doctoral commission.

The doctoral committee may delegate the ongoing affairs to its chair; this does not apply to decisions in appeal proceedings.

- (3) The doctoral committee meetings are not public. Its members are sworn to secrecy.
- (4) The doctoral committee has a quorum when the chairperson or their deputy and two other professors with voting rights or their deputies and at least two other members with voting rights or their deputies are present. The doctoral committee makes decisions with a simple majority. In the event of a tie, the chairperson's vote shall decide the matter. A record shall be kept of the doctoral committee meetings.
- (5) The chair of the doctoral committee shall inform the candidate about any decisions relating to them by a written notification that includes information on legal remedies.

§ 3 Doctoral Commission

- (1) A doctoral commission is formed to carry out the doctoral examination process. It includes the reviewers and other members, totaling a minimum of three and a maximum of nine people in accordance with Paragraphs 2 through 4.
- (2) The doctoral committee appoints the other members. These members are to be selected in such a way that the examiners of the selected examination subjects are part of the doctoral commission. They should be university instructors in accordance with § 35 HG, professors relieved of teaching duties or retired, adjunct professors, honorary professors or private lecturers from the Faculty of Civil Engineering. For interdisciplinary dissertations, at least one representative of another faculty or university must be included as a member for the topic that is not covered by the Faculty of Civil Engineering.
- (3) In accordance with § 35 HG of the Faculty of Civil Engineering, every university instructor can be nominated as a member of the doctoral commission by the doctoral committee at their request. This request must be submitted no later than the appeal deadline in accordance with § 14 (2). If the doctoral committee rejects the nomination, the candidate may call in the Faculty Council. The final members of the doctoral commission must be appointed before the decision on the acceptance of the dissertation is made.
- (4) The doctoral committee shall appoint the chairperson of the doctoral commission. This individual may not be the reviewer.
- (5) All members of the doctoral commission shall have voting rights. The doctoral commission makes decisions with a simple majority. In the event of a tie, the chairperson's vote shall decide the matter.
- (6) If members appointed to the doctoral commission are not able to carry out the doctoral examination process (e.g. due to illness), the doctoral committee shall select a replacement member.

§ 4 Reviewers

- (1) The doctoral committee shall appoint at least two reviewers for the examination of the dissertation, usually from the group of university instructors in accordance with § 35 HG, professors relieved of teaching duties or retired, adjunct professors, honorary professors or private lecturers (Privatdozenten) of RWTH Aachen University; private lecturers may only be appointed as reviewers if two years have passed since their habilitation. Junior professors may usually only be appointed as reviewers if they have completed their probationary period of three years.
- (2) If the dissertation has been supervised in accordance with § 5 (5), the supervisor must be one of the reviewers.
- (3) At least one of the reviewers must be a university instructor – according to § 35 HG – of the Faculty of Civil Engineering.
- (4) Reviewers can also be university instructors, adjunct professors, honorary professors, or private lecturers (Privatdozenten) employed at another German or international university or research institution.
- (5) If the content of the presented dissertation also includes a discipline pertaining to another faculty, one or several university instructors according to § 35 HG, adjunct professors, private lecturers (Privatdozenten), or honorary professors from this faculty can be appointed as reviewers by the doctoral committee.
- (6) Within the scope of a partnership with RWTH Aachen University, instructors of a university of applied sciences can also be appointed as a reviewer. In accordance with § 36 (1) No. 4 HG the reviewer must have completed a habilitation (postdoctoral teaching qualification) or an equivalent scientific qualification. The doctoral committee shall determine whether the requirement has been met. As part of this joint supervision, the scope and content of studies considered suitable preparation for the doctorate are to be determined for the doctoral candidate together with the supervisor of the university of applied sciences, in accordance with § 67 (4) Sentence 1 No. 2 HG.

§ 5 Dissertation

- (1) The candidate is required to submit an academic thesis (dissertation) that they have written independently in German or English. Upon request, the doctoral committee may also permit a dissertation to be written in another language. In this case, the doctoral committee may request a certified translation of the binding text. The doctoral committee shall decide on whether to admit a dissertation written in a foreign language as part of assessing the doctoral application in accordance with § 12. After the oral examination has been passed, the doctoral committee shall decide whether a dissertation submitted in a foreign language is to be published in this language or as a German translation.

- (2) A substantial part of the dissertation must relate to the scientific fields of the faculty where the doctoral application has been submitted.
- (3) At least three current scientific papers that have appeared in internationally renowned peer-reviewed journals whose quality is assured (listed in the Web of Science database) can be submitted as a dissertation if the results of these papers comply with the overall requirements for dissertations, the publication dates are not too far apart, and the results are inherently related to science.
 - 1) As a rule, at least two of the three scientific papers must be written in English.
 - 2) The scientific papers must be printed out and arranged behind the general introduction similar in form to a monograph.
 - 3) In addition to the general introduction, a summary must also be included in the printed work.

The submitted papers must be prefaced with a general introduction on the state of the relevant research, the research questions pursued, the main results, and the reception of the research contribution by the scientific community.

The candidate should be the sole author of all scientific papers; the supervisor of the dissertation does not count as a contributing author. If the candidate is not the sole author, the exact contribution of the applicant is to be described in the introduction so that the ability to perform independent scientific work can be confirmed.

- (4) Work submitted for previous examinations may not be used for the dissertation. Publications related to the dissertation topic are to be agreed upon with the supervisor.
- (5) The dissertation must have been produced under academic guidance from a university instructor, a professor relieved of teaching duties or retired, an adjunct professor, an honorary professor, or a private lecturer (Privatdozent) from RWTH University. They are required to ensure appropriate academic supervision during the doctoral examination process. The willingness to accept this responsibility is usually confirmed by entering into a supervision agreement according to the valid version of the RWTH Aachen University template.

§ 6

Grading of the Doctoral Examination

- (1) If the dissertation is rejected or if the candidate fails the repeat oral examination (§ 16 (8)), the dean shall inform the candidate that they have not passed the doctoral examination and will state the reasons for this.
- (2) If the doctoral examination is not passed, the dissertation cannot be presented again for the purposes of a doctorate, including to another faculty
- (3) The candidate shall only be given one final attempt at the same or another faculty and no earlier than one year after the rejection has been announced. A new dissertation is to be presented.
- (4) Copies of the dissertation in which objections or other comments have been included and, at the very least, one copy shall remain with the Faculty.
- (5) If the candidate passes the oral examination, they pass the doctoral examination.

(6) The doctoral commission shall determine an overall grade of the doctoral examination as

“with distinction”	(summa cum laude),
“very good”	(magna cum laude),
“good”	(cum laude) or
“sufficient”	(rite).

Instead of an overall grade, separate grades can be given for the dissertation and the oral examination.

(7) The candidate must be informed of the result verbally immediately after the oral examination and in writing within 14 days. The evaluation of the dissertation and the oral examination is to be completed no later than six months following the presentation of the dissertation.

§ 7

Doctoral Degree Requirements

Doctoral degree requirements within the meaning of these regulations are:

- a. the dissertation,
- b. the oral examination (defense),
- c. the publication of the dissertation.

Once these doctoral degree requirements have been met, the doctorate can be declared completed by issuing a doctoral certificate.

II Admission to Doctoral Studies

§ 8

General Admission Requirements

- (1) The doctoral examination process can commence if the candidate has obtained
 - a) a degree after relevant university studies with a standard study period of at least eight semesters for which a degree other than “Bachelor” is awarded, or
 - b) a degree after relevant university studies with a standard study period of at least six semesters and subsequent adequate courses in the doctoral subjects that prepare the candidates for the doctorate, or
 - c) a Master’s degree within the meaning of § 61 (2) Sentence 2 HG,

and can demonstrate their suitability to undertake the independent scientific work necessary for a doctorate through their academic work and achievements.

- (2) The scope of courses and related assessment criteria considered suitable preparation for the doctorate according to Paragraph 1 Sentence 1 b), including the number and type of certificates required, as well as the academic work and achievements demonstrating the candidate’s suitability to undertake the scientific work necessary for a doctorate, is determined by the doctoral committee after consultation with the candidate.

- (3) The prerequisite for the doctorate in engineering (Dr.-Ing.) is a Diplom degree in engineering [Diplom-Ingenieur] or a completed Master's degree within the meaning of § 61 (2) Sentence 2 HG in an engineering subject, which was preceded by a Bachelor's degree within the meaning of § 61 (2) Sentence 1 HG in an engineering subject. Holders of another engineering or mathematical/scientific Diplom or Master's degree within the meaning of § 61 (2) Sentence 2 HG can be admitted to the doctoral program to obtain the Dr.-Ing. title if the Faculty determines before the procedure is initiated that the dissertation is relevant to the engineering sciences and the applicant has sufficient knowledge of engineering. The doctoral committee is entitled to check that the candidate has the required knowledge before initiating the doctoral examination process.
- (4) The prerequisite for the doctorate in science (Dr.rer.nat.) is a Diplom degree in mathematics, computer science, physics, chemistry, biology, geology, mineralogy, or a different equivalent science Diplom degree, a completed Master's degree within the meaning of § 61 (2) Sentence 2 HG in a science subject, or evidence of passing the first state exam for teacher training for upper secondary education or a comparable teacher training examination in mathematics or a natural science subject. Holders of a Diplom degree in engineering or holders of another engineering Diplom degree can be admitted to the doctoral program to obtain the Dr.rer.nat. title if the doctoral committee determines before the procedure is initiated that the dissertation is relevant to a mathematical or natural sciences field and that the candidate has sufficient knowledge of mathematics or natural science. The doctoral committee is entitled to check that the candidate has the required knowledge before initiating the doctoral examination process.
- (5) If a candidate shows exceptional scientific achievements, the doctoral committee may admit the candidate to the doctoral examination process at the request of three university instructors of the Faculty Civil Engineering for with a majority of two thirds of its members in accordance with the provisions of § 49 (11) HG.

§ 9

Admission to the Doctoral Program Based on a Degree Awarded by an International University

A general requirement for admission to the doctoral program within the meaning of § 8 (1a) is a professional qualification or another final examination to complete a relevant scientific course with a standard period of study of at least eight semesters including an academic final thesis integrated into the course awarded by a university outside Germany if the degree

1. is to be considered equivalent to corresponding degrees that are awarded at German universities based on intergovernmental agreements,
2. is to be considered a general requirement for admission to doctoral studies based on evaluations of the Central Office for Foreign Education at the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education (ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister) of the federal states or the German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz),
3. is to be considered equivalent to a relevant degree that can be awarded at RWTH Aachen University based on agreements with partner universities outside of Germany by RWTH Aachen University.

Within the scope of admission to the doctoral program based on a degree awarded by an international university, the doctoral committee may impose additional requirements that are related to the scientific field that is to be addressed in the dissertation.

§ 10

Application for the Assessment of the Admission Requirements

- (1) Every candidate who intends to undertake doctoral studies at the Faculty shall submit an application for assessment of the admission requirements. The application is not the same as the application for admission to the doctoral examination in accordance with § 12.
- (2) The application in Paragraph 1 shall be submitted in writing to the doctoral committee of the Faculty. The following must be submitted together with the application:
 - a) the intended topic of the dissertation;
 - b) the letter of intent from a university instructor of the faculty which states their willingness to supervise the candidate with the dissertation and thus enter into a supervision agreement;
 - c) evidence that the admission requirements in accordance with § 8 through 9 have been met,
 - d) overview of the scientific career; including evidence about additional completed studies or exams as well as a declaration of any past unsuccessful doctoral examination processes;
 - e) a declaration that the candidate accepts these regulations.
- (3) Certificates are to be submitted as a certified copy or as a regular copy together with the original document. Certified translations of certificates not in German are to be included on request.
- (4) The doctoral committee decides whether to accept or reject a doctoral candidate. Acceptance may be conditional on completing additional requirements or examinations in accordance with § 8 and 9. The candidate shall be notified in writing of the acceptance and, if applicable, additional requirements. They shall receive a written notification of rejection or conditional acceptance, including the reasons for this decision and information on legal remedies.

§ 10a

Data Collection, Processing, and Transfer

In accordance with § 5 of the Act on Statistics for Higher Education (Hochschulstatistikgesetz – HSchStG), universities must collect personal data about any individuals who have been admitted to doctoral studies in accordance with § 10 (3). The personal data of the doctoral candidates are automatically stored by the University and are processed by the IT Center as well as the Central University Administration in order to comply with legal requirements. The University will only transmit the data if this is necessary to comply with its legal duties or duties specified in its statutes. Data transfer to the Statistical Office of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (IT NRW) concerns the data collection characteristics in accordance with § 3 (1), § 4, and § 5 (2) HSchStG (Higher Education Statistics Act).

§ 11
Center for Doctoral Studies (CDS)

- (1) In addition to the general admission requirements, every candidate should complete a doctoral program at the Center for Doctoral Studies. This is intended to encourage the candidate's scientific independence and allow them to acquire additional key academic qualifications.
- (2) In individual cases, if the candidate already has these key qualifications, the doctoral committee may approve exceptions to participating in the CDS.

III Doctoral Examination Process

§ 12
Application for Admission to the Doctoral Examination

- (1) The candidate's application for admission to the doctoral examination shall be submitted in writing to the doctoral committee of the Faculty of Civil Engineering.
- (2) The application must include:
 1. the pursued doctoral title,
 2. the title of the dissertation.
- (3) The following documents are to be submitted with the application:
 1. a CV in tabular form presenting the candidate's career and education,
 2. the notification of acceptance in accordance with § 10,
 3. a Certificate of Good Conduct from the Federal Central Register of document type O. Presentation of the Certificate of Good Conduct is not required if the candidate works in the public or church service,
 4. a dissertation in the form of a word-processing text ready for printing in accordance with § 5, at least six bound copies and an electronic version,
 5. a specimen copy of any prior publications,
 6. an affidavit that the candidate has independently completed the dissertation and has indicated any means of support used in the dissertation,
 7. an affidavit on whether the candidate has submitted doctoral applications in the past, including the result, stating the time, the German or international university, faculty as well as the topic of the dissertation,
 8. a written declaration that the candidate has acknowledged and adhered to the Guidelines and Procedures for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice at RWTH,
 9. a brief summary of the dissertation of 1 to 2 printed pages,
 10. confirmation of completion of a course on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice at RWTH Aachen University or a corresponding course at another institution. The chairperson of the doctoral committee shall decide on whether completion of similar courses at other higher education institutions is recognized or whether any exceptions apply.
- (4) If the dissertation was produced at an institution outside RWTH Aachen University, the candidate must submit a written declaration that the publication of the dissertation does not violate any existing trade secrets.

§ 13

Initiation of the Doctoral Examination Process

- (1) The doctoral committee initiates the doctoral examination process once a written application for its initiation and the documents to be submitted in accordance with § 12 have been received in full and the reviewers have declared that they are willing to provide an expert opinion. The process shall be initiated no later than one month after receipt of the application.
- (2) The reviewers and the doctoral commission are to be appointed upon initiation. The candidate shall be notified of the initiation immediately in writing.
- (3) If the doctoral application and the submitted documents do not meet the requirements (see § 8, 9, 10, 12), the doctoral examination process shall not be initiated. If the doctoral committee rejects the initiation of the doctoral examination process, the candidate shall be informed by the doctoral committee's chairperson immediately in writing, stating the reasons for this decision along with information on legal remedies.
- (4) An application to initiate the doctoral examination process that has been submitted to the University can be withdrawn within a week of the announcement of the initiation of the doctoral examination process.

§ 14

Evaluation of the Dissertation

- (1) The reviewers evaluate the dissertation and report back to the Faculty in separate written expert opinions, ideally within three months. They can request that the dissertation either be accepted, rejected, or revised, or not even considered if they deem the Faculty not to be the responsible authority. They must furthermore include the reasons justifying their recommendation. An expert opinion supporting the acceptance of the dissertation must include a recommended grade. If a reviewer is not able to prepare their expert opinion within six months, the doctoral committee may appoint another reviewer.
- (2) Once the expert opinions have been received, the dean shall present the dissertation and the expert opinions to the Faculty's instructors and the members of the Faculty Council who have a doctorate degree to allow them to make a statement or, if necessary, submit a written objection. The dissertation and expert opinions shall be available for review for a period of two weeks during the lecture period or six weeks during the lecture-free period. The objection period expires at the end of the second working day following the end of the review period.
- (3) If the reviewers unanimously recommend the acceptance of the dissertation and no objection has been made, the dean shall determine that the dissertation is accepted. If the reviewers unanimously recommend the rejection of the dissertation and no objection has been made, the dean shall determine that the dissertation is rejected.

- (4) If the reviewers disagree on the acceptance of the dissertation or at least one of the reviewers recommends that the dissertation be revised or not considered and an objection has been submitted within the deadline, the dean shall present the dissertation to the doctoral commission. It shall discuss the submission within a reasonable period of time. It can recommend consulting further reviewers. The doctoral commission recommends whether the dissertation is to be accepted, rejected, revised, or not to be considered. If the recommendation is made unanimously, the dean shall make the necessary determinations. Non-consideration does not mean that the dissertation has been rejected.
- (5) If a unanimous recommendation in accordance paragraphs Paragraph 4 cannot be achieved, the dean shall present the dissertation together with the expert opinions, statements, and objections to the doctoral committee. Based on the recommendations, it shall make a decision immediately on the acceptance, rejection or revision of the dissertation, or non-consideration. Dissertation acceptance requires the submission of two supporting expert opinions.

§ 15

Revision of the Dissertation

- (1) In accordance with § 14 (4) and § 14 (5), the doctoral committee or the doctoral commission can ask the candidate to revise the dissertation once within a deadline. The conditions for the revision are to be put on record and are to be communicated. The deadline can only be extended once. If the deadline is exceeded, the doctoral committee or the doctoral commission shall inform the dean. The dean shall determine the dissertation rejected.
- (2) Once the dissertation has been revised within the deadline, it shall be reexamined in accordance with § 14. The expert opinion of the revised version must particularly address the question of whether the conditions in accordance with Paragraph 1 have been adequately met. The revised version of the dissertation may only be rejected if conditions have not been adequately met or if there are strong scientific objections to sections that were rephrased or newly added to the dissertation during the revision that make rejecting the dissertation necessary.

§ 16

Oral Examination/Defense

- (1) Once the dissertation has been accepted, the dean will arrange an oral examination or defense. It will be conducted by the doctoral commission in accordance with Paragraph 6.
- (2) The dean shall inform the university instructors of the Faculty of Civil Engineering, the other deans, the members of the doctoral commission, and the members of the Faculty Council as well as the candidate of the time and place of the oral examination within a deadline of at least ten days. The time and place of the oral examination must be announced on the department's notice boards.
- (3) The members of the doctoral committee have the right to take part in the oral examination as guests. Other guests are only permitted with the consent of the candidate if they are members of RWTH Aachen University who hold a doctorate. Doctoral candidates who have started working on a dissertation topic are to be admitted as audience members, unless the candidate objects to this.
- (4) Each candidate shall be examined individually. The oral examination is conducted in German or English.

- (5) For Dr.-Ing. and Dr. rer. Nat. doctorates, the oral examination is to be conducted by at least three members of the doctoral commission. This group must include the chair of the doctoral commission, the supervisor, and another reviewer.
- (6) The oral examination consists of two parts: a half-hour presentation by the candidate on their dissertation and an oral examination lasting at least one hour. The presentation part is public unless the candidate objects to this. The oral examination part is conducted in accordance with Paragraph 3.
- (7) The doctoral commission shall decide on the result immediately after the oral examination.
- (8) If the candidate fails the oral examination, it may only be repeated once and only at the same faculty. The candidate can enroll to repeat the examination no earlier than three months and no later than 18 months following the oral examination.
- (9) Oral examinations may be held using a videoconferencing system in rooms outside the University, provided that all participants and the doctoral committee agree and the following requirements are met:
 1. the doctoral candidate proves their identity before the start of the examination by showing an official photo ID;
 2. the doctoral candidate is captured on camera as fully as possible;
 3. the room in which the doctoral candidate is located must be shown to the examiners via webcam before the start of the examination.

The examiner may furthermore ask the doctoral candidate to show the room via webcam again during the course of the examination.

- (10) If there is a failure in the technology during the oral examination (e.g. a loss of connection or the image freezes), which significantly disturbs the examination, the examination must be terminated and rescheduled. If the problems with the audio and/or visual connection are minor and do not significantly disturb the examination, the examination can be continued. In the event of major problems with the audio and/or visual connection which significantly disturb the examination, the examination is to be terminated. The decision on whether a technical problem is to be considered a significant disturbance to the examination lies with the examiner(s).
- (11) If the doctoral candidate terminates an oral examination via videoconferencing system without being able to prove that a technical error occurred, the examination shall be graded as "failed."
- (12) Detailed records shall be kept in transcript about any oral examinations held using a videoconferencing system, in the same way they are for regular oral examinations. These records should also explain the technical framework conditions (in particular the type of software used, the quality of transmission, possible malfunctions, procedural instructions). No audio and/or video recordings of oral examinations will be taken.

§ 17 Publication of the Dissertation

- (1) Once the candidate has passed the doctoral examination, they shall present the dissertation to the dean for the approval of the version intended for publication. The dean shall issue this approval in agreement with the reviewers once any additional requirements that may have been stipulated are met.

- (2) The Faculty of Civil Engineering is entitled to request that the doctoral candidate
- include a summary of their work of no more than one printed page and transfer the right to the University to publish this summary or offer it to a publisher or a database, and
 - write the title and summary in two languages (usually in German and English).
- (3) The doctoral candidate is required to make their dissertation available in an appropriate manner to the scientific community by way of copying and distribution. This happens either by
- a) submitting 2 deposit copies to the Faculty's Office and 35 deposit copies to the University Library in the form of a book or photo print, or
 - b) publishing it in a scientific journal; in this case, it is necessary to submit a deposit copy to the Faculty's Office and 14 deposit copies to the University Library; it must also be stated, e.g. on the back of the title page, in which journal the dissertation is published (including the publisher and its location), all deposit copies must include the note "D 82 (Diss. RWTH Aachen University), [indicating the year of the oral examination], or
 - c) distribution in book stores by a commercial publisher with a minimum circulation of 150 copies; in this case, it is necessary to submit a deposit copy to the Faculty's Office and 14 deposit copies to the University Library; it must also be stated, e.g. on the back of the title page, which publisher published the dissertation (including the publisher and its location), all deposit copies must include the note "D 82 (Diss. RWTH Aachen University), [indicating the year of the oral examination], or
 - d) submitting an electronic copy to the University Library, the data format and transfer of which is to be agreed with the University Library, together with a deposit copy. An abstract in German and English is required for publication. The doctoral candidate shall transfer the right to publish the electronic version in data networks to the University Library, the DNB (German National Library) in Frankfurt/Leipzig and, if applicable, the German Research Foundation's Special Collection Library and confirms that the electronic version corresponds with the accepted dissertation. The University Library shall check the delivered version to ensure it is legible and meets the specified requirements. The submission of files that do not meet the specified file format and data carrier requirements shall not be considered a publication.

All deposit copies to be submitted must include a dedicated title page with the candidate's name; their CV or educational background may also be added. They must be printed on age-resistant, wood-free, and acid-free paper and permanently bound together. They must also be technically flawless. If it is determined that the copies do not meet these criteria, they shall be rejected. Rejected work shall be considered unpublished; the doctoral degree certificate shall therefore not be issued.

- (4) The dissertation is to be published no later than one year after the oral examination. In justified exceptional cases, the dean may extend the deadline. If the candidate misses the deadline, all rights acquired with the examination shall expire.

§ 18 Joint Doctorate

- (1) A doctoral examination process jointly supervised with an international university (partner university) requires entering into an individual cooperation contract for the performance and supervision of the doctoral project and evaluation and assessment of the doctoral degree requirements.
- (2) The individual cooperation contract may stipulate that the involved universities must be represented equally on the doctoral commission.
- (3) After the doctoral examination process has been successfully completed, the Faculty of Civil Engineering shall award an academic degree in accordance with § 1 (3) and the partner university an academic degree in accordance with its applicable regulations. These academic grades may not be used concurrently.

§ 19 Doctoral Degree Certificate

- (1) After the dissertation has been published, a doctoral certificate is issued and signed personally by the rector and the dean. The doctoral degree certificate bears the date of submission of the deposit copies to the University Library. The reviewers who recommend acceptance of the dissertation are to be named on the doctoral certificate. The doctoral examination process is completed once the doctoral certificate has been issued. After receiving the doctoral certificate, the candidate has the right to carry the doctor title.
- (2) If the candidate has participated in courses by the Center for Doctoral Studies (CDS), they shall also receive a doctoral supplement documenting these achievements.

§ 20 Honorary Doctorate and Renewal of the Doctoral Certificate

- (1) Upon request by the Faculty of Civil Engineering, the Senate may award the academic degree and title of an honorary doctor of engineering (Dr.-Ing.) or science (Dr.rer.nat.) honoris causa (h.c.) to individuals who show extraordinary personal, scientific, technical, or artistic performances in a field in which the university specializes. They may not be members or associates of RWTH Aachen University.
- (2) The Faculty may only submit honorary doctorate applications for the doctoral degrees that it is entitled to award. In preparation for this application, the Faculty should obtain at least two external expert opinions. The Faculty Council shall decide on the application to the senate. The application requires the support of two thirds of the members of the Faculty Council.
- (3) The rector awards the honorary doctorate by presenting a doctoral certificate which commends the merits of the individual.
- (4) Doctoral graduates of RWTH who are distinguished for their scientific or practical professional work may be honored with the renewal of the doctoral certificate after 25 or 50 years or on extraordinary occasions. The Faculty shall decide on awarding honorary doctorates, the subject of which is related to civil engineering.

§ 21 Revocation of the Doctoral Degree

- (1) The doctoral degree may be revoked
 - a) if it transpires that it was achieved on the basis of false statements regarding significant requirements for admission to doctoral studies,
 - b) if it transpires that it was achieved using deception regarding the doctoral degree requirements,
 - c) if academic misconduct has been determined in relation to the dissertation, or
 - d) if the doctoral graduate has been sentenced to at least one year in prison after being found guilty of a deliberate crime.
- (2) If circumstances come to light that would justify the revocation of the doctoral degree in accordance with Paragraph 1, the doctoral graduate shall be consulted with regarding the accusations before the doctoral committee makes a decision. If an oral hearing is held, a record of the hearing is to be taken.
- (3) The doctoral committee shall communicate decisions detrimental to the doctoral candidate as well as the reasons for these decisions in writing and with information on legal remedies.
- (4) RWTH Aachen University shall inform all other German universities of the invalidity of the doctoral work or the revocation of the doctoral degree.
- (5) The provisions of Paragraphs 2 through 4 shall apply accordingly to the revocation of the degree and the title of an honorary doctor.
- (6) Following a decision in accordance with Paragraph 1, the doctoral degree certificate shall be revoked or invalidated in another way.

§ 22 Viewing of Examination Records

After completing the doctoral examination process, the candidate may submit a request to view their examination records. The application shall be submitted within a month of the announcement of the examination results. The chairperson of the doctoral committee shall determine the place and time to view the records.

§ 23 Entry Into Force and Transitional Provisions

- (1) These regulations shall be published in the official announcements of RWTH Aachen University and enter into force on the day after publication.
- (2) Doctoral candidates who have submitted their application for admission to the doctoral examination process in accordance with § 12 before the start of the 2021/2022 winter semester are exempt from the obligation to provide evidence in accordance with § 12 (3) No.10.

Issued based on the resolution of the Faculty Council dated December 16, 2020.

It is pointed out that, in accordance with § 12 (5) NRW Higher Education Act, no claims may be asserted after one year has elapsed since official publication of this announcement for a violation of procedural or formal requirements of the regulatory or other autonomous right of the university, unless:

- 1) the announcement has not been properly published,
- 2) the Rectorate has objected, prior to publication, to the decision of the committee adopting the regulations,
- 3) the University has been previously notified about the defect of form or of procedure in a complaint, specifying the infringed legal provision and the fact which gives rise to the defect, or
- 4) the legal consequence of the exclusion of complaints was not pointed out in the public announcement.

Rector
of RWTH
Aachen University

Aachen, January 18, 2021

sgd. Rüdiger

Univ.-Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Dr. h. c. mult. Rüdiger