

## **Regulations of the Faculty of Medicine**

### **Governing Doctoral Studies**

**Dated January 8, 2008,**

**in the Sixth Revised Version of the**

### **Regulations Governing Doctoral Studies**

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**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 NRW of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia p. 547), most recently amended by Art. 3 of the Act to Ensure the Accreditation of Degree Programs in North Rhine-Westphalia dated October 17, 2017 (Law and Official Gazette of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia p. 806), RWTH Aachen University (Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule; RWTH) has issued the following Regulations of the Faculty of Medicine Governing Doctoral Studies:

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## **Section 1 – Doctoral Degrees**

### **§ 1**

#### **Right to Award Doctorates**

- (1) The Faculty of Medicine (Faculty 10) at 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 studies.
- (3) The Faculty of Medicine awards the degree of Doktorin/Doktor der Medizin (Doctor medicinae, abbreviated as Dr. med.), of Doktorin/Doktor der Zahnmedizin (Doctor medicinae dentariae, abbreviated as Dr. med. dent.), and of Doktorin/Doktor der Theoretischen Medizin [Doctor of Theoretical Medicine] (Doctor rerum medicinalium, abbreviated as Dr. rer. medic.).

## **Section 2 – Dr. med., Dr. med. dent., Dr. rer. medic.**

### **I General**

#### **§ 2**

##### **Doctoral Committee**

- (1) The Faculty of Medicine forms a doctoral committee. The doctoral committee is comprised of four professors, one member from the group of academic staff who holds a doctorate, one representative nominated by the staff council of Uniklinik RWTH Aachen (UKA), and one member from the group of the Faculty's students as well as the same number of deputies. In matters of research and teaching, the member nominated by the UKA Staff Council shall have voting rights if they perform tasks in teaching and research and have particular experience in the respective areas. The chairperson and the deputy chairperson are elected from the group of professors. All members of the doctoral committee are voting members.
- (2) The members of the doctoral committee and their deputies are elected by the Faculty Council for a period of four years. The members from the group of students are elected for a period of one year.
- (3) The doctoral committee shall perform the following tasks:
  1. determining the doctoral requirements in accordance with §§ 8 through 9,
  2. deciding on applications for admission to doctoral studies in accordance with § 11,
  3. deciding on the rejection of a professor / private lecturer as a supervisor or reviewer,

4. initiating the doctoral examination process, including appointing the reviewers and the doctoral commission or not initiating the doctoral examination process,
  5. deciding on special cases during doctoral examination processes and appeals against decisions made by the doctoral commission.
- (4) The doctoral committee meetings are not public. Committee members are sworn to secrecy.
  - (5) The doctoral committee makes decisions with a simple majority. In the event of a tie, the chairperson's vote shall decide the matter. The doctoral committee has a quorum if more than half of its members, including the chairperson or their deputy, are present. A record shall be kept of the doctoral committee meetings.
  - (6) The doctoral committee's chairperson shall inform the candidates about any decisions relating to them, such as rejections or unsatisfactory grades in any performances during their doctoral examination process, in a written notification that includes information on legal remedies.
  - (7) According to Paragraph 3 Nos. 1, 2, and 4, the doctoral committee may delegate tasks to the chairperson.

### **§ 3 Doctoral Commission**

- (1) A doctoral commission is formed to carry out the doctoral examination process. It is comprised of the reviewers and one other member who acts as chairperson. Chairpersons must be university professors per § 35 HG, or RWTH professors relieved of teaching duties or retired. If a topic is not covered in the Faculty of Medicine in the case of interdisciplinary dissertations, one reviewer should belong to another faculty or university. The candidate may nominate the reviewers.
- (2) The doctoral committee shall appoint the chairperson of the doctoral commission. This individual may not be a reviewer and has to come from a different institute or clinic as the reviewers. The candidate may nominate the chairperson.
- (3) All members of the doctoral commission shall have voting rights. The doctoral commission makes decisions with a simple majority. Abstentions are not permitted for resolutions.
- (4) If a member appointed to the doctoral commission is not able to carry out the doctoral examination process (e.g., due to illness), the doctoral committee shall select a replacement member.
- (5) If a member might be biased for any reason, they cannot be appointed to the doctoral committee. Potential members of the doctoral commission must inform the doctoral committee of any bias issues they might have, in particular if they belong to the group of persons defined in § 20 (1) of the Administrative Procedure Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (VwVfG NRW).

## **§ 4 Reviewers**

- (1) The doctoral committee shall appoint at least two reviewers from different institutes or clinics for the examination of the dissertation, usually from the group of professors per § 35 HG, professors relieved of teaching duties or retired, adjunct professors, honorary professors, or private lecturers (Privatdozenten) from RWTH Aachen University. Heads of junior research groups funded by third-party funds (e.g., Emmy Noether Program) may be granted the right to act as reviewers upon request. In exceptional cases, further reviewers with equal rights may be called upon; however, the provisions of § 3 shall remain unaffected.
- (2) If the dissertation has been supervised in accordance with § 5 (5), the supervisor may be one of the reviewers.
- (3) At least one of the reviewers must be a professor per § 35 HG, an adjunct professor, honorary professor, or private lecturer (Privatdozent) of the Faculty of Medicine.
- (4) Within the scope of a partnership with RWTH Aachen University, an instructor from a university of applied sciences can also be appointed as a reviewer. In this case, the reviewer must have completed a habilitation (postdoctoral teaching qualification) or an equivalent scientific qualification per § 36 (1) No. 4 HG. 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 from the university of applied sciences, in accordance with § 67 (4) Sentence 1 No. 2 HG.
- (5) Reviewers can also be professors, adjunct professors, honorary professors, private lecturers (Privatdozenten), or university instructors employed at another German or international university or research institution.
- (6) Furthermore, if the content of the submitted dissertation also includes a discipline taught or researched at another faculty, a professor per § 35 HG, adjunct professor, private lecturer (Privatdozent), or honorary professor from that faculty can be appointed as a reviewer by the doctoral committee.

## **§ 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 a language other than German or English; in this case, a three-page summary in German may be required.

The candidate must submit the request before writing the dissertation. The dissertation must explain where the original data on which it is based are stored and outline the doctoral candidate's specific contribution to the results presented therein.

- (2) One or more independently authored scientific paper(s) already published in an internationally recognized, peer-reviewed journal listed in PubMed or Web of Science – of which the candidate is the sole or first author – may be submitted as a dissertation after examination by the doctoral committee. To obtain the Dr. rer. medic. degree, the doctoral candidate must submit a cumulative dissertation consisting of at least two previously published scientific papers, of which they are the sole or first author. In addition, a written statement from both the supervisor and the co-authors must be submitted detailing the doctoral candidate's contribution to the papers and stating that the doctoral candidate has completed the central part of the work. As a rule, the papers should have been published in the previous two years. The doctoral committee decides whether these papers are equivalent to a standard dissertation. At the request of the doctoral candidate, the publication(s) may be accompanied by a general introduction and joint discussion.
- (3) A substantial part of the dissertation must relate to the scientific fields taught and researched at the Faculty of Medicine.
- (4) Work submitted for previous qualifications may not be used for the dissertation. Excerpts from prior publications are permitted in agreement with the supervisor.
- (5) The dissertation must have been produced under academic guidance from a professor, a professor relieved of teaching duties or retired, an adjunct professor, an honorary professor, or a private lecturer (Privatdozent) at the Faculty of Medicine at RWTH Aachen University. They are required to ensure appropriate academic supervision for the duration of 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 Faculty of Medicine's RWTH Aachen University template.
- (6) The supervision agreement must be submitted to the Faculty's Doctoral Office when the dissertation is begun and at least one year prior to application for admission to doctoral studies.

## **§ 6**

### **Grading of the Dissertation and the Oral Examination**

- (1) The following grades shall be used to evaluate a dissertation proposed for acceptance:

very good (1)	an excellent performance;
good (2)	a performance that is well above average
satisfactory (3)	a performance that meets average requirements;
sufficient (4)	a performance that still meets requirements despite its shortcomings.

For a differentiated performance assessment, the grade may be lowered or raised by 0.3. However, the grade of 4.3 is not permitted.

- (2) The doctoral examination process can be continued if the dissertation has been graded at least as sufficient. If the dissertation is rejected or if the candidate fails the repeat oral examination, the chairperson of the doctoral committee shall inform the candidate in writing that they have not passed the doctoral examination, stating the reasons for this and providing information on legal remedies. 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.
- (3) The latest version of the doctoral committee's grading recommendations should be used for the evaluation. These can be viewed in the Dean's Office.
- (4) For the grade of the dissertation, the arithmetic mean of the individual grades is calculated.
- (5) The oral examination is evaluated individually by the reviewers and the chairperson of the doctoral committee. The same grades as for the dissertation according to Paragraph 1 are available for this, as well as the option to grade the performance unsatisfactory for a doctorate.
- (6) For the grade of the oral examination, the arithmetic mean of the individual grades is calculated. An oral examination graded as passed requires a performance graded at least "sufficient" (4.0) by the majority of the doctoral committee's members.
- (7) The doctoral committee shall determine an overall grade immediately after the oral examination, with the grade of the dissertation counting as two thirds and the grade of the oral examination as one third. The resulting value is rounded to one decimal place and yields the following grades:

"summa cum laude"	(with distinction, better than 1.0)
"magna cum laude"	(very good, 1.0 to 1.5)
"cum laude"	(good, 1.6 to 2.5)
"rite"	(sufficient, 2.6 to 4.0)

To receive a "summa cum laude" grade, the dissertation must have been evaluated by the reviewers as worthy of a grade of 1.0 or better and given an average grade better than 1.0, and the grade proposals must have been confirmed by tacit consent.

- (8) The candidate must be informed of the final grade immediately.

## § 7

### Doctoral Degree Requirements

Doctoral degree requirements within the meaning of these regulations are:

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

Only after the dissertation has been published, can the doctorate be declared completed by issuing a doctoral certificate.

## II Admission to Doctoral Studies

### § 8

#### General Admission Requirements

- (1) The prerequisite for the doctorate in medicine (Dr. med.) is the professional qualifying state medical examination or the granting of the German license to practice medicine or the recognition of diplomas and examination certificates qualifying the candidate as a physician based on the relevant directives of the Council of the European Communities in the Federal Republic of Germany or the granting of the German license to practice medicine based on an examination taken abroad.
- (2) The prerequisite for the doctorate in dentistry (Dr. med. dent.) is the passing of the dentistry examination or the granting of the German license to practice dentistry based on an examination taken abroad or the recognition of diplomas and examination certificates qualifying the candidate as a dentist based on the relevant directives of the Council of the European Communities in the Federal Republic of Germany.
- (3) Prerequisites for the doctoral degree of Dr. rer. medic. are:
  - a) a degree after completing university studies within a standard study period of at least eight semesters for which a degree other than a "Bachelor's degree" is awarded, or
  - b) a degree after completing university studies within 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,

as well as proof of a degree in either non-human medicine or non-human dentistry and a knowledge test in theoretical medicine. Graduates of a degree program according to Paragraph 1 or 2 are admitted after successful completion of the Faculty of Medicine's internal PhD program in its respective valid version. In addition, candidates must provide proof of having worked full-time on the dissertation topic for at least two years or having completed at least two years of full-time employment in the field of medicine or dentistry at the Faculty of Medicine at RWTH Aachen University. Spending time on non-academic and non-doctoral work leads to an extension corresponding to the respective proportion of the time. Sentences 1 and 2 shall apply to scholarship holders analogously. This work must be directly related to the candidate's field of study, as stated in Sentence 1. Upon request, the doctoral committee may allow exceptions to this rule in justified cases. In addition, the candidate must submit proof of participation in a medical terminology course if this was not part of the degree program (e.g., pharmacy or veterinary medicine). The content of the dissertation must be related to the subjects of the Faculty of Medicine. In cases of doubt, the doctoral committee may ask the candidate to undergo a knowledge examination in the subject area to which their dissertation or dissertation project is related before considering their admission to the doctoral examination process. The doctoral committee decides guidelines on exceptions. These guidelines are to be applied in their most current version. They can be viewed in the Dean's Office.

- (4) The scope of courses and related assessment criteria considered suitable preparation for the doctorate according to Paragraph 3 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.
- (5) If a candidate shows exceptional scientific achievements, the doctoral committee may admit the candidate to doctoral studies at the request of three professors of the Faculty of Medicine with a majority of two-thirds of the Faculty's members in accordance with the provisions of § 49 (11) HG.
- (6) Admission to doctoral studies for the degrees of Dr. med. and Dr. med. dent. can even be granted before passing the aforementioned final examinations. However, graduates of the standard degree program in human medicine must have completed the admission requirements for the practical year first, and dental medicine graduates must have completed the course in dental prosthodontics II first.

## **§ 9**

### **Admission to Doctoral Studies Based on a Degree Awarded by an International University**

- (1) A general requirement for admission to doctoral studies 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 a final academic 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.
- (2) 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**

### **Center for Doctoral Studies**

- (1) In addition to the general admission requirements for doctoral studies leading to a Dr. rer. medic. title, every candidate shall also acquire a subject-related, research-oriented qualification at the Center for Doctoral Studies (CDS) of RWTH Aachen University. This is intended to encourage the candidate's scientific independence and allow them to acquire key academic qualifications.

- (2) In individual cases – if the candidate already has these qualifications – the doctoral committee may approve exceptions to participating in the CDS.

### **§ 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 anyone admitted to doctoral studies. 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.

## **III Doctoral Examination Process**

### **§ 11 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 chairperson of the doctoral committee.
- (2) The application must include:
1. the title of the dissertation,
  2. the proposal for the reviewers, and
  3. the pursued doctoral title.
- (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 certificates and evidence required in accordance with §§ 8 to 9,
  3. a Certificate of Good Conduct from the Federal Central Register of document type O.
  4. at least four bound copies of the dissertation in the form of a word-processing text ready for printing in accordance with § 5 (1), and an additional abstract of the dissertation of no more than one typewritten page in German and English in five copies as well as an electronic version and a PDF file of the dissertation and abstract in German and English.
  5. five specimen copies each of any publications,
  6. information about who the principal supervisor of the dissertation was,

7. an affidavit that the candidate has independently completed the dissertation and has indicated any means of support used in the dissertation – (this includes, for example, mentioning the activity of a so-called dissertation advisor or mediator) – and has respected all copyrights of third parties,
  8. 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, or department, as well as the topic of the dissertation,
  9. a written declaration that the candidate accepts these regulations,
  10. a written declaration that no existing trade secrets are injured by the publication as a dissertation (if it was written at an institution outside of RWTH).
  11. a written declaration stating whether the candidate agrees to the participation of other guests and listeners in the oral examination,
  12. an affidavit regarding the candidate's contributions (especially those of an experimental nature) to the results shown in the dissertation, which the supervisor has confirmed,
  13. a certificate of completion for the course on academic misconduct and good academic practice (GWP) at the Faculty of Medicine, or an equivalent certificate from another university.
- (4) If a dissertation is submitted before passing the final examinations in accordance with § 8 Paragraphs 1 and 2, the documents above, except those listed in Paragraph 3, Numbers 2 and 3, must be submitted with the application. The documents referred to in Paragraph 3 Numbers 2 and 3 must have been submitted before the oral examination.
- (5) Candidates must submit officially certified copies of certificates. Certified translations of certificates not in German are to be included on request.

## **§ 12**

### **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 have been received in full, and the reviewers have declared that they are willing to provide an expert opinion.
- (2) The doctoral examination process shall not be initiated if the doctoral application and the submitted documents do not meet the requirements according to §§ 8, 9, and 11. If the doctoral committee decides not to initiate 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.
- (3) An application submitted to the University to initiate the doctoral examination process can be withdrawn within a week of the announcement of the initiation of the doctoral examination process.
- (4) Once the process is initiated, the reviewers must be appointed, and the subject areas for the examination determined. The candidate shall be notified of the initiation immediately in writing.

- (5) The chairperson of the doctoral committee also orders the preparation of the expert opinions.

### **§ 13 Evaluation of the Dissertation**

- (1) The reviewers examine the dissertation and report back to the doctoral committee in separate written expert opinions within two 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. The expert opinions are carried out independently of one another. An expert opinion in favor of acceptance shall be accompanied by a proposed grade in accordance with the grading scale of § 6 (1). An extension of this period by four weeks is only possible once upon justified request, after which the doctoral committee appoints another reviewer for the procedure in consultation with the candidate.
- (2) Once the expert opinions have been received, the chairperson of the doctoral committee shall present the dissertation and the expert opinions to the Faculty's instructors, adjunct professors, honorary professors, private lecturers from the Faculty, 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 four weeks during the lecture-free period. If the grade "summa cum laude" is to be awarded, this must be announced at the time of posting to the persons entitled to appeal. 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 doctoral committee's chairperson shall determine that the dissertation is accepted. If the reviewers unanimously recommend the rejection of the dissertation and no objection has been made, the chairperson of the doctoral committee 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 doctoral committee's chairperson shall present the dissertation, together with the expert opinions, statements, and objections, to the doctoral committee. Based on the recommendations, the committee shall immediately decide on the acceptance, rejection, or revision of the dissertation or on calling in additional reviewers if this is necessary for the evaluation; acceptance of the dissertation requires a majority of favorable expert opinions.

### **§ 14 Revision of the Dissertation**

- (1) The doctoral committee may, in accordance with § 13 (4), ask the candidate to revise the dissertation once within a deadline of three months. The conditions for the revision are to be put on record and are to be communicated. The deadline can only be extended once and for a period of three months. If the deadline is exceeded, the doctoral committee's chairperson shall determine that the dissertation is rejected.

- (2) Once the dissertation has been revised within the deadline, it shall be reexamined in accordance with § 13. The expert opinions on the revised version shall in particular verify whether the requirements under Paragraph 1 have been adequately fulfilled. The revised version of the dissertation may only be rejected if the 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 makes rejecting the dissertation necessary.
- (3) Purely editorial or linguistic objections may also be requested before going to press so that the procedure is not delayed.

## **§ 15 Oral Examination**

- (1) Once the dissertation has been accepted, the doctoral committee's chairperson will inform the chairperson of the doctoral commission of the time period in which the oral examination must be scheduled. The oral examination must take place within two months of the acceptance of the dissertation. An extension of the deadline by four weeks is possible once and must be requested from the doctoral committee by giving valid reasons. The oral examination is to be conducted in the form of a doctoral colloquium (examination interview).
- (2) The doctoral commission's chairperson coordinates the joint examination date and notifies the members of the doctoral commission, the doctoral committee, and the candidate of the time and place of the oral examination at least five days before this date. If the candidate fails to appear for the oral examination without a justified reason, or withdraws from the examination after it has begun without good reason, the oral examination is deemed to have been failed. Credible reasons for the withdrawal or non-attendance must be given immediately and in writing to the doctoral committee. If the reasons are accepted as valid, the doctoral committee's chairperson shall set a new date.
- (3) Each candidate shall be examined individually. As a rule, the colloquium is conducted in German. It can also be held in a language other than German after consultation with the examiners.
- (4) 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.
- (5) The oral examination covers subjects from the fields taught and researched at the Faculty of Medicine. Exceptions are only permitted if the reviewers are not experts in a subject taught at the Faculty of Medicine. The subjects of the oral examination must be the subjects of expertise of the doctoral committee members. The oral examination should cover the scientific principles of medicine, and the subject matter of the dissertation should be considered whenever possible. The examination shall be held jointly by the doctoral committee members and shall last a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 60 minutes. The doctoral committee shall decide on the result of the oral examination.

- (6) If the candidate fails the oral examination, it may only be repeated once and only at the Faculty of Medicine. The candidate can enroll to repeat the examination no earlier than three weeks and no later than 18 months following the oral examination.

## **§ 16 Publication of the Dissertation**

- (1) Once the candidate has passed the doctoral examination, they shall present the dissertation to the doctoral committee for approval of the version intended for publication. The doctoral committee shall issue this approval in agreement with the reviewers once any additional requirements that may have been stipulated are met.
- (2) The Faculty of Medicine is entitled to request that the doctoral candidate
- include an abstract of their work of no more than one printed page and transfer the right to the University to publish this abstract or offer it to a publisher or a database, and
  - write the title and abstract 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 4 deposit copies to the Faculty's Office and 20 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 4 deposit copies to the Faculty's Office and 15 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]; upon request, the doctoral committee may accept and consider publication of the vital contents as sufficient if the reviewers confirm that these reflect the vital contents of the dissertation; if the dissertation is a doctoral thesis according to § 5 (2), It is sufficient if the dissertation is already published following confirmation by the reviewers; 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 4 deposit copies to the Faculty's Office and 15 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. A further 4 deposit copies must be submitted to the Faculty's Office. 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, 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.

### **§ 16a**

#### **Joint Doctorate / Cotutelle**

- (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 Medicine 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.

### **§ 17**

#### **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's 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.

## § 18

### Honorary Doctorate and Renewal of the Doctoral Certificate

- (1) Upon request by the Faculty of Medicine, the Senate may award the academic degree and title of an honorary doctor of medicine or dentistry honoris causa (h.c.) to individuals who demonstrate outstanding personal, scientific, or technical achievement in a field in which the University specializes. They may not be members or associates of RWTH Aachen University.
- (2) The Faculty of Medicine 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 in two sessions. 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 that commends the merits of the honored individual.
- (4) Doctors of the Faculty of Medicine 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.

## § 19

### 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.

**§ 20**  
**Viewing of Examination Records**

After completing the examinations, 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.

**Section 3 – Final Provisions**

**§ 21**  
**Entry into Force and Transitional Provisions**

These regulations shall be published in the official announcements of RWTH Aachen University and shall enter into force on the day after publication.

Issued based on the resolution of the Faculty Council dated October 9, 2017.

Rector  
of RWTH Aachen University

Aachen, November 6, 2017

signed Schmachtenberg  
Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. E. Schmachtenberg