

## **Regulations of the School of Business and Economics Governing Doctoral Studies**

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**in the Seventh Revised Version of the Regulations**

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**Please note: This publication is an English translation. 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 (64) 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 on Further Amendments to the Higher Education Act and the Art School Act dated November 25, 2021 (GV. NRW p. 1210a), RWTH Aachen University (Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule; RWTH) has issued the following Regulations Governing Doctoral Studies of the School of Business and Economics:

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## I. General

### § 1

#### Right to Award Doctorates

- (1) The School of Business and Economics 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 studies.
- (3) The School of Business and Economics awards the degree of Doctor of Economic and Social Sciences (Dr. rer. pol.).

### § 2

#### Doctoral Committee

- (1) The School forms a doctoral committee, which is comprised of all members of the School Council as well as all professors of the School. Members with a habilitation and honorary professors of the School who are not already members of the doctoral committee according to Sentence 2 are included with voting rights in doctoral procedures where they are a reviewer or as a member of the doctoral committee. The chairperson of the doctoral committee is the dean.
- (2) The doctoral committee shall decide on the implementation of the doctoral examination process as well as all questions concerning compliance with these regulations. In addition to the tasks expressly mentioned in these regulations, the doctoral committee shall perform the following tasks in particular:
  1. determining the doctoral requirements in accordance with § 8 through 10,
  2. accepting the doctoral candidates in accordance with § 11,
  3. initiating the doctoral examination process, including appointing the reviewers and the doctoral commission or not initiating the doctoral examination process,
  4. deciding on special cases during doctoral examination processes and appeals against decisions made by the doctoral commission.

The doctoral committee may delegate the ongoing affairs to its chairperson; this does not apply to the tasks mentioned in No. 4.

- (3) The doctoral committee meetings are not public. Committee members are sworn to secrecy.
- (4) 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 when more than half of its members, including the chairperson, are present. A record shall be kept of the doctoral committee meetings.
- (5) The doctoral committee's chairperson 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 four and a maximum of nine people in accordance with Paragraphs 2 through 4. At least four of the members of the doctoral commission must be current members of the School of Business and Economics of RWTH Aachen University or have been members within the previous five years.
- (2) The doctoral committee appoints at least two and at the most seven other members. The other members should be university professors in accordance with § 35 HG, professors relieved of teaching duties or retired, adjunct professors, honorary professors, or private lecturers (Privatdozenten) from the School of Business and Economics. For interdisciplinary dissertations, at least one representative of another faculty/school or university must be included as a member for the topic that is not covered by the School of Business and Economics.
- (3) Within the framework of the provisions of Paragraph 2, the candidate has the right to propose the other members of the doctoral commission in accordance with Paragraph 2. The candidate's proposals should be considered where possible. However, suggestions do not constitute a right.
- (4) In accordance with § 35 HG of the School of Business and Economics, every university professor 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). The final members of the doctoral commission must be appointed before the decision on the acceptance of the dissertation is made.
- (5) The doctoral committee shall appoint the chairperson of the doctoral commission. This individual may not be the reviewer.
- (6) The doctoral commission has a quorum when at least four members, including the chairperson and at least one reviewer, are present.
- (7) 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.
- (8) 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.

### **§ 4 Reviewers**

- (1) The doctoral committee shall appoint at least two reviewers for the examination of the dissertation, usually from the group of university professors in accordance with § 35 HG, professors relieved of teaching duties or retired, adjunct professors, honorary professors, or private lecturers (Privatdozenten) from the School of Business and Economics of RWTH Aachen University. Junior professors may usually only be appointed as reviewers if they have completed their probationary period of three years.
- (2) One of the reviewers must be the supervisor of the dissertation (§ 5 (5)).

- (3) In accordance with § 35 HG, reviewers can also be university professors, adjunct professors, honorary professors, or private lecturers (Privatdozenten) employed at another German or international university or research institution.
- (4) Within the scope of a partnership with RWTH Aachen University, professors 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 this requirement has been met. As part of this joint supervision, the scope and content of the studies that are 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) If the content of the presented dissertation also includes a discipline pertaining to another faculty/school, one or several university professors, adjunct professors, private lecturers (Privatdozenten), or honorary professors from this faculty can be appointed as reviewers by the doctoral committee. The dean of the other faculty/school is to be informed of this.

## **§ 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 permit a dissertation written in a foreign language as part of assessing the doctoral application. 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) At least three current scientific papers can also be submitted as a dissertation, if the results of these papers comply with the overall requirements for dissertations, the results are not too far apart, and the results are inherently related to science. 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 candidate is to be described in the introduction so that the ability to perform independent scientific work can be confirmed.
- (3) The dissertation must predominantly focus on the scientific fields of the School of Business and Economics.
- (4) Work submitted for previous qualifications may not be used for the dissertation.
- (5) The dissertation must have been produced under academic guidance from a university professor in accordance with §35 HG, a professor relieved of teaching or 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 (7)), 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/school.
- (3) The candidate shall only be given one final attempt at the same or another faculty/school 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 School.
- (5) If the candidate passes the oral examination, and the dissertation has been accepted, they pass the doctoral examination.
- (6) The doctoral commission shall determine an overall grade for the dissertation and the oral examination (defense) as
 

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

- (7) The candidate must be informed of the result immediately after the oral examination. 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 the Doctoral Studies Program**

### **§ 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 b), and the number and type of certificates required, are determined by the doctoral committee or, in individual cases, after consultation with the candidate.
- (3)
  - a) The prerequisite for the doctorate Dr. rer. pol. is, as a rule, a Diplom degree in economics, business administration, commercial instructor, industrial engineering, business informatics, a Magister degree in operations research, a Diplom degree acquired on the basis of additional studies in business administration, evidence of a completed Master’s degree in accordance with § 61 (2) Sentence 2 HG of the discipline of business administration or industrial engineering, or a certificate acquired on the basis of an additional course of study in business administration.
  - b) Candidates who have successfully completed the additional course of study in economics of the School or the additional course of study in operations research of the School with the exception of the Diplom thesis and candidates with the first state examination for the teacher

training course of study for Gymnasium and Gesamtschule in business administration are also to be admitted, as are candidates who have completed a Master's of Arts degree in which either business administration or economics was the major or both are minor came from the School of Business and Economics.

- c) Other relevant academic degrees can be recognized as a prerequisite for the doctorate (Dr. rer. pol.); the doctoral committee decides on the recognition. Achievements and degrees can be recognized depending on the fulfillment of additional requirements, which the doctoral committee decides upon.
  - d) Candidates are to be admitted to doctoral studies upon application if they have been employed as research assistants at the School of Business and Economics for at least two years and have taken at least two courses with professors of the School of Business and Economics who teach subject areas to which the dissertation does not predominantly contribute.
- (4) 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 professors of the responsible faculty/school with a majority of two thirds of its members in accordance with the provisions of § 49 (11) HG.

## § 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 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.
- (2) If none of the prerequisites listed under Paragraphs 1 No. 1 to 3 are met, the doctoral committee of the School of Business and Economics shall decide whether the candidate may be admitted. The committee shall first obtain the opinion of the School's examination board responsible for the degree program at RWTH that corresponds to the foreign degree program. Otherwise, in case of doubt of equivalency, the Central Office for Foreign Educational Systems can be consulted.
- (3) 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 the doctoral program, every candidate shall also acquire a subject-related qualification at RWTH Aachen University's Center for Doctoral Studies (CDS) . 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.

## **§ 11 Application for Assessment of the Admission Requirements**

- (1) Every candidate who intends to undertake doctoral studies at the School of Business and Economics of RWTH Aachen University 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 School. The following must be submitted together with the application:
  - a) the intended topic of the dissertation;
  - b) the letter of intent from a university professor of the School 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 10 have been met;
  - d) an 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) The doctoral committee decides whether to accept or reject the doctoral candidate. Acceptance may be conditional on completing additional studies or examinations. The candidate shall be notified of the decision in writing. Decisions detrimental to the doctoral candidate on such objections must be substantiated and include information on legal remedies.

## **§ 11a**

### **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 those who have been admitted to doctoral studies in accordance with § 11 (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.

## **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 School of Business and Economics.
- (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, including, if applicable, a list of publications and presentations at conferences;
  2. the certificates and evidence required in accordance with §§ 8 to 10; if these are not already available;
  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 accordance with § 5 (1) in three bound copies as well as an electronic version as a PDF;
  5. information on who was the main supervisor of the dissertation;
  6. an affidavit that the candidate has independently completed the dissertation and the contribution to the joint papers and has indicated any means of support used in the dissertation according to § 5 (2);
  7. for joint papers according to § 5 (2), an affidavit stating the candidate's contribution to the respective paper and a declaration that any co-authors have agreed to the paper being submitted for the dissertation;

8. an affidavit on whether the candidate has submitted doctoral applications in the past, including the result, stating the date, the German or international university, faculty/school as well as the topic of the dissertation;
  9. a written declaration that the candidate has acknowledged and complied with the Guidelines and Procedures for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice at RWTH Aachen University;
  10. a brief summary of the dissertation of one to two printed pages;
  11. 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) Candidates who intend to undertake doctoral studies at the School of Business and Economics of RWTH Aachen University must enclose with their application the written decision of the doctoral committee on their acceptance as a doctoral candidate according to § 11 (3) and, if applicable, confirmations that they fulfill the requirements, in addition to the documents mentioned in Paragraph 3.
  - (5) 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.
  - (6) Candidates must submit certified copies of certificates. Certified translations of certificates not in German are to be included on request.

### **§ 13**

#### **Initiation of the Doctoral Examination Process**

- (1) In accordance with § 35 HG, the chairperson of the doctoral committee informs the university professors and the members of the School who have a habilitation and the members of the School Council about the doctoral application and the intended reviewers according to § 4. The chairperson shall give them the opportunity to make a statement.
- (2) 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 four weeks after receipt of the application.
- (3) The reviewers and the doctoral commission are to be appointed upon initiation. The candidate shall be notified of the initiation immediately in writing, in which the names of the reviewers in accordance with § 4, the other members of the doctoral commission in accordance with § 3 (2), and the members of the doctoral commission appointed up to the time of the initiation of the process in accordance with § 3 (4) shall also be stated.
- (4) If the doctoral application and the submitted documents do not meet the requirements, 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.
- (5) 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 in accordance with Paragraph 2.

## **§ 14 Evaluation of the Dissertation**

- (1) The reviewers evaluate the dissertation and report back to the School in separate written expert opinions, usually within three months. They can request that the dissertation either be accepted, rejected, or revised, or not even considered if they deem the School not to be the responsible authority. They must furthermore include the reasons justifying their recommendation. An expert opinion supporting the acceptance of the dissertation should include a recommended grade. The grading scale in § 6 (6) is to be applied for the grading; for a differentiated evaluation, the grades can be given the addition "plus" or "minus"; the evaluation "summa cum laude plus" or "rite minus" are not permitted. A dissertation awarded the grade "summa cum laude" must include results that are, in terms of their scientific quality and significance, on a par with those presented in a generally well respected journal. If a reviewer is not able to prepare their expert opinion within three 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 School's professors and the members of the School 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. 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. The doctoral commission shall discuss the matter within a reasonable period of time. It can recommend consulting further reviewers. If the reviewers disagree on the acceptance of the dissertation, at least one additional reviewer must be consulted before a decision is made by the doctoral commission. The doctoral commission recommends whether the dissertation is to be accepted, rejected, revised, or not to be considered, according to Paragraph 1. 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 with 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, the committee 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 (5), the doctoral committee or the doctoral commission can ask the candidate to revise the dissertation once within a deadline, including information on legal remedies. 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 is conducted by the doctoral commission in accordance with Paragraph 5.
- (2) The dean shall inform the university professors of the School of Business and Economics, the rector, the other deans, the members of the doctoral commission, and the members of the School 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 will also be announced on the department's notice boards or on the homepage of the Dean's Office.
- (3) The members of the doctoral committee have the right to take part in the oral examination as guests. Doctoral candidates who have started working on a dissertation topic are to be admitted as audience members, unless the candidate objects to this. Other guests may only be admitted by the chairperson of the doctoral committee with the candidate's consent.
- (4) Each candidate shall be examined individually. As a rule, the oral examination is conducted in German or English. At the candidate's request, it may also be conducted in another language, provided that the doctoral committee and all members of the doctoral commission agree.
- (5) The oral examination takes the form of a defense, which consists of a presentation by the candidate on the topic of their dissertation, immediately followed by a discussion of their presentation and dissertation. All members of the doctoral commission and the doctoral committee may participate in the discussion; other guests of the oral examination have no right to speak or to ask questions. The duration of the presentation should be no less than 30 minutes and no more than 45 minutes, while the duration of the subsequent discussion may not exceed 60 minutes.
- (6) Oral examinations in doctoral examination processes may be conducted via a video conferencing system.
- (7) If there is a technical failure during the exam that is caused by the video conferencing system (e.g. loss of connection or the video feed freezes up), which significantly disturbs the examination, it 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. The decision on whether a technical problem is to be considered a significant disturbance to the exam lies with the chairperson of the doctoral commission.
- (8) If the doctoral candidate withdraws during an exam held via video conferencing system and there are no technical disturbances, the exam is considered unsuccessful.
- (9) The doctoral commission shall decide on the result immediately after the oral examination in a meeting not open to the public. The overall result of the doctoral examination is usually announced to the doctoral candidate following the consultation.

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

## § 17

### Publication of the Dissertation

- (1) Once the candidate has passed the doctoral examination, they shall present the dissertation to the dean for 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 School in charge 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 Dean's office, one of which is an electronic version as a PDF, and 50 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 2 deposit copies to the Dean's Office, one of which is an electronic version as a PDF 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], 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 2 deposit copies to the Dean's Office, one of which is an electronic version as a PDF, 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 2 deposit copies must be submitted to the Dean's Office, one of which is an electronic version as a PDF. 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.

### **§ 17a 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 School of Business and Economics shall award an academic degree in accordance with § 1 (3) and the partner university an academic degree in accordance with its applicable regulations. The academic titles of these degrees may not be used concurrently.

### **§ 18 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.

### **§ 19 Honorary Doctorate and Renewal of the Doctoral Certificate**

- (1) Upon request by the School of Business and Economics, the Senate may award the academic degree and title of an honorary doctor of economic and social sciences honoris causa (Dr. rer. pol. 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 School may only submit honorary doctorate applications for the doctoral degrees that it is entitled to award. In preparation for this application, the School should obtain at least two external expert opinions. The School 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 School 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 School Council that represents the subject of the doctorate shall make the decision on awarding honorary doctorates.

## **§ 20**

### **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.

## **§ 21**

### **Viewing of Examination Records**

After completing the oral examination, 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.

## **§ 22**

### **Entry Into Force**

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

- (2) Doctoral candidates who submitted their application for admission to the doctoral examination process in accordance with § 11 before the start of the 2021/2022 winter semester are exempt from the obligation to provide evidence in accordance with § 12 (3) No. 11.

Issued based on the resolution of the School Council dated April 13, 2022.

It is pointed out that, in accordance with § 12 (5) NRW HG, any claims regarding a violation of procedural or formal requirements of the regulatory or other autonomous rights of the University may no longer be asserted after one year has elapsed since the official publication of this announcement 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.

The Rector  
of RWTH  
Aachen University

Aachen,  
dated

May 20, 2022

sgd. Rüdiger

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