

Regulations of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Governing Doctoral Studies

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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 Article 1 of the Act on Further Amendments to the Higher Education Act and the Art School Act dated November 25, 2021 (Law and Official Gazette of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia p. 1210a), RWTH Aachen University (Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule; RWTH) has issued the following Regulations Governing Doctoral Studies at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities:

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I.General

§ 1

Right to Award Doctorates

- (1) The Faculty of Arts and Humanities 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 Arts and Humanities awards the degree of Doktorin/Doktor der Philosophie (Dr. Phil.) [Doctor of Philosophy].

§ 2

Doctoral Committee

- (1) The Faculty Council of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities appoints a doctoral committee, which is responsible for the proper execution of the doctoral studies and the tasks assigned to it by these regulations.
- (2) The doctoral committee is comprised of four full-time university professors – per § 35 HG – from the faculty who have a postdoctoral teaching qualification (habilitation), one member from the group of academic staff holding a doctoral degree, one member from the group of technical and administrative staff, and one member from the group of the faculty's students. The chairperson of the doctoral committee is the dean. The deputy chairperson and other members of the doctoral committee are nominated by the Faculty Council. The deputy chairperson must also be a professor. The term of office of the members of the doctoral committee is two years; re-election is permitted. A deputy shall be appointed for each member; this shall not apply to the chairperson.
- (3) The doctoral committee shall perform the following tasks:
 1. determining the doctoral requirements and deciding on admission to doctoral studies in accordance with §§ 8 through 11,
 2. initiating the doctoral examination process, including appointing the reviewers and the doctoral commission or not initiating the doctoral examination process,
 3. deciding on questions concerning compliance with the provisions of these regulations, as well as special cases in doctoral examination processes and appeals against decisions made by the chairperson, the doctoral committee, or individual examiners.
- (4) The doctoral committee may delegate the tasks listed in paragraph 3 numbers 1 and 2 to the chairperson.
- (5) The doctoral committee meetings are not public. Committee members are sworn to secrecy.
- (6) 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.

- (7) 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.
- (8) The chairperson of the doctoral committee regularly reports to the Faculty Council on the status of doctorates and performances on exams.

§ 3 Doctoral Commission

- (1) A doctoral commission is formed to carry out the doctoral examination process. It includes the following members:
 1. the reviewers of the dissertation and
 2. one or two additional members according to paragraph 2, one of whom is assigned the function of chairperson by the doctoral committee.
- (2) The doctoral examination is to be conducted by the doctoral commission. The examiners are:
 1. In the case of a thesis defense (Disputation): the two reviewers and one other individual designated by the doctoral committee.
 2. In the case of a comprehensive oral examination (Rigorosum) with two minors: either, the two reviewers and one other person determined by the doctoral committee, or: a reviewer and two other individuals appointed by the doctoral committee. In both cases, a reviewer must examine the major.
 3. In the case of a comprehensive oral examination (Rigorosum) with two majors: two examiners for one of the subjects, which the candidate gets to choose, and one examiner for the other subject. At least one of these individuals must be a reviewer.
- (3) The members of the doctoral commission should be university professors per § 35 HG, professors relieved of teaching duties or retired, adjunct professors according to § 41 HG, honorary professors, university instructors, or private lecturers (Privatdozenten) from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. If a topic is not covered in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities in the case of interdisciplinary dissertations, one of the reviewers should belong to another faculty or university.
- (4) The candidate has the right to make a request for a particular individual as the first reviewer. If this person meets the requirements of paragraph 3 sentence 1, the request is to be granted. The candidate may request additional reviewers. The doctoral committee decides on the appointment of the other reviewers and examiners.
- (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 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 per § 35 HG, professors relieved of teaching duties or retired, adjunct professors, honorary professors, university instructors, or private lecturers (Privatdozenten) from RWTH Aachen University.
- (2) 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 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 cooperative supervision the scope and content of subject matter 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 No. 2 HG.
- (3) On request and following a formal assessment by the doctoral committee, heads of research groups who work at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities or on a superordinate research project in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts and Humanities can also be appointed as reviewers. Should the research group leader leave, the respective chair or the head of the teaching and research unit shall take over supervision, provided no other individual there is qualified to supervise the doctoral candidate. The supervision agreement must therefore always be co-signed by the chair or head of the teaching and research unit.
- (4) If the dissertation has been supervised in accordance with § 5 (4), the supervisor must be one of the reviewers.
- (5) At least one of the reviewers must be a professor per § 35 HG at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. However, in the subject of art history, one of the reviewers must be a university professor per § 35 HG in art history at RWTH's Faculty of Architecture.
- (6) Reviewers can also be professors, adjunct professors, honorary professors, university instructors, or private lecturers (Privatdozenten) employed at another German or international university or research institution.
- (7) If the content of the presented dissertation also includes a discipline pertaining to another faculty, a professor per § 35 HG, a professor relieved of teaching duties or retired, an adjunct professor, a university instructor, a private lecturer (Privatdozent), or honorary professor from that faculty can be appointed as a reviewer by the doctoral committee; the dean of the other faculty is to be informed.
- (8) An additional reviewer may be asked to participate in exceptional cases. If the dissertation is submitted in a language other than German or English, the doctoral committee must appoint an additional external reviewer who speaks that language.

§ 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. The request must be justified and submitted before the dissertation is written. The doctoral committee decides whether to grant this request at their next scheduled meeting. If the request is granted, the candidate must submit a 30-page

summary in German with the dissertation, which also lays out the key points and arguments of the individual chapters.

- (2) A substantial part of the dissertation must relate to the scientific fields taught and researched at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.
- (3) Work submitted for previous examinations may not be used for the dissertation. Excerpts from prior publications are permitted in agreement with the supervisor and must be communicated to the faculty.
- (4) The dissertation must have been produced under academic guidance from a university professor, a professor relieved of teaching duties or retired, an adjunct professor, an honorary professor, a university instructor, or a private lecturer (Privatdozent) from RWTH Aachen 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.
- (5) In the subjects of English linguistics, educational science, political science, psychology, sociology, and linguistics and communication science, several scientific papers already published or submitted for publication can be submitted as a dissertation with the consent of the supervisor 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 thematically coherent. The doctoral committee decides on whether these papers are equivalent to a standard dissertation. 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 unless their contribution can be clearly identified and evaluated so that their ability to perform independent scientific work can be confirmed.

§ 6

Grading of the Doctoral Examination

- (1) If the dissertation is graded at least “rite” (sufficient), the doctoral examination process may be continued.
- (2) If the dissertation is rejected or the candidate fails the repeat oral examination (§ 16 (7)), the doctoral committee’s chairperson shall inform the candidate that they have not passed the doctoral examination and state the reasons for this.
- (3) If the doctoral examination is not passed, the dissertation cannot be presented again for a doctorate, including to another faculty.
- (4) 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.
- (5) 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.
- (6) The candidate passes the doctoral examination if the oral examination is graded at least “rite” (sufficient).
- (7) The doctoral commission shall determine an overall grade of the doctoral examination as

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

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

- (8) The candidate must be informed of the result immediately. The evaluation of the doctoral 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, 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 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 HGand 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 b), and the number and type of certificates required, are determined by the doctoral committee or, in individual cases, after consultation with the candidate and the supervisor.
- (3) The prerequisite for the doctorate in philosophy (Dr. phil.) is a Master's or Diplom degree, proof of a completed Master's degree program in the sense of § 61 (2) sentence 2 HG, or evidence

of passing the first state exam for teacher training for upper secondary education or a comparable teacher training examination; the degree must have been acquired in at least one subject represented at the faculty. The doctoral committee shall decide on whether to recognize other relevant scientific degrees. Furthermore, Latin skills within the scope of the state-level Latinum (qualifying exam in Latin) are required. This requirement does not apply to the majors and minors in communication studies, modern German literary history, English linguistics, English literary studies, German studies (German linguistics or older German literature), philosophy, education, psychology, geography, economic geography, sociology, and political science, as well as the minors in economic and social history, economics, or international technical and economic cooperation. The doctoral committee shall decide whether to recognize any other languages as suitable in place of Latin at the candidate's request in consultation with the Latin representative.

- (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 professors per § 35 HG from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities 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 university degree that is recognized as a qualification for a particular profession. Also acceptable is for candidates to have concluded a relevant academic degree program designed for a standard period of study of at least eight semesters by completing some other form of final examination. In this case, they must also have written a final academic thesis integrated into the course of study. These types of degrees awarded by universities outside Germany will be accepted 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 the doctoral program, every candidate shall also acquire a subject-related 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 applicant 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 Faculty of Arts and Humanities shall apply for the assessment of the admission requirements.
- (2) The application in accordance with paragraph 1 shall be submitted in writing to the faculty's doctoral committee. The following must be submitted together with the application:
 1. the intended topic of the dissertation;
 2. the letter of intent from a professor per § 35 HG from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, which states their willingness to supervise the candidate with their dissertation and thus enter into a supervision agreement;
 3. evidence that the admission requirements in accordance with §§ 8 through 10 have been met;
 4. 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;
 5. a declaration that the candidate accepts these Regulations Governing Doctoral Studies.
- (3) The doctoral committee decides whether to accept or reject the doctoral candidate. Acceptance may be conditional on completing additional requirements or examinations in accordance with §§ 8 and 9.
- (4) The candidate shall be notified of the acceptance immediately and in writing. They shall receive a written notification of rejection or conditional acceptance, including the reasons for this decision and 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 anyone admitted to doctoral studies under § 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.

- (2) The application must include:
 1. the title of the dissertation and
 2. a request for reviewers.

- (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 11,
 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 (1), at least four bound copies and an electronic version,
 5. a specimen copy 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,
 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, the faculty or department as well as the topic of the dissertation,
 9. a brief summary of the dissertation on two printed pages,
 10. an indication of whether the candidate wishes to take the oral examination in the form of a comprehensive or broader oral examination (Rigorosum) or in the form of a thesis defense (Disputation).
 11. a written declaration that the candidate has acknowledged and adhered to the Guidelines and Procedures for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice at RWTH,
 12. In the case of a cumulative dissertation, the Faculty of Arts and Humanities Statement of Authorship form.

- (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.

- (5) Candidates must submit officially 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) 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 three weeks after receipt of the application.

- (2) Once the process is initiated, the reviewers and the doctoral commission must be appointed, and the subject areas for the examination determined. The candidate shall be notified of the initiation immediately in writing.

- (3) The doctoral examination process shall not be initiated if the doctoral application and the submitted documents do not meet the requirements according to § 12. 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.
- (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 in accordance with paragraph 2.

§ 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 according to the grading scale in § 6 (7). If a reviewer is not able to prepare their expert opinion within five months, the doctoral committee may appoint another reviewer. Another reviewer shall be appointed within the period stated in § 13 (1) sentence 2.
- (2) Once the expert opinions have been received, the chairperson or the doctoral committee shall present the dissertation and the expert opinions to the faculty's professors per § 35 HG, honorary professors, private lecturers from the faculty, and the members of the Faculty Council who have a doctorate 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 three 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 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 doctoral committee's chairperson 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 commission shall appoint an additional reviewer. After receiving the additional expert opinion, the doctoral committee discusses the submission and recommends whether the dissertation is to be accepted, rejected, revised, or not considered. If the recommendation is made unanimously, the chairperson of the doctoral committee 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 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 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) The doctoral commission or the doctoral committee may, in accordance with § 14 (4) or § 14 (5), 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'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 § 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

- (1) Once the dissertation has been accepted, the committee's chairperson will arrange an oral examination or defense. At the candidate's request, it is conducted either in the form of a broader, comprehensive oral examination (Rigorosum) or in the form of a thesis defense (Disputation).
- (2) The doctoral committee's chairperson shall inform the faculty's professors, the rector, the deans of the other faculties, 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 shall be announced on the department's notice boards.
- (3) Each candidate shall be examined individually. As a rule, the oral examination is conducted in German. A part of the exam may be conducted in another language.
- (4) The following provisions apply to the examination conducted in the form of the comprehensive oral examination (Rigorosum):
 1. This examination is to be taken in one major subject and two minor subjects or in two major subjects. However, the choice of two majors requires that the candidate has previously studied these subjects as majors at a university in a Magister, Master's, or Diplom degree program.
 2. If one major and two minor subjects are chosen, the major subject is usually the subject in which the dissertation's main topic is covered. Like the minor subjects, the candidate chooses their major based on the catalog of subjects listed in number 4. Upon request, subjects other than those mentioned in this catalog of subjects taught at RWTH Aachen University or at another German university may be chosen as one of the minor subjects if they are reasonably related to the other chosen subjects; the doctoral committee decides whether to permit such subject combinations.
 3. The examiners shall be appointed in accordance with § 3 (2); a different examiner shall be appointed for each subject. The oral examination shall last 90 minutes. Of this time, approximately half is spent on the examination in the major subject, and the other half is spent on the examination in the two minor subjects or the second major subject.
 4. Major and minor subjects that may be chosen for the oral examination are:
Philosophy,
Educational Science

Psychology,
 Sociology,
 Protestant Theology,
 Catholic Theology,
 Communication Studies,
 Political Science,
 German Studies (German Linguistics or Older German Literature),
 Modern German Literary History,
 German Language and Literature Didactics,
 Social Sciences Didactics,
 Foreign Language Didactics,
 English Linguistics,
 English Literature,
 Romance Linguistics,
 Romance Literature,
 Ancient History,
 Medieval and Modern History,
 Geography
 Economic Geography,
 Art History, or
 Architectural History.

5. Only one of the subjects of history of technology, economic and social history, or history, theory and ethics of medicine may be chosen as one of the two minors. If ancient history or medieval and modern history is chosen as the major, only one of the minors may be from the field of historical studies. The doctoral committee can decide on exceptions in justified cases.
 6. In justified exceptional cases, both minor subjects may be chosen from other faculties and/or other universities if the requested subject representatives and the doctoral committee agree to the combination.
 7. All members of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities who have a post-doctoral lecturing qualification (Habilitation) have the right to participate in the comprehensive oral examination (Rigorosum) as guests. Other guests may be admitted if they hold a doctorate and if the candidate agrees. Doctoral candidates who have started working on a dissertation topic in the same subject can be admitted as audience members, unless the candidate objects to this.
- (5) The following provisions apply to the oral examination in the form of a thesis defense (Disputation):
1. The thesis defense consists of a discussion between the doctoral candidate and the examining committee of no more than 90 minutes in duration. The doctoral candidate shall begin the thesis defense by giving a presentation on the topic of their dissertation. The presentation should not exceed 20 minutes. They shall place their work in the context of their assigned research field and related research fields within the subject. The subsequent thesis defense (Disputation) shall address topics of the dissertation and related

fields.

2. The thesis defense is open to all members of RWTH; the chairperson of the doctoral committee may limit the number of audience members. Only the members of the doctoral commission have the right to ask questions during the thesis defense.
- (6) The doctoral commission shall decide on the result immediately after the oral examination.
- (7) If the candidate fails the oral examination, it may only be repeated once and only at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. The candidate can enroll to repeat the examination no earlier than three months and no later than 18 months following the oral examination.
- (8) After passing the oral examination, the applicant is entitled to use the German Ph.D. title "Doctor des" [Doctor of].

§ 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. If the dissertation has been accepted and no additional requirements for a revision of the dissertation have been stipulated and placed on file, approval may be obtained and granted even before the oral examination is conducted. 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 Arts and Humanities is entitled to request that the doctoral candidate 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
 - provide the title, subtitle, 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 one deposit copy to the faculty's office 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 a deposit copy 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 their business 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 1 deposit copy 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 company published the dissertation (including the publisher and their business 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 deposit copy must be submitted to the faculty's office. The University Library requires an abstract in German and English 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 two 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

Doctoral Degree Certificate

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.

§ 19

Honorary Doctorate and Renewal of the Doctoral Certificate

- (1) Upon request by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, the Senate may award the academic degree and title of a doctor of philosophy honoris causa (Dr. Phil. 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 of Arts and Humanities 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 Arts and Humanities 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.

§ 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 the doctoral program,
 - 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 heard on 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 graduate including the reasons for these decisions in writing and along 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 certificate shall be revoked or invalidated in another way.

§ 21

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.

§ 22

Joint Doctoral Examination Process

- (1) A doctoral examination process jointly supervised with an international university (partner university) requires entering into an individual partnership agreement for the performance and supervision of the doctoral project and evaluation and assessment of the doctoral degree requirements.
- (2) The individual partnership agreement 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 Arts and Humanities 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.

§ 23

Entry Into Force

These regulations shall be published in the official announcements of RWTH Aachen University and

enter into force on the day after publication.

Issued based on the resolutions of the Faculty Council dated October 18, 2017, and June 15, 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.

Rector
of RWTH
Aachen University

Aachen,
dated

July 25, 2022

sgd. Rüdiger

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