

PhD Doctoral Degree Regulations of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Bonn dated February 24, 2021

Amended document for 2025

By virtue of § 2, para. 4 and § 64, para. 1 of the Higher Education Act of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (*Hochschulgesetz*, HG) of September 16, 2014 (Legal and Regulatory Gazette of North Rhine-Westphalia (GV NRW) p. 547), as last amended by Article 1 of the Act on Further Measures to Combat the Corona Pandemic in Higher Education dated December 1, 2020 (GV NRW p. 1110), the University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine issued the following Doctoral Degree Regulations including the following amendments:

First Amendment to the PhD Doctoral Degree Regulations of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Bonn dated December 9, 2021 as published in the Official Announcements of the University of Bonn of December 16, 2021, 51st year, no. 83

Second Amendment to the PhD Doctoral Degree Regulations of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Bonn dated March 8, 2024 as published in the Official Announcements of the University of Bonn of March 15, 2024, 54th year, no. 18

Third Amendment to the PhD Doctoral Degree Regulations of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Bonn dated January 16, 2025 as published in the Official Announcements of the University of Bonn of February 4, 2025, 55th year, no. 4

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I. General

§ 1 Doctorate

(1) The University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine awards the academic degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) based on a doctoral examination procedure in the disciplines indicated in Annex 1 and in accordance with the provisions of these Regulations.

(2) During the doctorate, special academic qualification beyond a university degree in the disciplines specified in Annex 1 is demonstrated by means of independent research work.

(3) The doctoral achievements consist of

1. successful participation in courses in accordance with § 4, para. 3;
2. a doctoral thesis in accordance with § 6;
3. the oral examinations in accordance with § 9.

(4) The doctoral examination procedure is not public, with the exception of the doctoral colloquium and awarding of the diploma. The doctoral board can decide to exclude the public from participating in the doctoral colloquium if the doctoral student, an institution at which the doctoral student is working on the doctorate or the University has a legitimate interest in excluding the public. A legitimate interest is given in particular if the object of the doctoral thesis is information from the institution at which the doctoral thesis was completed and this information needs to be kept confidential, or if the doctoral thesis must be kept confidential to protect potential patent rights and other industrial property rights from being published in a way that is prejudicial as to novelty. In this case, the faculty-wide announcement as per § 9, paragraph 5 is not made. The members of the doctoral board, doctoral thesis committee and reviewers shall be bound to confidentiality. Members who are not civil servants shall be bound to confidentiality by the chair of the doctoral board. In cases in which the doctorate is carried out at an institution, if a non-disclosure agreement is made between the doctoral student, the University and the institution in which the doctoral thesis is completed to protect potential patent rights and other industrial property rights from being published in a way that is prejudicial as to novelty, then all reviewers, other members of the doctoral thesis committee and the doctoral board as well as other people who gain knowledge of the doctoral topic and the content of the doctorate as part of the doctoral examination procedure are to be informed of the contractual obligation to maintain confidentiality; if required by the institution, the people involved in the doctoral examination procedure must confirm in writing their acknowledgment and willingness to adhere to the obligation to maintain confidentiality.

§ 2 Doctoral board

(1) The Faculty Council of the Faculty of Medicine shall appoint a doctoral board to organize the doctoral examination procedure and manage the tasks outlined in these Doctoral Degree Regulations. The doctoral board appoints the doctoral thesis committee (§ 3), verifies the requirements for admission to the doctoral examination procedure (§ 5) and for opening the examination phase (§ 7), and verifies that the criteria for assessing a doctorate as “excellent” are satisfied (§ 10, para. 1). The

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Dean of the Faculty shall ensure that the doctoral board is able to duly fulfill its tasks and does reliably do so. The Dean shall give appropriate instructions for this purpose.

(2) The doctoral board consists of eight members. Six members are appointed from the group of university professors. One member is appointed from the group of academic staff and one member from the group of students. All professors, including assistant professors and adjunct professors in the Faculty of Medicine that are members of the University of Bonn and retired professors are eligible to become members of the doctoral board. From the group of academic staff in the Faculty, those who have received doctorates are eligible to become members. From the group of students, those enrolled as doctoral students in the Faculty of Medicine are eligible to become members. A deputy is to be appointed for each member.

(3) The term of office of members from the group of professors and from the group of academic staff is three years, and the term of office of the student members is one year. Members may be re-appointed. The doctoral board elects a chair from its members and a deputy from the group of professors.

(4) The doctoral board is an administrative body as defined by the Administrative Procedure Act (*Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz, VwVfG*) and Code of Administrative Court Procedure (*Verwaltungsgerichtsordnung, VwGO*).

(5) The Faculty is to create a doctoral office providing administrative support to the doctoral board. This office is overseen by the Dean.

(6) The doctoral board ensures compliance with the provisions of the Doctoral Degree Regulations and makes certain that the doctoral examination procedure is conducted in accordance with regulations. It may delegate tasks to the chair.

(7) Doctoral board meetings are not open to the public. Summary minutes are to be prepared as a record of the doctoral board's discussions and decisions and included in the doctoral board files.

(8) The doctoral board has a quorum when, in addition to the chair or deputy chair, at least two professors are present. Resolutions are passed by simple majority vote. In the event of a tie, the chair's vote decides.

(9) Directives, dates set and other communications of the doctoral board with public relevance are to be made available by public display or in electronic form with legally binding effect, giving due consideration to data protection requirements. Other additional publications are permissible but not legally binding.

§ 3

Doctoral thesis committee

(1) The doctoral board appoints a doctoral thesis committee for every doctoral examination procedure. It consists of four members, the first reviewer, second reviewer and two additional members.

(2) All members must be full-time professors at a university, adjunct professors, retired professors, assistant professors, *Privatdozent*innen*, heads of the competitively reviewed programs of excellence specified in Annex 2, or have qualifications equivalent to a *Habilitation*. This does not affect § 65, para. 1 HG.

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(3) The first reviewer is the professor responsible under the supervision agreement for supervision of the doctoral student. The second reviewer must represent the discipline of the doctorate. The second reviewer must not belong to the working group, institute or clinic of the responsible professor.

(4) At least two of the members, including one reviewer, must be full-time professors in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Bonn as of the date of their appointment. One reviewer should be a professor outside the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Bonn as of the date of appointment, with an international reputation in the field concerned in the doctoral thesis. The doctoral board may appoint another member as a deputy in case a member is unable at short notice to be present at the oral examinations.

(5) The doctoral thesis committee monitors the progress of the doctorate. At least two minuted meetings must take place between at least two members of the doctoral thesis committee and the doctoral student for this purpose during the qualification phase.

(6) The doctoral thesis committee is responsible for conducting the oral examinations and assessing the doctoral defense.

(7) If the first reviewer was appointed to the doctoral thesis committee as a member of the University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine, the first reviewer may continue to provide supervision even after leaving the University. The following time limit applies in this case: The application for admission to the examination phase should be submitted no later than five years after the date the first supervisor leaves. This also applies to the second reviewer and the third and fourth members. At least one member of the doctoral thesis committee should be a member of the University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine when the examination phase is opened.

II. Qualification phase

§ 4

Scope and content of the qualification phase

(1) The doctoral examination procedure begins with the qualification phase. The qualification phase is generally three years in length under a supervision agreement and begins with admission in accordance with § 5. Candidates with state examinations in medicine or dentistry can receive credit for one year of research activity during their studies if the candidate took a semester leave for this purpose. Recognition must be requested when applying for admission (§ 5). The doctoral board decides whether recognition is granted.

(2) The doctoral thesis is produced during the qualification phase. The qualification phase is research-oriented. Doctoral students should acquire a well-founded understanding of academic problems, in-depth expert knowledge and the ability to undertake interdisciplinary work. To do this, they should

1. undertake a research activity in an employment relationship at the University of Bonn or an institution that cooperates with the University of Bonn; and
2. participate in a doctoral program or research training group, including doctoral research training groups, at the University of Bonn or an institution that cooperates with the University of Bonn.

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The qualification phase can, however, also be conducted without undertaking a research activity in accordance with point 1 or participating in structured doctoral studies in accordance with point 2. The decision regarding this is made by the doctoral board.

(3) For all doctoral students who are not participating in a doctoral program or research training group, including doctoral research training groups, participation in at least two research-related courses, which usually corresponds to two course units per week, is mandatory during the qualification phase. Regular participation in the courses is to be demonstrated by a certificate of attendance when applying for the opening of the examination phase (§ 7).

(4) Doctoral students must enroll for doctoral studies in accordance with § 67, para. 5 HG.

§ 5 Admission

(1) The following individuals can be admitted to the doctoral examination procedure for the PhD:

- a. Individuals with a qualifying degree following a relevant university program with a standard period of study of at least eight semesters, for which a degree other than “bachelor” is awarded, except a university program in human medicine or dentistry; or
- b. Individuals with a qualifying degree following a relevant university program with a standard period of study of at least six semesters, followed by suitable pre-doctoral studies in the discipline of the doctorate; or
- c. Individuals with a qualifying degree from a master’s degree program as defined in § 61, para. 2, sentence 2 HG; or
- d. Individuals who have passed a state examination in medicine or dentistry with at least a grade of “good”

(2) A qualifying degree as defined in paragraph 1 exists if at least the second-best grade was received. The doctoral board decides on deviations in justified exceptional cases.

(3) The doctoral board decides on the recognition of university achievements obtained by candidates at foreign universities. This decision is based, among other things, on a list maintained by the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) at the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany. Recognition is to be clarified before the start of the doctoral examination procedure as part of admission.

(4) If an examination in a PhD doctoral examination procedure in the Faculty of Medicine is not passed overall, a new admission is possible at the earliest one year after the last oral examination.

(5) The application for admission must be submitted to the doctoral board before the doctoral thesis is prepared. The following are to be included with the application for admission:

1. Information about the candidate’s academic career
2. All university degree diplomas and state examination certificates received
3. A declaration by the candidate regarding whether and, if applicable, with what outcome they have applied for a doctoral examination procedure at another university or another faculty at

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the University of Bonn

4. An agreement between the candidate and the supervisor
 5. A work plan, for which the responsible professor is jointly responsible and which they co-sign
 6. A proposal for the composition of the doctoral thesis committee
- (6) The agreement between the candidate or doctoral student and the supervisor (§ 5, para. 5, sentence 1, no. 4) can be terminated at any time by mutual agreement of the signatories. Mutually agreed termination of the agreement must be reported and justified in writing to the doctoral office. The agreement between the candidate and the supervisor can also be terminated if there has been no contact between the doctoral student and supervisor for more than half a year. Agreements that are unilaterally terminated must be reported and justified in detail to the doctoral board and require its approval. In the event of termination, all the parties involved shall seek mutually agreeable, practical solutions, if necessary with the assistance of the ombudspeople of the Faculty of Medicine.
- (7) If an existing agreement between a doctoral student and the previous first supervisor is terminated and a new agreement is concluded between the doctoral student and another first supervisor, the doctoral student must submit a new application for admission in accordance with paragraph 4. In this case, the doctoral board can, upon request by the doctoral student and with appropriate justification, recognize the qualification phase completed up to that point and approve exceptions to § 4.

§ 6

Doctoral thesis

- (1) The doctoral thesis must be an academic work that represents an advancement in academic knowledge and demonstrates the ability to undertake independent academic work and present the results in an appropriate manner. It must address an academic question from the field of the disciplines in accordance with Annex 1. The doctoral thesis is to be prepared in writing, in German or English.
- (2) At least three major original academic publications (publication doctoral thesis) with related contents that have been accepted for publication by international journals and show the doctoral student named as first author at least once are equivalent to this doctoral thesis. Shared first authorship is possible. In such case, corresponding confirmation is required from the first supervisor that the doctoral student contributed significantly to the publication, in accordance with § 6, para. 3. Approval by the doctoral board is required if a publication with shared first authorship which is the student's sole first-authorship publication is to be re-used after having previously been used for a doctoral thesis.
- (3) With regard to the publication for which the doctoral student is first author, the doctoral student must have undertaken the predominant share of the planning, data collection, evaluation, and interpretation for the academic work, and must have written the first version of the manuscript themselves. For the publications for which the doctoral student is a co-author, they must have undertaken a significant share of the planning, data collection, evaluation and interpretation for the academic work. Appropriate information must be provided to the publisher as proof of the doctoral student's contribution to the publications.
- (4) The publications are only permitted while abiding by § 6, para. 1. At least one of the publications should be no more than one year old at the time the doctoral examination procedure is opened. The publications must clearly indicate that they originate from the University of Bonn or an institution cooperating with the University. The doctoral board decides on exceptions upon request.

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- (5) The layout of the doctoral thesis must satisfy doctoral board requirements.
- (6) The responsible professor ensures that the doctoral student prepares the doctoral thesis independently, with regular supervision, and in an appropriate period of time.
- (7) The University of Bonn Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice are to be observed. Parts of the doctoral work can, in consultation with the doctoral board, be conducted at a foreign research institution. The responsible professor ensures that the partner university/research institution appoints at least one professor to guide the doctoral student and report on the accompanying training programs and progress of the work.
- (8) Assignment of the doctoral thesis topic does not establish entitlement to remuneration or an employment relationship.
- (9) A doctoral thesis that was previously prepared may not be submitted again, unless the rejection took place due to the incompetence of another university or faculty.
- (10) Unpublished manuscripts may be used as part of a cumulative doctoral thesis if designated as such. Unpublished manuscripts do not count toward the required minimum number of three accepted or published publications in accordance with § 6, para. 2. The reviewers assess the scientific quality of such unpublished papers along with the other publications comprising the doctoral thesis.

III. Examination phase

§ 7

Opening of the examination phase

- (1) The application to open the examination phase is submitted to the doctoral board. It can only take place once admission has been granted (§ 5). The following must be enclosed with your application:
 - 1. An electronic version of the doctoral thesis.
 - 2. A detailed statement signed by the candidate and the responsible professor regarding the candidate's share of the work for the publications if the doctoral thesis has been published in whole or in part. The candidate must also affirm that all sources and resources have been indicated.
 - 3. Proof of the courses in which the candidate has regularly participated (§ 4).
 - 4. A police certificate of good conduct which may not be more than eight weeks old on the date of submission.
 - 5. Proof of enrollment as a doctoral student for at least six semesters during the qualification phase. The doctoral board can approve exceptions to this.
 - 6. Proof of the minuted meetings with the doctoral thesis committee specified in § 3, para. 5, if proof of participation in a doctoral program or research training group, including doctoral research training groups, cannot be provided.
- (2) The examination phase is opened if the application meets the requirements of paragraph 1. The candidate is notified of the decision in writing upon request.
- (3) The application cannot be withdrawn once the examination phase has been opened.

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§ 8

Review of the doctoral thesis

- (1) Once the examination phase is opened, the doctoral board requests reviews from the first and second reviewers (§ 3). If the assessments for the two reviews differ such that one of the reviewers assesses the doctoral thesis as “passed” and the other as “failed,” the doctoral board appoints another professor who does not belong to the doctoral thesis committee as a reviewer.
- (2) The reviews of the doctoral thesis must be prepared in writing and include a justified recommendation for the acceptance, rejection or return of the doctoral thesis for revision. Upon a recommendation to accept the doctoral thesis, a justified suggestion to assess the doctoral thesis as “excellent” can be made (§ 10). The reviews should be submitted at the latest six weeks after the request for review by the doctoral board. If a review has not been received ten weeks following the request, the doctoral board can replace a reviewer.
- (3) If one of the reviewers assesses the doctoral thesis as “failed,” or a reviewer requests changes to the doctoral thesis, the doctoral student is to be notified of the deficiencies and informed that they must be corrected. The revised doctoral thesis is to be resubmitted within one year and assessed again by the reviewers. If two reviewers assess the thesis as “failed” even after revision, the doctoral thesis is considered rejected and the examination is considered not passed overall.
- (4) If only one reviewer assesses the doctoral thesis as “failed” after revision, the doctoral board appoints another professor who does not belong to the doctoral thesis committee as a reviewer. If this reviewer assesses the doctoral thesis as “failed,” the doctoral thesis is considered rejected and the doctoral examination is considered not passed overall.
- (5) If the candidate rejects the proposed revision, or the revised doctoral thesis is not resubmitted within one year, the doctoral thesis is considered rejected and the doctoral examination procedure is terminated.
- (6) Following the rejection, the doctoral thesis and all of the reviews remain in the doctoral board files.
- (7) The candidate is to be informed of the termination of the doctoral examination procedure in accordance with § 8, para. 3 to 5 in a written notice by the doctoral board, including reasons, within a period of two weeks after a prior hearing. The notice shall include information on legal remedies.
- (8) If two reviewers assess the doctoral thesis as “passed,” the oral examinations take place.
- (9) The doctoral thesis and reviews are to be available in the doctoral office (§ 2, para. 5) for confidential viewing by members of the Faculty of Medicine with doctorates during the period from completion of the review of the doctoral thesis to completion of the doctoral defense, or at least 14 days. Objections are possible during this period and are to be submitted, with reasons, to the doctoral board. The doctoral board decides whether these objections are taken into account. The doctoral board can pass a resolution not to make the doctoral thesis and reviews available for viewing if the doctoral student, an institution at which the doctoral student is carrying out the doctoral thesis or the University has a legitimate interest in keeping the topic and/or content of the doctoral thesis confidential. § 1, paragraph 4 applies.

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§ 9

Oral examinations

- (1) The oral examinations are comprised of a public, academic lecture with a discussion (doctoral colloquium) and, following this, a non-public doctoral defense. The oral examinations take place in front of the doctoral thesis committee.
- (2) In the doctoral colloquium, the candidate reports on the results of his or her doctoral thesis in an academic lecture. The duration of the lecture should not exceed 30 minutes. An academic discussion of 15 minutes with questions from the doctoral thesis committee and the listeners is permitted at the end. § 1, paragraph 4 applies.
- (3) In the doctoral defense, the ability of the candidate to present the subjects of his doctoral thesis and their categorization within the discipline or a neighboring discipline is verified in a specialist discussion. It should last a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 90 minutes.
- (4) The doctoral colloquium and the doctoral defense are conducted in English. Another language is also permitted with the approval of the doctoral board and with the consent of all members of the doctoral thesis committee.
- (5) The doctoral board determines the date and location of the oral examinations (doctoral colloquium and doctoral defense) at the suggestion of the candidate. The suggestion must be received by the doctoral office at least three weeks in advance of the planned examination date. The examination should take place at the latest two months after receipt of the last review. The doctoral colloquium is to be announced faculty-wide with the name of the candidate, the lecture title, and the time and location. § 1, paragraph 4 applies.
- (6) During the doctoral defense, doctoral students can be permitted as listeners if the candidate has agreed. Admission does not extend to the consultation for and announcement of the examination result to the candidate. Anyone who, as a listener, attempts to influence the examination or disrupt it in another manner is to be excluded by the doctoral thesis committee.
- (7) After the doctoral defense following the doctoral colloquium, the doctoral thesis committee decides in camera on the passing or failing of the doctoral colloquium and the doctoral defense. If both of the reviewers have previously made a justified suggestion to assess the doctoral thesis as “excellent” and all members of the doctoral thesis committee have assessed the doctoral colloquium and doctoral defense as “passed,” a justified suggestion to assess the doctoral defense as “excellent” can be made (§ 10).
- (8) If a candidate does not attend the oral examinations without just cause or withdraws after the start without just cause, the oral examinations are considered not passed. If good cause is claimed for the failure to appear or withdrawal, this is to be reported and demonstrated immediately in writing to the doctoral board via the first reviewer. In the event that the candidate is ill, the submission of a doctor’s letter can be requested. If the reasons are recognized, a new date is arranged.
- (9) If the doctoral colloquium and/or the doctoral defense have/has not been passed, the doctoral office determines a new date for the doctoral colloquium and/or the doctoral defense at the suggestion of the candidate. A repeat examination can take place at the earliest three months and at the latest twelve months after the date for the failed examination.
- (10) If the doctoral colloquium and/or the doctoral defense are/is not passed on the repeat date, the doctoral examination is not passed overall. A second repeat of the oral examinations is not permitted.

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§ 10

Assessment

(1) The doctoral thesis is considered “passed” if the requirements in § 6, para. 1 are satisfied.

The doctoral colloquium and doctoral defense are considered “passed” if at least three members of the doctoral thesis committee assess them as having been “passed” and the requirements in § 9, para. 2 and 3 are satisfied.

The doctoral board can, upon request by the doctoral thesis committee, assess the overall performance for the doctoral examination procedure as “excellent.” As a guideline, an overall performance of “excellent” should be assigned to a maximum of 10% of the doctoral students admitted to the examination phase.

(2) The requirement for assessing the overall performance as “excellent” is:

- (a) The first and second reviewers have made a justified suggestion to assess the doctoral thesis as “excellent” in accordance with § 8, paragraph 2; and
- (b) All members of the doctoral thesis committee have made a justified suggestion to assess the doctoral defense as “excellent” in accordance with § 9, paragraph 7; and
- (c) The third reviewer votes in favor in accordance with paragraph 5

(3) If the doctoral thesis is assessed as “excellent,” the reviewers must provide reasons why all of the following points are to be assessed as “excellent”:

- (a) Importance and extent of the increase in knowledge due to the results of the doctoral thesis
- (b) Academic and methodological standard of the doctoral thesis
- (c) Language, expression and organization of the doctoral thesis
- (d) Degree of independence when preparing the doctoral thesis

(4) If the doctoral defense is assessed as “excellent,” the doctoral thesis committee should provide reasons why all three of the following points are to be assessed as “excellent”:

- (a) Expert knowledge
- (b) Ability to categorize the subjects of the doctoral thesis within the discipline
- (c) Language and expression

(5) Before the doctoral board decides on assessing a doctoral thesis as “excellent,” the doctoral board obtains another independent written review from a professor outside the University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine with an international reputation in the field concerned in the doctoral thesis who is not associated with the working group within which the candidate prepared the doctoral thesis. This reviewer is to assess whether assessing the written doctoral thesis as “excellent” is justified applying the criteria in § 10, paragraph 3, letters a to c. § 1, paragraph 4 applies. This does not affect § 65, paragraph 1 HG. If the outcome of this third review is negative, the overall assessment of “passed” is applied.

(6) If the candidate completes their doctoral studies with “excellent,” this will be noted explicitly on the diploma.

§ 11

Publication of the doctoral thesis

(1) The doctoral student must make the doctoral thesis permanently accessible in one of the following forms:

- a) Publication through the Bonn University and State Library (USL) publication service
- This results in the doctoral thesis being published on the Internet on the USL's publication server according to the USL's execution rules as amended. The doctoral student is to submit the doctoral thesis file(s) and any descriptive metadata to the USL. All files and metadata must conform to the USL's formal and technical requirements. The doctoral thesis must include the doctoral thesis cover page required by the Faculty according to the template provided at the time. If the file(s) and/or metadata are incomplete and/or have technical flaws, they will be rejected by the USL and the doctoral thesis will be deemed not to have been published. The doctoral student must check the metadata and the electronic version of the doctoral thesis for completeness, accuracy and legibility after processing by the USL and immediately report any need for corrections.
- The USL can only publish the doctoral thesis, thus fulfilling the requirement to publish, if the USL has been granted the unlimited and irrevocable right to distribute the doctoral thesis and make it publicly accessible.
- The University of Bonn recommends that doctoral students publish their doctoral thesis and accompanying research data in an open-access model with a free license, preferably Creative Commons CC BY. In addition to the Bonn University and State Library's free publication service, the University of Bonn's Research Data Service Center is also available as a free repository for research data.

Publication of cumulative online doctoral theses

If the doctoral thesis includes academic works that have already been published or accepted for publication by an academic publisher and if passages from these works are included directly in the doctoral thesis, these works are excluded from the requirement to publish. The doctoral student can remove them before the doctoral thesis is published online if this appears to be legally necessary. In this case, the complete bibliographical data and (if applicable) the persistent DOI, handle or URN link to the publisher's version of all works that have been removed from the doctoral thesis must always be included to ensure that they are findable. Proof that all parts of the publication that have been removed have been accepted for publication or already published must be submitted to the doctoral board.

- b) Publication with a commercial publishing house
- The doctoral thesis can also be published by a commercial publishing house as part of a publication series or as a monograph. The following minimum requirements must be fulfilled:
- 1) The publication must have an ISBN/eISBN.
 - 2) The doctoral thesis is to be marked as a doctoral thesis from the University of Bonn in an appropriate place. Preferably, this is to be done with the following note on the imprint page: "*Dissertation, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn*, [year in which the oral examination took place]" ("Doctoral thesis, University of Bonn").
 - 3) If the responsible doctoral board has approved a change of title for publication by a publishing house, then the original title of the doctoral thesis is also to be noted; in this case, the note on the doctoral thesis also includes "*unter dem Titel: ...*" ("under the title: ...").

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- 4) In addition to the publisher's title page, the copy that is submitted to the USL must also include the doctoral thesis title page as required by the Faculty according to the template valid at the time.
- 5) If the doctoral thesis will be published in print form, the chosen publishing house must guarantee that at least 150 copies will be printed. If the publishing house ensures that the demand will be covered by print-on-demand, then the responsible doctoral board can permit a lower number for the minimum print run. Proof that the doctoral thesis has been published in a form that fulfills one of the above requirements must be submitted to the doctoral board.
- 6) The doctoral student must submit one printed copy of the publication from the publishing house to the USL free of charge.

(2) An embargo period of up to two years for online publication on the USL's publication server may be granted upon joint written application by the doctoral student and their first supervisor, without stating reasons, filed with the doctoral office. An embargo period of more than two years may only be requested from the doctoral board if justification is given. The delayed publication of the online doctoral thesis by the USL cannot occur until the doctoral student has submitted to the USL all file(s) and descriptive metadata that are part of the publication. If all file(s) and metadata are complete, and if the USL only needs to activate the publication, the requirement to publish is deemed to have been fulfilled even before the embargo has ended; this means that the doctoral examination procedure can be formally completed. If the doctoral student wants to extend the embargo, they must request this from the responsible doctoral office at the latest eight weeks before the embargo is to end. If the request is approved, the doctoral office informs the USL of the new embargo period.

(3) If the USL has either a printed copy of the publication as published by the publishing house or if the online publication has been activated on the bonndoc publication server or if it can be activated without any further action by the doctoral student after the embargo period has ended, then the USL shall certify that the doctoral student has fulfilled their obligation to publish the doctoral thesis and send this certification to the responsible doctoral office. Once this has been done, the requirements for publishing the doctoral thesis as listed in § 11 can be considered to have been fulfilled.

§ 12

Issuing of the diploma

(1) The doctoral examination procedure is concluded when the doctoral diploma is issued. It is issued in German. An English translation of the diploma is also issued. It must include:

1. The name of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Bonn
2. The academic degree awarded
3. The name, date of birth and place of birth of the graduate
4. The title of the doctoral thesis
5. If applicable, a note indicating excellent overall performance in accordance with § 10, para. 5
6. The name of the responsible professor
7. The name and signature of the Dean of the University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine
8. The embossed seal of the University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine
9. The date of the oral examination
10. The date the diploma is issued

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(2) The doctoral diploma is presented to the graduate by the Dean, chair of the doctoral board or one of the vice deans of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Bonn during a public doctoral convocation ceremony. It may only be issued if the doctoral student has fulfilled the publication requirement. The title of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is awarded when the diploma is issued. Graduates receive their diplomas in person. The doctoral board decides on exceptions. The academic degree that is awarded may only be used after the doctoral diploma has been issued.

§ 13

Declaration of invalidity of examinations and revocation of the academic degree

- (1) If it becomes known during the doctoral examination procedure that the doctoral student is guilty of deception, the assessment of the doctoral achievements concerned can be amended accordingly, or parts or all of the doctoral examination procedure can be declared invalid or failed.
- (2) If the doctoral student has committed deception with respect to a doctoral achievement and this only becomes known after the doctoral diploma is issued, the assessment of the doctoral achievements concerned can be subsequently amended or the academic degree that was awarded can be revoked.
- (3) If the doctoral student has obtained admission to the doctoral examination procedure by means of deception, threats or bribery, the academic degree that was awarded can also be subsequently revoked when this becomes known. If the requirements for admission to the doctoral examination procedure were not satisfied, without any intent to deceive by the doctoral student, and if this deficiency only becomes known after the doctoral diploma has been issued, the deficiency will be remedied by passing the doctoral examination procedure.
- (4) Decisions relating to paragraphs 1 to 3 that result in a doctoral examination procedure or parts of it being declared invalid must be approved by the Faculty Council.
- (5) If the academic degree that was awarded is revoked in accordance with paragraph 2 or 3 or the assessment of the doctoral achievements is amended in accordance with paragraph 1 or 2, the doctoral board is to revoke the doctoral diploma and, if necessary, issue a new doctoral diploma.
- (6) The academic degree that was awarded can be revoked by the Faculty if the doctoral student is sentenced by final judgment to imprisonment for at least one year due to an intentional science-related criminal offense and the academic degree that was awarded was used to prepare or commit the offense.
- (7) Prior to making a decision, the student concerned is to be given an opportunity to state his or her case.

§ 14

Access to examination records

After the doctoral examination procedure has been completed, the doctoral student is to be granted access to the reviews and minutes upon request, which must be submitted within one month after the oral examinations are passed or notification that the final attempt has been failed. This does not affect § 29 of the Administrative Procedure Act (*Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz, VwVfG*). Copies and other reproductions of examination records or parts thereof are only intended for doctoral students to pursue their own rights arising under the legal examination relationship and are therefore only to be used by the doctoral students, or made available to people engaged by them to safeguard their legal interests.

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IV. Joint doctorate

§ 15

Joint doctorate with another university

(1) The University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine can award the academic degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) with another university in a joint doctoral examination procedure. Notwithstanding §§ 3 and 6, this procedure requires joint supervision by one responsible professor from each university and successful participation in courses at both universities. In particular, the requirements for admission to the doctoral examination procedure and for opening the examination phase must be satisfied at both universities.

(2) An agreement for the joint procedure must be concluded between the Faculty of Medicine and the other university and approved by the doctoral board. The agreement must be signed by the Rector of the University of Bonn in order to be effective. The agreement governs a doctoral examination procedure conducted jointly by the responsible administrative body at the other university and the doctoral board, in particular appointment of a joint doctoral thesis committee as well as joint examination and assessment of the examinations in accordance with §§ 4, 6, 9 and 10.

(3) The agreement can include exceptions to the provisions of these Doctoral Degree Regulations, e.g. for the

- composition of the doctoral thesis committee and its responsibilities in accordance with § 3;
- qualification phase in accordance with § 4;
- preparation of the reviews in accordance with § 8;
- access to the examination records in accordance with § 14;
- form and duration of the oral examinations in accordance with § 9;
- language of the diploma in accordance with § 12, para. 1.

The doctoral board can approve further exceptions in justified cases.

(4) The examination achievements are assessed both in accordance with these Regulations and in accordance with the laws applicable to the other university involved.

(5) The publication requirement for the doctoral thesis and the rights to it are based on the regulations of both universities.

(6) The diploma includes the award of a single academic degree, which may be used in the form awarded by the other university or in the form awarded by the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Bonn. The degree is awarded in a joint diploma. It is signed by the responsible representative of the other university and the Dean of the University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine and bears the seals of both universities.

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V. Concluding provisions

§ 16 Transitional provisions

These Doctoral Degree Regulations apply to doctoral examination procedures for which the application for admission to the qualification phase is submitted after these Regulations come into force. Doctoral examination procedures for which the application for admission to the qualification phase is not yet complete on the date these Doctoral Degree Regulations are announced shall be completed in accordance with the PhD doctoral degree regulations of September 2, 2014, as amended. Doctoral students who are already in the qualification phase under the PhD doctoral degree regulations of September 2, 2014, as amended, at the time these Doctoral Degree Regulations come into force are granted the right to complete the examination phase under these Doctoral Degree Regulations upon request.

§ 17 Entry into force and publication

These Doctoral Degree Regulations shall enter into force on the day after their publication in the Official Announcements of the University of Bonn.

B. Weber

The Dean
of the Faculty of Medicine
at the University of Bonn
Professor Dr. med. Bernd Weber

Executed pursuant to the resolution adopted by the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Medicine on November 18, 2024 and the resolution passed by the Rectorate on December 17, 2024.

Bonn, January 16, 2025

M. Hoch

The Rector
of the University of Bonn
Professor Dr. Dr. h.c. Michael Hoch

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Annex 1

The University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine awards the academic degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) upon successful completion of doctoral studies in one of the following disciplines:

Epidemiology
Experimental Medicine
Clinical Immunology
Clinical Infectiology
Medical Biometrics
Medical Psychology
Medical Sociology
Neuroscience
Public Health
Health Care Research

The University of Bonn Faculty of Medicine awards the academic degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) upon successful completion of doctoral studies in the above-mentioned and following disciplines to doctoral students who have passed a state examination in medicine or dentistry with at least a grade of “good” in accordance with § 5, para. 1:

Human Genetics
Clinical Medicine
Translational Medicine
Dentistry

The disciplines/fields stated below are added to Annex 1. The choice of disciplines applies to doctoral examination procedures for which the application for admission to the qualification phase is submitted after the Amendment comes into force.

Experimental Medicine
Immunoscience and Infection
Neuroscience
Clinical Research, Health Care Research, Population Research and Data Science

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Annex 2

The following programs are recognized as competitively reviewed programs of excellence:

Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Sofja Kovalevskaja Research Group
Bernstein Group
Emmy Noether Program
ERC Starting Grant
Heisenberg Fellowship
Helmholtz Young Investigator Group
Max Eder Research Group, German Cancer Aid
Max Planck Research Group
NRW Research Group
NRW Returning Academic Program

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