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**Joint Doctoral Degree Regulations**  
**of**  
**School II: School of Computing Science, Business Administration, Economics and Law**  
**(for its Department of Computing Science)**  
**School V: School of Mathematics and Science**  
**and**  
**School VI: School of Medicine and Health Sciences**  
**of the University of Oldenburg**

**for the award of the doctoral degrees of *Doktor der Naturwissenschaften* (Dr rer. nat., Doctor of Science), *Doctor of Philosophy* (PhD), *Doktor der Philosophie* (Dr phil.) or *Doktor der Ingenieurwissenschaften* (Dr-Ing., Doctor of Engineering Sciences)**

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## **Section 1 Purpose of the doctorate, doctoral degrees and the required achievements**

- (1) The doctorate serves as proof of the ability to carry out in-depth, independent scientific work. The following achievements are required for the doctorate:
  - a) a written doctoral thesis which has a subject belonging to the field of natural sciences, mathematics, computer science, engineering or psychology and corresponds to the desired degree. For details see Section 10.
  - b) an oral exam (the doctoral defence). For details see Section 14.
- (2) The School of Mathematics and Science (hereinafter referred to as School V), the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (hereinafter referred to as School VI) and the School of Computing Science, Business Administration, Economics and Law on behalf of the Department of Computing Science (hereinafter referred to as School II/DFI) award, for doctoral work as defined in (1), doctoral degrees with the following possible titles: *Doktor der Naturwissenschaften* (abbreviated: Dr rer. nat., Doctor of Science); Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), *Doktor der Philosophie* (abbreviated: Dr phil., Doctor of Philosophy) or *Doktor der Ingenieurwissenschaften* (abbreviated: Dr-Ing., Doctor of Engineering) for advanced independent scientific achievements in the fields of science, mathematics, computing science, engineering or psychology. With their application for admission to the doctorate in accordance with Section 9 (1) and the application for the initiation of the doctoral degree procedure in accordance with Section 12 (2) (b) point IV, doctoral candidates must indicate which doctoral degree they are seeking. The decision on the title to be awarded is made by the responsible Doctorate Committee (Section 5).
- (3) School V, School VI and School II/DFI may also, depending on the focus of the work, award the honorary degree of Doctor of Science (Doctor rerum naturalium honoris causa, abbreviated: Dr rer. nat. h. c.), the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Doctor philosophiae honoris causa, abbreviated: Dr phil. h. c.) or the honorary degree of Doctor of Engineering (abbreviated: Dr-Ing. E. h.).

## **Section 2 Competences**

- (1) As the case may be, the following are involved in the process of the doctorate:
  - a) if applicable, the Interfaculty Doctorate Council (Section 4),
  - b) the responsible Doctorate Committee (Section 5),
  - c) the Examination Committee (Section 6),
  - d) the first assessor (Section 7), who is usually the supervisor of the thesis (Section 11),
  - e) the Supervisory Committee, if established (Section 11 (2)),
  - f) one or more of the other assessors (Section 7),
  - g) the responsible Dean; in the case of School II/DFI, the Vice Dean for Computing Science replaces the Dean.
- (2) The Interfaculty Doctorate Council advises and decides on interdisciplinary matters regarding quality assurance and the implementation of doctoral degree procedures in the participating faculties.
- (3) The Doctorate Committee decides on admission and for all other procedural matters, unless the Doctoral Degree Regulations provide otherwise.
- (4) The Examination Committee executes the doctoral defence and marks it.
- (5) The first assessor, or the first assessor together with the other assessors, will assess the thesis. The assessment reports are prepared independently from each other.

- (6) The supervisor advises and supports the doctoral candidate during the preparation of the doctoral thesis. They are usually to be designated first assessor.
- (7) If a Supervisory Committee has been set up, it will accompany the supervision of the thesis (Section 11 (2)).
- (8) The Dean will complete the procedure with the delivery of the degree certificate.

### **Section 3 Interfaculty and international doctorates**

- (1) A doctoral degree procedure can be carried out across several schools, provided that the subject of the doctorate lies in the area of expertise of several faculties and the respective faculties have agreed to this arrangement.
- (2) Schools can engage in joint doctoral degree procedures with German universities and research institutions (hereinafter: 'cooperation partners') on the basis of cooperation agreements or in a joint scientific institution in accordance with Section 36a of the NHG (the Lower Saxony University Regulations).
- (3) Joint doctoral degree procedures (in the form of a bi- or multinational doctorate) can be implemented in the framework of international doctorate programmes or on the basis of a cooperation agreement with the University of Groningen (UG), the University Medical Centre Groningen (UMCG) or another foreign university or research institution (hereinafter: 'cooperation partner'). Before initiating these procedures, the parties involved must confer with regard to the particularities of a bi-national doctorate.
- (4) In the cases mentioned in (1)-(3), the doctoral degree is awarded jointly by the School or Schools in conjunction with the competent institution of the cooperation partners. If permissible, the title of 'Doctor' is jointly awarded by the School and the competent institution of the cooperation partner, or else by way of a double doctorate, if the cooperation partner is authorised to award doctoral degrees; if this is not the case, the title is awarded by the School with reference to the cooperation. For procedures with the University of Groningen, the specific regulations according to Appendix 4 'Bi-national doctoral degree procedures with the University of Groningen (UG)' apply.

### **Section 4 Interfaculty Doctorate Council**

School V, School VI and School II/DFI will together form a joint Interfaculty Doctorate Council. This will comprise the Deans, in accordance with Section 2 (1) (g), as well as two members of the Doctorate Committees of the involved schools. One of these members will belong to the group of professors and the other to the group of other academic research staff. The chair is held alternately by one of the Deans.

### **Section 5 Doctorate Committee**

- (1) By a decision of their Faculty Council, School V, School VI and School II/DFI will each form from their own ranks, a Doctorate Committee for the awarding of the degree, according to Section 1 (2).
- (2) In accordance with (3) and (4), each of the Doctorate Committees of Schools V and VI consists of members of the group of professors, as well as two members each from the group of other academic research staff and the group of doctoral students. The chair is a member of the University group of professors and is elected by the Faculty Council concerned for a term of two years.
- (3) In the Doctorate Committee of School V, the professors' group consists of one member in the role of chair and other members. The total number of members corresponds to the number of institutes of the School. The members of the status group of professors and their deputies are appointed by the members of

the group of professors in the Institute Councils of the institutes of School V (one seat each) and must belong to each of these institutes.

(4) In the Doctorate Committee of School VI, the professors' group consists of one member as chair and another four members. The majority of the members should have a doctorate in science or engineering or a relevant professorship.

(5) The Doctorate Committee of School II/DFI consists of one member of the professors' status group, or one habilitated member, as chair, and usually four further members of the group of professors or habilitated members, as well as two members of the group of postdoctoral researchers. The members of the Doctorate Committee elect the chair and the deputy chair from their ranks.

(6) All members of the respective Doctorate Committees have up to three deputies. The members and their deputies are selected from their respective status groups by the Faculty Council concerned. They are appointed for a term of two years, but for one year in the status group of doctoral students.

(7) The responsible Doctorate Committee decides by a majority of votes. In the case of a tied vote, the matter will be decided by the chair's vote.

(8) In joint doctoral degree procedures pursuant to Section 3, a joint Doctorate Committee may be set up, in which members of the participating schools and cooperation partners should be appropriately represented. In the joint Doctorate Committee, the group of professors or habilitated members, the group of research staff with a doctoral degree and the group of doctoral students, who are advisory members, are represented in a ratio of 2:1:0 or 2:1:1. All members have up to three deputies. The Faculty Council concerned elects the members and their deputies from their respective status groups for a term of two years, but one year in the case of the group of doctoral students. The representatives of the cooperation partners are sent by them. All in all, the majority of the members of each joint Doctorate Committee must belong to universities with the right to award doctorates. The members of the joint Doctorate Committee elect the chair from their ranks. In case of doubt, the Interfaculty Doctorate Council decides on the composition of the respective joint Doctorate Committee.

## **Section 6 Examination Committee**

(1) After accepting the thesis, the responsible Doctorate Committee appoints an Examination Committee and a chair for each doctoral degree procedure. The composition of the Committee should adequately reflect the relevant fields of study. Fields of study outside the natural sciences, mathematics, computing science, engineering or psychology touched upon by the subject of the thesis should be taken into account as much as possible in the composition of the Committee. A majority of committee members should have a relevant doctorate as defined in Section 1 (2) or a relevant professorship.

(2) In the implementation of joint doctoral degree procedures pursuant to Section 3, members representing the cooperation partners should be given appropriate consideration in the composition of the committee. The requirements and rights pursuant to (1) apply equally to members of the Examination Committee who do not belong to the participating Schools V, VI or II/DFI.

(3) The Examination Committee consists of at least three authorized examiners (pursuant to Section 6 (4)), of whom at least one must be a member of the Doctorate Committee concerned:

- a) the first assessor of the thesis,
- b) another assessor of the thesis and
- c) another authorized examiner.

The Examination Committee may include one additional voting member from the group of researchers with a doctorate.

The responsible Doctorate Committee can name up to two other examiners.

The majority of the Examination Committee members must be professors.

(4) Independent junior research group leaders are also authorized to be examiners, on the condition that they have a doctorate. The same applies to junior research group leaders operating in the framework of externally assessed projects funded by recognized institutions for research or research funding. The Interfaculty Doctorate Council will decide whether a research or research funding organization belongs to the recognized institutions. At the suggestion of the Doctorate Committee concerned, the responsible Faculty Council may also determine the eligibility of persons with a doctorate in individual cases that do not fulfil these formal requirements.

(5) The majority of the members of the Examination Committee must belong to the University of Oldenburg. In duly substantiated cases, exceptions can be made. However, at least one person must be a member of the Schools concerned.

### **Section 7 Assessors**

(1) The respective Doctorate Committee appoints the first assessor for the assessment of the thesis, who is usually a member of the respective School and fulfils the requirements of Section 6 (4). In a joint, bi- or multinational doctoral degree procedure pursuant to Section 3, the first assessor may belong to the cooperation partner. In addition, the Doctorate Committee appoints one to three other assessors, who together cover the fields touched upon by the thesis in question.

(2) The doctoral candidate may make suggestions for the first assessor and up to three other assessors.

(3) The first assessor and at least one other assessor must be members of the Examination Committee, as defined in Section 6 of these Regulations. At the suggestion of the responsible Doctorate Committee, the responsible Faculty Council may allow exceptions in individual cases.

(4) In the case of a publication-based thesis, at least one of the assessments must be made by an assessor who is impartial towards the doctoral candidate, in accordance with the rules of good scientific practice of the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*).

(5) If the thesis has been developed in cooperation with non-university research institutions or firms engaged in research, the responsible Doctorate Committee can ask the responsible scientists at those organizations for an assessment, on the condition that they possess the qualifications defined in Section 6 (4) or the equivalent of a habilitation according to Section 11 (2).

### **Section 8 Admission requirements**

(1) To be admitted to the doctoral programme, candidates must have completed a relevant degree programme by obtaining a Master's degree, a *Diplom* or *Magister* certificate, the certificate of the first State Examination for Teaching at Gymnasium Schools or a State Examination in Medicine, or another diploma that has been deemed equivalent by the responsible Doctorate Committee. The recognition of other corresponding degrees acquired abroad is subject to approval by the responsible Doctorate Committee. The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (BGBl. 2007, part II, pp. 712 ff.) applies. The Doctorate Committee may also base its decision on a recommendation of 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 (KMK). In case of doubt, agreement must be reached with the Interfaculty Doctorate Council.

(2) The responsible Doctorate Committee may admit applicants who have a degree, as defined in (1), in a non-relevant degree programme, on the condition that they fulfil specified supplementary academic requirements prior to the start of the doctoral degree procedure pursuant to Section 12.

(3) Applicants who do not hold a degree as described in (1) or (2) may be admitted if the following conditions are met:

- a) a relevant university degree (e.g. in a teacher training programme for primary and certain secondary schools) with a standard period of study of at least eight semesters, which have been awarded a higher mark, and
- b) qualifying study and examinations as part of a supplementary course (usually of two semesters) leading to the subject area of the thesis. The required coursework and examinations are determined by the responsible Doctorate Committee in consultation with the future supervisor. In the case of a doctorate in a doctoral programme or degree programme, these and examination credits are determined by the Admissions Committee of the doctoral programme or study programme in consultation with the future supervisor, and approved by the responsible Doctorate Committee.

(4) Applicants with special qualifications who have a relevant Bachelor's degree can apply for a combined Master's and doctoral programme, called the fast-track option. They may be admitted to doctoral studies if they have demonstrated their ability to work scientifically in an aptitude test, in conjunction with successfully completing the procedure for admission to the doctoral programme or degree programme. Further details are regulated by the corresponding admission regulations and, if necessary, by a separate fast-track regulation. An admission to the doctoral programme expires if the Master phase of the fast-track programme is not successfully completed.

(5) The responsible Doctorate Committee will refuse admission to the doctorate if the applicant has not withdrawn an application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate or for initiation of a doctoral degree procedure at another university. The Doctorate Committee may deny admission to the doctorate without providing reasons if the applicant has already unsuccessfully undergone a doctoral degree procedure.

### **Section 9 Admission to the doctorate, acceptance, enrolment**

(1) The application for admission to doctoral studies and thus to 'acceptance as a doctoral candidate' must be addressed in writing to the chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee, stating the desired title and degree pursuant to Section 1 (2). In the case of a doctorate in a doctoral programme or degree programme, the application is submitted via the responsible Graduate School.

(2) As a condition for admission, the application must be accompanied by:

- a) a presentation of the applicant's scientific career,
- b) the topic of the thesis (working title), with a brief description of the research plan, which has been agreed by the intended supervisor,
- c) a declaration by a person authorized to examine, in accordance with Section 6 (4), who is usually a member of School V, School VI or School II/DFI, indicating their willingness to supervise the applicant's planned doctoral thesis,
- d) the names of the members of the Supervisory Committee, if established (Section 11 (2)),
- e) diplomas and evidence as defined in Section 8 or documents proving the completion of an equivalent relevant degree programme at a foreign university with evidence of examinations taken there and degrees obtained,

- f) a statement of any previous unsuccessful applications for a doctorate with details of the date of the first application, the academic university and the faculty or department to which the thesis was submitted, as well as the topic of the thesis,
- g) if applicable, an application for a joint doctoral degree procedure or a bi- or multinational doctorate (Section 3) specifying the faculties and/or the cooperation partners involved,
- h) a statement that the applicant is aware of the regulations on good scientific practice of the University of Oldenburg and is following them,
- i) a statement that no commercial recruitment or consulting services (doctorate advice) have been used in connection with the doctoral project,
- j) a list of the texts that the candidate has already published and
- k) a Supervision Agreement between the doctoral student and the first supervisor or a Supervisory Committee (Section 11 (5)), which contains an explanation of (b), (c), (g) and (h).

All submitted documents – except for originals and diplomas, which are to be presented as certified copies or with an original for inspection – become the property of the University.

(3) If, pursuant to (2) (e) above, evidence of foreign degrees has been submitted, the responsible Doctorate Committee will check whether they are equivalent to the German degrees. Recognition may be subject to certain requirements and conditions, such as retrieval of a missing diploma or Master's thesis, or the passing of knowledge examinations.

(4) After examination of the documents submitted in accordance with (2) or (3), the responsible Doctorate Committee will decide on the admission of the applicant to the doctorate programme. In well-founded individual cases, the applicant can be admitted despite a previous failed application for a doctorate. Through admission, the applicant receives the status of doctoral candidate. This status ends when the candidate successfully completes the doctorate or definitively fails to meet the requirements for the doctorate, as well as in the case of late application for the initiation of the doctoral degree procedure (Section 12 (1)) or upon withdrawal of the doctoral application (Section 19).

(5) After admission to doctoral studies, doctoral candidates should enrol as doctoral students, if applicable, in one of the doctoral programmes or degree programmes of the Graduate School.

## **Section 10 Thesis**

(1) The thesis must demonstrate the author's capacity for in-depth and independent scholarly work and verifiably constitute a contribution to the advancement of science in a particular field of science, mathematics, computer science, engineering or psychology.

(2) The thesis should be written in German or English. Writing in another language requires the approval of the responsible Doctorate Committee. The thesis must contain an abstract in German and English of at most three pages.

(3) Several scientific papers in internationally recognized peer-reviewed scientific journals can be recognized as a thesis at Schools V and VI if they are related in content and in their entirety fulfil the requirements of Section 1 (publication-based thesis). The applicant is required to explain comprehensively in the thesis how they are related. If other researchers are also involved as co-authors in these individual papers, their own contribution must be presented in detail. The correctness of the explanation must be confirmed in writing by the supervisor.

## **Section 11 Supervision**

(1) The topic of the thesis should be agreed upon with a person with a qualification according to Section 6 (4) of the relevant subject area. They will supervise the thesis. The supervisor is usually the first assessor. The applicant can ask the responsible Doctorate Committee to recommend a supervisor.

(2) If the doctorate is part of a doctoral programme or degree programme, it should be accompanied by a Supervisory Committee. Moreover, at the request of a doctoral candidate, a Supervisory Committee may be appointed. The doctoral candidate can make suggestions. In exceptional and soundly argued cases, scientists from non-university research institutions or from industry can also be assigned as members of the Supervisory Committee, on the condition that they have a doctorate and at least five years of professional experience in a responsible research position. As a rule, another doctoral candidate, a research assistant or a research associate should also be a member of the Supervisory Committee if their expertise is close to the research area of the thesis. The details are regulated by the responsible Doctorate Committee.

(3) The responsible Doctorate Committee will appoint the supervisor and, if applicable, the members of the Supervisory Committee, taking into account the suggestions of the doctoral candidate.

(4) A person with qualifications, as stated in Section 6 (4), of another university or a cooperation partner according to Section 3, may also be appointed as the first supervisor.

(5) The relationship between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor and, if applicable, the Supervisory Committee is regulated in a Supervision Agreement. This states, in particular, the topic of the thesis, the expected timeframe, and, if applicable, a second supervisor, members of the Supervisory Committee, any agreements on regular meetings between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor and any approvals that may need to be obtained from, for example, the ethics committee, a research institution or a company.

(6) After careful consideration, the supervisor can, exclusively for objective or personal reasons, terminate the supervisory relationship. This decision must be promptly communicated by the supervisor to the doctoral candidate and the chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee, with a statement of the reasons. In this case, the Doctorate Committee will seek to appoint a successor to the supervisor as soon as possible.

(7) If serious problems arise between the supervisor and the doctoral candidate, the candidate can seek the help of the responsible Doctorate Committee. In such a case, the Doctorate Committee will mediate between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor, or the Supervisory Committee, and seek a solution.

## **Section 12 Initiation of the doctoral degree procedure**

(1) The doctoral candidate applies to the responsible Doctorate Committee for the initiation of the doctoral degree procedure. As a rule, the application can be submitted, at the earliest, one year after admission and, at the latest, within five years from the date of admission to the doctorate. Upon request, if sound arguments are presented, these periods may be shortened or extended by a reasonable period, after the doctoral candidate and the supervisor have been heard. If the application for the initiation of the doctoral degree procedure is not submitted on time, or if the deadline or final warning is not heeded, the admission is deemed to have been withdrawn. The chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee will notify the doctoral candidate and the supervisor of the thesis accordingly.

(2) The application for the initiation of the doctoral degree procedure must be accompanied by the following documents:

- a) at least one copy of the thesis in print-ready condition for each member of the Examination Committee, as well as a copy for the files of the responsible Doctorate Committee;



b) a statement:

- i. that the candidate has written the thesis independently and that the resources used have been fully specified,
- ii. a statement that indicates whether the thesis has already been published in part or in full; in this case, a list of publications must be enclosed,
- iii. that the thesis has not been submitted in part or in its entirety to another university for assessment in a doctoral degree procedure,
- iv. which doctoral degree is desired,
- v. if necessary, whether the diploma of the desired degree should refer to the candidate in the feminine or the masculine form,
- vi. that the regulations for good scientific practice of University of Oldenburg have been observed,
- vii. if necessary, evidence pursuant to Section 9 (5) on enrolment as a doctoral student,
- viii. a declaration that no commercial recruitment or consulting services (doctoral coaching) have been used in connection with the doctoral project;

c) Suggested names for the other assessors.

(3) The responsible Doctorate Committee will initiate the doctoral degree procedure by appointing the assessors, according to Section 7, who will examine the thesis, bearing in mind the suggestions and the declaration of the doctoral candidate. The chair will immediately inform the doctoral candidate of the decisions of the Doctorate Committee.

### Section 13 Assessment of the thesis

(1) In general, the assessors provide a written report within 4 weeks, but no more than 8 weeks, and recommend either acceptance of the thesis and continuation of the procedure, or modification or rejection of the thesis. If the thesis is accepted, the assessors will at the same time propose one of the following marks:

<i>sehr gut</i>	(magna cum laude)	[with distinction] =	1
<i>gut</i>	(cum laude)	[credit] =	2
<i>genügend</i>	(rite)	[pass] =	3

In the case of a truly outstanding performance, the committee can propose that the thesis be given the mark 1, with the distinction *ausgezeichnet* (summa cum laude, with high distinction). If the majority of the assessors proposes to accept the thesis, the procedure described in Section 4 will continue.

(2) If one or more of the assessors have made reasoned proposals for amendments, the responsible Doctorate Committee will decide by a simple majority of its members, after hearing the doctoral candidate, whether the thesis will be returned with instructions for amendment, or whether the procedure will continue. The chair of the Doctorate Committee will notify the doctoral candidate in writing of the instructions, and explain the reasons for requiring changes. A reasonable deadline will be set for the revision. After revision of

the thesis, all assessors will comment on the revised version in writing within one month. After the revision of the thesis, the Doctorate Committee may appoint a further assessor. The committee can only once require revision of the thesis.

(3) If the majority of the assessors have proposed the rejection of the thesis, the responsible Doctorate Committee will reject acceptance of the thesis. The candidate will have failed the doctoral degree procedure, which is therefore terminated. If a minority of the assessors proposes to reject the thesis, or if the votes pro and contra are tied, the Doctorate Committee will appoint an additional assessor. If, after considering this additional assessment, the majority of the experts propose to accept the thesis, the procedure will continue according to (4). If, after submission of this additional assessment, the thesis is rejected by at least half of the assessors, the candidate will have failed the doctoral degree procedure and it will be closed. The chair shall inform the doctoral candidate in writing. The rejected thesis and the reports on it will be added to the files of the responsible School.

(4) If the requirements for the continuation of the doctoral degree procedure have been met, the responsible Doctorate Committee will submit the thesis and the reports to the participating Schools for an inspection period of two weeks. Persons from the participating Schools with qualifications, as defined in Section 6 (4), will be able to view the thesis and the associated reports and submit expert opinions during the inspection period. If no expert opinions have been received, after expiry of the inspection period, the thesis will be accepted.

(5) Upon receipt of expert opinions, the responsible Doctorate Committee may, within four weeks, commission further appraisals. The Doctorate Committee will decide by a simple majority of votes cast by university professors or, if applicable, habilitated employees, whether to consider the expert opinions and further appraisals, and which conclusions to draw from them regarding the assessment of the thesis. If the decision is made to consider the expert opinions and further appraisals, these documents and the thesis will again be made available for inspection for two weeks.

(6) After expiry of the period, the responsible Doctorate Committee will decide on the acceptance or rejection of the thesis, taking into account all the reports, expert opinions and further appraisals considered. This decision must be communicated to the doctoral candidate in writing.

(7) If all of the assessors have proposed acceptance of the thesis, the overall mark of the thesis will be the arithmetic mean of the individual marks pursuant to (1), as follows:

from 1.0 to less than 1.5	= <i>sehr gut</i>	= magna cum laude [with distinction]
from 1.5 to less than 2.5	= <i>gut</i>	= cum laude [credit]
from 2.5 to less than 3.5	= <i>genügend</i>	= rite [pass]

If all of the assessors propose the mark 1 with the distinction *ausgezeichnet* (summa cum laude, with high distinction), the overall mark *ausgezeichnet* (summa cum laude) will be awarded to the thesis. In this case, the thesis, with a mark of 1.0, will be included in the overall evaluation of the doctoral performance, according to Section 15. If the thesis was rejected by an assessor, the thesis was returned for revision or expert opinions were submitted (pursuant to (3) and (5)), the responsible Doctorate Committee will decide whether the expert opinions are to be taken into account in the marking process. Rejection by an assessor will enter into the overall mark as a mark of 4.0.

(8) The chair of the Doctorate Committee concerned will inform the doctoral candidate of the approval of the thesis. Pursuant to Section 6 (1), the Doctorate Committee will at the same time appoint the Examination Committee and announce the date of the defence, after consultation with all participants and bearing in mind the suggestion of the doctoral candidate. The defence should take place within six weeks after

approval of the thesis. If the doctoral candidate is not able to attend on the scheduled date of the defence, they must notify the committee immediately, stating the reasons.

#### **Section 14 Thesis defence**

(1) The chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee will invite the doctoral candidate and the members of the Examination Committee to the defence and announce the event in School V, School VI and School II/DFI. The defence is open to all members of the University. If the doctoral candidate consents, other persons may attend and listen.

(2) The defence consists of a lecture of about 30 minutes, open to all members of the University, on the goals, methods and results of the thesis, or a part of it, and a subsequent discussion of 30 to 60 minutes at the most led by the chair of the Examination Committee. The discussion will extend to the entire field of studies related to the topic. The assessments of the thesis can also be included in the discussion. For this purpose, the doctoral candidate is to be granted access to the reports, without prejudice to the provisions of Section 21, when the candidate is informed that the thesis has been accepted. At the request of the doctoral candidate, part of the discussion may take place in private with the Examination Committee. Minutes of the defence proceedings are to be taken.

(3) Immediately following the defence, the Examination Committee shall decide in closed session whether the candidate has passed the oral examination. If the candidate has passed, the Examination Committee will determine the overall mark for the defence. Each member of the Examination Committee will award a mark in accordance with Section 13 (1) and (7). The chair of the Examination Committee will immediately inform the doctoral candidate of the overall mark of the defence.

(4) If the doctoral candidate has not passed the defence, they shall be informed of the result of the defence and of the opportunity to repeat it once, if they write to the chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee within a month requesting a resit. The oral re-examination can be taken, at the earliest, four weeks after the application and, at the latest, before the end of the year.

(5) If the doctoral candidate fails to attend the defence without submitting an excuse, they will be deemed to have failed the examination. In the case of an excused absence, a new appointment will be made. The Examination Committee will decide whether to accept the excuse.

(6) Subject to the consent of the doctoral candidate, the Examination Committee may, in well-founded exceptional cases, unanimously decide to conduct the components of the thesis defence referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 electronically using visual and audio procedures that have been approved by the Presidential Board. The Chair of the Examination Committee shall inform the Doctorate Committee of the decision. In deviation from Section 2, paragraph 3, the Doctorate Committee does not vote on such cases. These procedures must ensure that all aspects of the examination process can be followed. A stable connection must be ensured for the entire duration of the thesis defence. It is also possible to allow only one examiner or only the doctoral candidate to join the thesis defence remotely.

#### **Section 15 Assessment and completion of the doctorate**

(1) Following the defence, the responsible Examination Committee will determine how the candidate's achievements in the doctorate should be assessed in their entirety. The overall score is determined by the arithmetic mean of the unrounded mark for the defence, which counts once, and the unrounded mark for the thesis, which counts twice. The doctoral degree procedure is concluded when the Examination Committee decides that the candidate has passed the defence.

(2) For particularly outstanding achievements, the overall mark 'passed with high distinction' (summa cum laude) may be awarded on the recommendation of the Examination Committee. This recommendation is only permissible if all assessors rated the written exam performance as 1.0 with the distinction *ausgezeichnet* (high distinction), and all members of the Examination Committee rated the oral doctoral degree defence as 1.0 and endorsed the distinction *ausgezeichnet*. Detailed reasons must be provided for the recommendation. At least one of the assessments must have come from an external assessor. If necessary, an additional external assessment can be obtained. Assessors who are not present at the defence will give their appraisal in writing. The relevant Doctorate Committee will decide on the recommendation. Only the representatives of the group of University professors and, if applicable, habilitated employees are entitled to vote on this matter. No reasons will be provided for this decision.

(3) The chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee shall notify the doctoral candidate in writing of the marks awarded for the thesis, the defence and the doctorate as a whole.

### **Section 16 Publication of the thesis**

(1) Within one year of the successful completion of the defence, the doctoral candidate shall make the thesis accessible to the scientific public in an appropriate manner by copying and processing it. For this purpose, the doctoral candidate must provide to the Library and Information System of the University free of charge:

- a) 40 copies of the thesis in book or photocopy form, or
- b) three copies of the thesis and proof of publication of the thesis or its essential parts in a journal, or
- c) three copies of the thesis, as well as proof of dissemination of the thesis by a bookshop or a commercial publisher with a minimum circulation of 150 copies; on the back of the title page, the publication shall be indicated as a thesis, indicating the place of origin of the thesis, or
- d) an electronic version of the thesis, the data format and data carrier of which must be agreed with the University Library, and five printed and durable copies of the thesis, as well as:
  - e) two summaries in German and English of a maximum of 1000 characters each that have been approved by the first assessor, and,
  - f) if applicable, an affidavit stating that the content and form of the electronic version are in conformity with the printed version.

In the cases of (a) and (d), the doctoral candidate of the University of Oldenburg will transfer the right to produce and disseminate in print or data networks further copies of the thesis as is legally required from university libraries. This will not affect the author's intellectual property rights.

(2) The items delivered shall be provided with a title page, the front and back of which shall be in accordance with the model in Annex 1.

(3) A brief description of the doctoral candidate's academic education and development can be added at the end of the thesis.

(4) The final draft for publication must be submitted to the chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee. They will give the permission to print. The Doctorate Committee and the doctoral candidate can agree on deviations from the thesis.

(5) In duly justified cases, the chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee may, upon request, extend the deadline for publication in accordance with Section 1.

## **Section 17 Completion of the doctorate**

(1) The doctorate is completed by the leadership of the School issuing the doctoral degree certificate. Prior to this, the doctoral candidate does not have the right to assume the title associated with the doctorate.

(2) Upon the awarding of the doctoral certificate, the doctorate is completed. However, if the doctoral candidate so requests, the Doctorate Committee may rule that the doctorate has been completed after the decision of the Examination Committee that the candidate has successfully defended the thesis (Section 14). This request can be made before the defence.

(3) The doctoral certificate is issued in accordance with the model in Annex 2. Upon request, the qualification will also be delivered in an English translation in accordance with the model in Annex 3. Pursuant to Section 3 (4), the certificate for a cross-faculty or bi- or multinational doctorate can be issued as a joint certificate in accordance with Annexes 2 and 3. The doctoral certificate will carry the date of the oral examination (defence), but will be awarded only after fulfilment of the obligation to publish in accordance with Section 16.

## **Section 18 Unsuccessful completion of the doctoral degree procedure**

(1) The doctoral degree procedure is terminated unsuccessfully if the thesis is definitively rejected or the defence has definitively been pronounced inadequate. The chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee will notify the doctoral candidate in writing of the result.

(2) A renewed application for a doctorate is only permitted once and only after a year has passed. This also applies if the first unsuccessful doctoral application was made at another university. A rejected thesis may not be submitted again for the purpose of obtaining a doctorate in the same or a slightly modified form.

## **Section 19 Withdrawal of the doctorate application**

An application for a doctorate can be withdrawn as long as the doctoral candidate has not submitted the thesis for assessment. Thereafter, a withdrawal is possible only for important personal reasons that are not related to the doctoral degree procedure. This is decided upon by the responsible Doctorate Committee upon written request. Subsequently, the doctoral candidate can request a re-opening of the procedure in the same way.

## **Section 20 Invalidity of doctoral work**

(1) If the doctoral candidate is found to have committed fraud in their doctoral studies, in fulfilling the requirements for admission to the doctoral programme or in the initiation of the doctoral degree procedure, the responsible Doctorate Committee shall declare the doctoral work invalid.

(2) If the acts referred to in (1) become known after the doctoral certificate has been awarded, (1) shall apply accordingly and the responsible Faculty Council shall decide, after hearing the recommendation of the Doctorate Committee, in accordance with the law, whether the award of the doctoral degree is to be revoked or withdrawn. The same applies if the award of the degree was obtained by threat or bribery. Sections 48 and 49 of the VwVfG (Administrative Procedures Act) remain unaffected. The award of the higher education degree may also be revoked if the holder has seriously violated the scientific authority conferred by the degree, e.g. in the case of a final conviction for a crime leading to a loss of the status of civil servant in Lower Saxony, or if the holder of the doctorate has abused the scholarly rigour certified by the university degree.

(3) If the requirements for admission to the doctoral programme or the initiation of the doctoral degree procedure were in fact not fulfilled but this was not due to fraud on the part of the doctoral candidate, and this fact becomes known only after the doctoral certificate has been awarded, this deficiency will be deemed to have been repaired by the successful completion of the doctorate.

(4) Prior to a decision, the person concerned must be given the opportunity to discuss the matter with the responsible Doctorate Committee.

(5) An incorrect doctoral certificate must be withdrawn and, as appropriate, replaced by a corrected certificate.

### **Section 21 Access to the doctoral records, retention period**

(1) Upon completion of the doctoral degree procedure, doctoral students who request access to their dossier of doctoral documents will be allowed to inspect them.

(2) The doctoral documents must be kept for 50 years. Even after this time, it must be ensured that information can be provided on the basis of registers regarding the outcome of a doctoral degree procedure.

### **Section 22 Objections and appeal**

(1) Decisions to reject doctoral work that are taken in accordance with these Doctoral Degree Regulations must be substantiated in writing, offer information on opportunities for protest and appeal and published in accordance with Section 41 of the VwVfG (Administrative Procedures Act).

(2) Appeals against a decision of the examiners that is based on an assessment of a student's work can be made in writing within one month after receipt of the decision or in accordance with Section 68 ff. of the *Verwaltungsgerichtsordnung* (Code of Administrative Procedures) by the chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee. Otherwise, legal proceedings must be instituted. The appeal should be substantiated within one month after filing. No appeal is possible in procedures for the award of an honorary doctorate (Section 23).

(3) The competent Doctorate Committee will rule on objections, as the appeal authority. It is responsible for carrying out the appeal procedure. If matters of principle are at stake regarding decisions pursuant to Section 9 (3), the Doctorate Committee must reach agreement with the Interfaculty Doctorate Council. No costs are charged for appeal procedures.

(4) If the grounds of appeal are directed against a decision of the Examination Committee, the chair of the responsible Doctorate Committee shall forward the objection of the Examination Committee for review. If the grounds of appeal concern the decision of an assessor, the chair of the Doctorate Committee shall refer the objection to the assessor. The outcome of the review and appeal is to be forwarded to the Doctorate Committee and the Interfaculty Doctorate Council.

(5) If the Examination Committee or the assessor changes their decision as requested, the responsible Doctorate Committee will have resolved the objection. Otherwise, the responsible Doctorate Committee will examine in full the examination decision, and especially check whether:

- a) the examination procedure was carried out properly,
- b) whether the assessment was based on incorrect information,
- c) whether general assessment principles have not been observed,
- d) whether a reasonably acceptable solution based on sound arguments was deemed incorrect, and
- e) whether the assessor was guided by extraneous considerations.

(6) The responsible Doctorate Committee can appoint ex officio an assessor for the appeal procedure. If it is requested by the appellant, an assessor must be appointed. This assessor must possess the qualifications stated in Section 6 (4).

(7) If the responsible Doctorate Committee detects a deficiency as stated in (5) Sentence 2 above, but is not willing or able to counter the objection at this stage of the procedure, the work of the candidate will be re-examined by assessors who were not previously involved, or, as the case may be, a second defence will be organized.

(8) Objections and appeals must be definitively settled within three months of being filed. Decisions to reject the objection or appeal in part or in whole must be substantiated. Legal opportunities to appeal against the decision must be specified.

(9) The objection or appeal procedure may not lead to a lowering of the examination mark.

### **Section 23 Honorary doctorates**

(1) In recognition of outstanding personal achievements of a scholarly or scientific nature, characterized by research that has contributed significantly to the development of a field of study associated with School II/DFI, School V or School VI, the school responsible can award an honorary doctorate, as defined in Section 1 (3) as a rare distinction.

(2) The nomination for an honorary doctorate must state the scientific achievements and must include the professional and/or scientific CV and a list of the publications of the person to be honoured.

(3) The Faculty Council responsible will appoint an Honours Committee, chaired by the Dean, to advise on the nomination for an honorary doctorate. This Committee will include at least three additional members who must have a qualification in accordance with Section 6 (4). The Committee will draw up a written report on the personality and academic achievements of the nominee. For this purpose, at least two external scientific opinions must be obtained. The reports and expert opinions are submitted to the Interfaculty Doctorate Council, which should respond within 4 weeks.

(4) In a meeting of the Faculty Council preceding the one at which the decision is to be taken, the Dean responsible will declare that a decision is needed on an application for an honorary doctorate. At the same time, the Dean will point out that the application, the expert opinions and the report of the Honours Committee are available at the Dean's office for confidential inspection by the members of the Faculty Council concerned and for academic staff members with qualifications according to Section 6 (4).

(5) The competent Faculty Council will decide in a secret ballot on the award of the honorary doctorate. A qualified majority of 80% of the Faculty Council members is required for a decision to approve the application for the award of the honorary doctorate.

(6) After the acceptance of the application, the Dean of the responsible School will confer the honorary doctorate by awarding a certificate. The Dean will issue invitations to a celebratory tribute and select the speaker of the eulogy.

(7) The honorary doctorate is to be communicated to German universities with the right to confer doctorates as well as to the Ministry of Science and Culture.

(8) Applicants must be informed of a negative decision.

## **Chapter II**

(1) This amendment shall enter into force after the approval of the Presidential Chair on the day following its publication in the Official Bulletin of the University of Oldenburg.

(2) By way of derogation from (1), the following applies to doctoral candidates already admitted at the time of entry into force of this regulation: the Doctoral Degree Regulations valid at the time of admission will continue to apply. On request, but at the latest with an application for the initiation of the doctoral degree procedure, these persons have the opportunity to pursue their doctorate according to these Doctoral Degree Regulations.



**1. Annex 1**

**Vorderseite:**

.....  
(Titel der Dissertation\*)

Von der Fakultät/den Fakultäten\* für Mathematik und Naturwissenschaften/Fakultät für Medizin und Gesundheitswissenschaften/Fakultät für Informatik, Wirtschafts- und Rechtswissenschaften\* der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg zur Erlangung des Grades und Titels

.....  
(Angabe des Grades\*) (Abkürzung\*)

angenommene Dissertation

von Frau/Herrn\* .....  
(Vorname, Name\*)

geboren am ..... in .....

**Rückseite:**

Gutachterin/Gutachter\* .....

Weitere Gutachterin/Gutachter\*

.....

.....

Tag der Disputation\*: .....

---

\* Zutreffendes einfügen

## 2. Annex 2 Certificate

Fakultät ...

Bezeichnung der

Fakultät

# PROMOTIONSURKUNDE

Die Fakultät [...] der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg verleiht mit dieser Urkunde

Herrn/Frau\*) .....

geboren am ..... in .....

Grad und Titel

Doktor/in\* der ..... (Dr. rer. nat./ Dr. phil./ Dr.-Ing.)\*/  
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.)\*,

nachdem er/sie\*) in ordnungsgemäßem Promotionsverfahren durch seine/ihre mit dem Prädikat .....<sup>1)</sup>  
beurteilte Dissertation mit dem Thema

„.....“

und durch die mit dem Prädikat .....<sup>1)</sup> beurteilte Disputation am ..... seine/ihre\*)  
wissenschaftliche Befähigung erwiesen und dabei das Gesamturteil

.....<sup>2)</sup>

erhalten hat.

Oldenburg, .....

Die Dekanin/ Der Dekan\*der Fakultät für  
Mathematik und Naturwissenschaften/ der  
Fakultät für Medizin und Gesundheitswissen-  
schaften/der Fakultät für Informatik, Wirtschafts-  
und Rechtswissenschaften\*)

Die/ Der Vorsitzende des Promotionsaus-  
schusses der Fakultät für Mathematik und  
Naturwissenschaften/der Fakultät für Medizin und  
Gesundheitswissenschaften/der Fakultät für  
Informatik, Wirtschafts- und  
Rechtswissenschaften\*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Universitätsprofessor/in\*) .....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Universitätsprofessor/in\*) .....

\* Zutreffendes einfügen/ggf. streichen

\*\* auf Grundlage der Gemeinsamen Promotionsordnung der Fakultät für Mathematik und Naturwissenschaften, der Fakultät für Medizin und Gesundheitswissenschaften und der Fakultät für Informatik, Wirtschafts- und Rechtswissenschaften

<sup>1)</sup> Noten: magna cum laude (sehr gut), cum laude (gut), rite (genügend)

<sup>2)</sup> Prädikate: summa cum laude (ausgezeichnet), magna cum laude (sehr gut), cum laude (gut), rite (genügend)

Annex 3 English translation of the certificate

**School of...**

Designation of the School

# CERTIFICATE

The School of ... of the Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg (Germany) hereby confers on

Mr./Ms.\* . . .

born on . . . . . in . . . . .

having presented his/her\* doctoral thesis entitled

„ . . . “

and having passed the oral examination

the Degree of

Doctor of .... (Dr. rer. nat./ Ph. D./ Dr. Phil./ Dr.-Ing.)

Doctoral thesis grade<sup>1)</sup>

Oral examination grade<sup>1)</sup>

Overall grade<sup>2)</sup>

Oldenburg, (day, month, year\*)

Dean of the School of Mathematics and  
Science/Medicine and Health  
Sciences/Computing Science, Business  
Administration, Economics and Law\*

Chair of the Doctoral Committee Mathematics  
and Science/Medicine and Health  
Sciences/Computing Science, Business  
Administration, Economics and Law\*

---

(Signature)

---

(Signature)

Please note: Only the German wording is legally binding.

\* Insert where applicable, delete where inapplicable

\*\* based on the joint doctoral degree regulations of the Schools of Mathematics and Sciences, of Medicine and Health Sciences, and of Computing Science, Business Administration, Economics and Law

<sup>1)</sup> Grades: magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)

<sup>2)</sup> Overall grades: summa cum laude (high distinction), magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)

## Annex 4

### Bi-national doctoral programmes with Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG)

#### 1

##### Precedence, binding character, advice

(1) Joint bi-national doctoral degree procedures carried out in the form of cotutelle procedures between the University of Oldenburg (UOL) and Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) will primarily follow the special regulations outlined below. The general provisions of the doctoral regulations shall additionally apply, unless they contradict these special regulations.

(2) Before a bi-national procedure with the RUG is initiated, the doctoral candidate must be informed and advised on the special regulations below. Provided they agree with the special regulations, a "Cotutelle Agreement for the Joint Supervision leading to a Double Doctorate" (attached as template A to this Groningen Annex) is concluded with the doctoral candidate regarding the bi-national doctorate project. This agreement may also include different or additional provisions. This agreement must be entered into before a bi-national doctoral degree procedure can be carried out with RUG.

(3) If the candidate does not consent to the special regulations outlined below, the doctoral project cannot be carried out as a bi-national procedure with RUG but only as a national doctoral degree procedure based on the general provisions of the applicable UOL doctoral degree regulations.

#### 2

##### Doctoral performance

(1) The thesis must be written in English. The proposal should be written in English, Dutch and German.

(2) Based on the scientific requirements and the supervision needs, the thesis will be worked on alternately at both partner universities.

(3) The doctoral candidate must meet the requirements of both partner universities regarding admission, progress and performance.

#### 3

##### Enrolment, fees, insurance

(1) The doctoral candidate should be enrolled in both partner universities according to the regulations at the respective university.

(2) UOL charges semester fees in accordance with the regulations of the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (NHG). As far as legally possible, the doctoral candidate will be exempted from paying tuition and semester fees to RUG.

(3) The doctoral candidate must provide proof of health insurance and private liability insurance for the duration of the stay in Groningen and in Germany.

#### 4

## **Responsibilities, procedures**

- (1) The doctoral procedure is carried out in accordance with the legal regulations of both partner universities.
- (2) Any costs incurred (travel expenses, etc.) by the supervisors or by members of the Examining Committee will be borne by their respective nominating partner university.
- (3) The results of the individual procedural steps mentioned below are recorded in the PhD Project Monitoring System of RUG ("Hora Finita") and are also accessible there for anyone involved at UOL. If information required by UOL should not be accessible on Hora Finita, the responsible graduate school at RUG will inform UOL using other channels.

## **5 Publication**

The thesis shall be published according to the regulations of both partner universities. The doctoral candidate's copyrights with regard to their thesis shall remain unaffected. The partner universities shall inform the doctoral candidate about the rules of the respective partner university regarding the publication of the dissertation.

## **6 Intellectual property**

- (1) All rights concerning the dissertation thesis belong to the doctoral candidate.
- (2) New knowledge and intellectual property rights (immaterial property rights, in particular inventions) arising from a joint project (foreground intellectual property rights) shall be jointly owned by both partner universities. They will enter into a separate written agreement to decide whether intellectual property protection should be applied for, how the application and any patents granted should be maintained or defended, how costs arising in the process should be handled, and how commercial use could be made of these rights.

## **7 Supervision**

- (1) The doctoral candidate shall be jointly supervised by a RUG supervisor and a UOL supervisor during the preparation of their thesis.
- (2) The supervisors regularly consult with the doctoral candidate with regard to the progress of their academic work. Supervision is provided in equal proportions by both partner universities. The assigned supervisors will each bear an equal share of the supervision work. Day-to-day supervision and academic mentoring are provided by the supervisor at the site where the dissertation is currently being worked on.
- (3) A positive evaluation of the thesis by the supervisors is a prerequisite for submitting it to the Assessment Committee.

## Assessment Committee

- (1) Following a positive evaluation of the thesis by the supervisors, it is submitted to the Assessment Committee.
- (2) The Assessment Committee has four members, of which at least one professor from each RUG and UOL. Members of the Assessment Committee must be professors who did not participate as co-authors of the thesis.
- (3) The Assessment Committee shall be appointed by the partner universities by mutual agreement and in accordance with the applicable regulations of the respective partner university. At UOL, this is the responsibility of the doctoral committee.
- (4) In accordance with the requirements of the UOL doctoral regulations, two members of the Assessment Committee are appointed as assessors of the thesis. The two assessors are appointed by the UOL, and the remaining two members of the Assessment Committee are appointed by the RUG. The assessors each prepare an individual review in which they suggest a grade for the thesis in accordance with the relevant regulations of the UOL.
- (5) All members of the Assessment Committee provide a reasoned assessment on the dissertation via Hora Finita. Provided that both assessors and the Assessment Committee as a whole approve the admission of the thesis, the Assessment Committee decides by formal resolution that the doctoral candidate will be admitted to the defence and the assessors assign a grade based on their reviews. The decision must be communicated immediately to the appropriate doctoral committee of the UOL.
- (6) The grades mentioned in the above paragraphs 4 and 5 and in Section 10(3) refer exclusively to the award of the doctoral degree of the UOL, whose legal remedies shall be applied in accordance with the relevant doctoral regulations in the case of dissent over the award of grades. No grade is awarded in the conferral of the RUG doctoral degree unless the supervisors or Assessment Committee members propose that the award be "cum laude" (in the Dutch legal sense), in which case the Dutch procedure for conferring the "cum laude" award is followed.
- (7) After a positive evaluation, the Assessment Committee forwards the dissertation to the Joint Examining Committee (Section 9).

## 9

### Examining Committee

- (1) The partner universities shall, by mutual agreement and in accordance with the provisions of their respective doctoral regulations, establish a joint Examining Committee, which shall be composed of equal numbers of members from both partner universities. The relevant doctoral committee is responsible for the nomination on the part of the UOL.
- (2) The Examining Committee shall consist of at least five, but no more than nine persons:
  - a) Professors from both partner universities;
  - b) a maximum of two university members not holding a doctorate;
  - c) the members of the Assessment Committee;
  - d) the chairperson.

## **Thesis defence**

(1) The disputation is usually held at the RUG and should comply with RUG doctoral regulations and, as far as possible, with the relevant UOL doctoral regulations.

(2) The doctoral disputation shall be conducted in English in the form of a public ceremony at the RUG, which shall be transmitted virtually to UOL in order to allow the UOL members to attend, and which shall be recognised by the UOL as a proper disputation.

(3) Immediately following the oral examination, the Examination Committee will decide in closed session whether the candidate has passed the oral examination. Following the disputation, the Examining Committee will determine the grade for the disputation as well as the overall grade for the UOL doctoral degree in accordance with relevant UOL doctoral regulations.

## **11**

### **Award of degree certificate**

(1) Upon successful completion of the doctoral degree procedure, the partner universities shall confer their respective doctoral degrees in accordance with the rules and regulations in force at their respective universities. UOL awards the title "Dr.....(plus name of subject)" in accordance with the relevant doctoral regulations. RUG awards the title "Doctor of Philosophy" (PhD). The doctoral degree may be used either as awarded by UOL or as awarded by RUG. According to the relevant UOL doctoral regulations, the German doctoral degree is awarded only after publication of the thesis.

(2) Both universities confer their doctoral degrees by means of a separate certificate in each case (cf. attached samples 7B1 and 7B2 to this Groningen Annex). Each university signs and seals its certificate, referring to the binational nature of the doctoral process, which leads to two doctoral degrees. The certificates clearly state that the doctoral candidate is only entitled to use either the Dutch or the German title. If one of the two universities does not confer its doctoral degree, this shall not prevent the other university from conferring its doctoral degree as a purely national degree.

## **12**

### **Scientific misconduct (deception, plagiarism)**

(1) If, during or after the completion of the binational doctoral procedure, circumstances become known that give rise to scientific misconduct (deception, plagiarism) or the suspicion of scientific misconduct, each university shall decide independently whether to initiate an appropriate investigation procedure in accordance with the regulations in force at its university.

(2) The partner universities shall inform each other about any procedures they initiate according to paragraph 1 and their results.

(3) Both universities may withdraw their doctoral degree without regard to whether the partner university does likewise.

### **Early termination of the binational doctoral degree procedure**

(1) The progress of the binational doctoral degree procedure shall be reviewed annually; it can be terminated by the participating universities with a 3-month period of notice by terminating the contract on joint supervision mentioned in Section 1(2) (cf. Model A), if there is an objective reason. As long as the bi-national doctoral degree procedure based on the above agreement exists, the universities involved will support the candidate in successfully completing the Cotutelle procedure.

(2) An objective reason within the meaning of paragraph 1 above may also consist in a failure of the examination performance (dissertation, disputation) or a dispute about the execution of the binational doctoral procedure including the decisions of the Examining Committee, the Assessment Committee or the supervisors/assessors.

(3) The bi-national doctoral degree procedure shall also end if the candidate terminates the agreement referenced in Section 1(2) with a notice period of 1 (one) month.

(4) In case of discontinuation of the binational doctoral procedure, the candidate is entitled to apply for continuation of their doctoral project at the UOL and to submit their dissertation for re-evaluation according to the relevant doctoral regulations.



## Annex 4A

For Annex 4

### Cotutelle Agreement for the Joint Supervision leading to a Double Doctorate

between

the **University of Oldenburg** represented by its President Prof. Dr. Ralph Bruder, Ammerländer Heerstr. 114-118, 26129 Oldenburg (Germany),

implementing entity: School of..... , represented by the Dean, Prof. Dr. ....

- hereinafter referred to as the "UOL" -

and

the **University of Groningen**, Broerstraat 5, 9712 CPSL Groningen (the Netherlands), represented by President Prof. Dr. Jouke de Vries,

- hereinafter referred to as the "UG" -

hereinafter collectively referred to as "**Universities**"

#### **In due observance of the following**

- the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek);
- the PhD Regulations of the University of Groningen (Promotiereglement);
- the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (Niedersächsisches Hochschulgesetz)
- the PhD regulations of the School .... (Promotionsordnung der Fakultät ....)

**agree as follows:**

#### **Section 1 – Doctorates**

(1) This agreement regulates the cooperation and the respective responsibilities of the Universities involved in the double doctorate of \_\_\_\_\_, born on and residing at \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) The topic of the dissertation is \_\_\_\_\_.

The dissertation will be written in English. The abstract shall be written in English, Dutch and German.

(3) The doctorate is expected to take \_\_\_ years to complete, commencing from \_\_\_. If necessary, such term can be prolonged in accordance with the rules in force at both of the institutions. The dissertation will be completed in alternating periods at the two Universities, based on scientific and supervision needs.

(4) The doctoral candidate must meet the relevant requirements of both Universities regarding admission to the doctoral programme, progress and examination.

### **Section 2 – Enrolment, Fees, Insurance**

(1) The doctoral candidate shall enroll at both Universities in accordance with each of the University's regulations. The enrolment is effective from \_\_\_\_.

(2) UOL will charge the fees and contributions stipulated in the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (Niedersächsisches Hochschulgesetz). To the extent legally admissible the doctoral candidate will be exempt from paying fees and contributions to the UG.

(3) The doctoral candidate must prove sufficient health insurance coverage for the full period of her or his stay in the Netherlands and in Germany as well as a personal liability insurance.

### **Section 3 – Responsibilities**

(1) The doctorate will be realized in accordance with the legal provisions of both universities.

(2) Any costs incurred (travel expenses, etc.) by the supervisor or the members of the Examination Committee shall be borne by their respective university.

(3) The results of the following procedural steps shall be documented in the PhD Project Monitoring System of the RUG ("Hora Finita") and be accessible to the members of University of Oldenburg being duly involved in the joint supervision of this doctorate. If the information needed by UOL is not registered in Hora Finita, the Graduate School will inform UOL in a different way.

### **Section 4 – Publication**

The thesis will be published according to the doctoral regulations of both implementing Universities. The intellectual property rights of the doctoral candidate regarding his or her dissertation shall remain unaffected by its publication. Both Universities will instruct the doctoral candidate to follow the rules of both institutions concerning the registering, the description and the reproduction of the thesis.

### **Section 5 - IP**

(1) Any rights related to the thesis will be held by the doctoral candidate.

(2) Foreground intellectual property rights shall be the property of both Universities. The Universities shall jointly apply to obtain and/or maintain the relevant intellectual property rights and shall strive to set up appropriate agreements in order to do so.

### **Section 6 – Supervision (Betreuer)**

(1) The doctoral candidate shall research and write the thesis under the joint supervision of the thesis supervisor at UG, \_\_\_\_\_, and the thesis supervisor at UOL, \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) The supervisors will consult regularly on the research progress of the doctoral candidate. The supervision is equally divided between both Universities. Each University will invest 50% of the allotted time for supervision. The daily supervision and scientific mentoring resides with the supervisor located where the research work is being undertaken at that particular moment.

(3) The positive assessment of the supervisors shall be a necessary prerequisite for admission to the final examination.

### **Section 7 – Assessment Committee**

(1) After the positive assessment of the supervisors, the thesis can be submitted to the Assessment Committee.

(2) The Assessment Committee consists of four persons of which at least one professor from the UG and one professor from the UOL. Only full professors employed by a university who have not co-authored with the doctoral candidate may be members of the Assessment Committee.

(3) The Assessment Committee shall be composed by mutual consent between the Universities, in accordance with the regulations in force at the Universities.

(4) In order to meet the criteria of the doctoral regulations in force at UOL, two members of the Assessment Committee are appointed as reviewers for the thesis. These two members of the Assessment Committee will be appointed by UOL, the other two by UG. The reviewers each draw a report and propose a grade for the thesis according to the regulations of the UOL.

(5) All members of the Assessment Committee will provide a substantiated opinion of the PhD thesis in writing via Hora Finita. If both reviewers and the full Assessment Committee support the admission of the thesis, the Assessment Committee formally decides on the admission of the doctoral candidate to the defense and the reviewers decide on the grade for the thesis, based on the reports of the reviewers. The report and the decision will be communicated promptly to the doctoral committee of the ... School of XX of UOL.

(6) The grades mentioned under subsections 4 and 5 above and in Section 9 subsection 3 only apply to the awarding of the degree by UOL whose appeal procedures solely apply in case of any disputes on grades. At UG no grade will be given, unless the supervisors or members of the Assessment Committee propose to award the “cum laude” distinction; then the procedure for the awarding of the “cum laude” distinction for UG degree will be followed.

### **Section 8 – Examining Committee**

(1) Both Universities mutually consult each other to compose a joint Examining Committee that equally represents members of both Universities, in accordance with their respective PhD regulations.

(2) After the positive assessment of the Assessment Committee, the thesis can be submitted to the joint Examining Committee.

(3) In accordance with the PhD regulations of the UG, the Examining Committee at UG shall consist of at least five persons;

- full professors, both from the UG and from UOL, and;
- a maximum of 2 University Readers/Associate Professors or Lecturers/Assistant Professors with PhDs;
- the members of the Assessment Committee;
- the chair.

### **Section 9 – Disputation**

(1) The defense of the thesis will take place at UG in a form compatible with both PhD regulations.

(2) The thesis will be defended in English during a public ceremony at the UG to be digitally transmitted to the UOL in order to allow participation of interested university members, and which is duly recognized by the UOL.

(3) After the Examining Committee has given a favourable recommendation it will have to agree on a grade for the defence as well for an overall grade according to the regulations in force at UOL.

## **Section 10 – Dual Award**

(1) Upon successful completion of the examination procedure, both universities will confer their doctoral degrees according to the rules and regulations in force at their institutions. UOL will award the degree of “Dr. ....”. UG will award the degree "Doctor" (*translated into English as: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)*). The title may be used either in the form conferred by UG or in the form conferred by UOL. According to the regulations in force at UOL, the degree can only be awarded after the successful publication of the thesis.

(2) Both universities will award their respective degrees in two separate certificates according to Enclosures 7B1 and 7B2. Each University signs and seals its respective certificate and makes reference to the joint nature of the supervision by the Universities. leading to the two doctoral degrees. The certificates shall make clear that the doctoral candidate is entitled to use either the Dutch or the German title. A decision by one University not to award the degree does not preclude the other partner from awarding the degree as a solely national degree.

## **Section 11 – Fraud and Plagiarism**

(1) In the event that (a suspicion of) fraud or plagiarism is discovered during or after completion of the PhD trajectory, both universities can decide for themselves whether to take action and both will follow their own procedure regarding scientific integrity.

(2) The Universities will keep each other informed about the procedure on scientific integrity and its outcome.

(3) A decision by one institution to strip the doctoral candidate of the degree does not hinder the other partner from upholding its doctoral degree as a solely national degree.

## **Section 12 – Entry into Force, Term and Termination, Failure, Final Provisions**

(1) The present agreement holds as long as necessary for the completion of the doctoral degree. The agreement may be reviewed on an annual basis by each University and may be terminated with a three months notice if good reason is found to do so. As long as the agreement is in force the Universities commit themselves to supporting the doctoral candidate in continuing the project.

(2) As a 'good reason' in the meaning of Subsection 1 may be seen e.g. a non-approval of the dissertation or any other dispute arising in connection with the implementation of the provisions or the appendices of this agreement concerning a decision by the Examining Committee, the Assessment Committee or the supervisors,

(3) In addition, the agreement may be terminated by the initiative of the doctoral candidate or following collegial advice from the doctoral supervisors with a one month notice.

(4) After premature discontinuation of the double doctorate the doctoral candidate may request to proceed the doctoral research at one of the Universities and have her or his dissertation re-evaluated in accordance with the doctoral regulations at that university.

(5) There are no oral side agreements. Any amendments or supplements to this agreement, including the annulment of this written form clause, shall require written form.

(6) The ineffectiveness or unenforceability of one or more provisions hereunder shall not affect the effectiveness of the remainder of the Agreement. The Universities undertake to replace the ineffective or unenforceable provision with an effective and enforceable provision, which comes as close as possible to the purpose of the ineffective or unenforceable provision. The same shall apply to any gaps herein.

University of Oldenburg

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Name of President

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Signature of President

---

Place, date

---

Name of Dean

---

Signature of Dean

---

Place, date

---

Name of Chair of doctoral committee

---

Signature of Chair of doctoral committee

---

Place, date

---

Name of Supervisor and Advisor or Co-  
Advisor

---

Signature of Supervisor and Advisor or Co-  
Advisor

University of Groningen

---

Name of President

---

Signature of President

---

Place, date

---

Name of Dean

---

Signature of Dean

---

Place, date

---

Name of Director of Graduate School

---

Signature of Director of Graduate School

---

Place, date

---

Name of Supervisor and Advisor or Co-  
Advisor

---

---

Place, date

Signature of Supervisor and Advisor or Co-  
Advisor

Place, date

---

Name of doctoral candidate

---

Signature of doctoral candidate

---

Place, date

Fakultät -X-

Bezeichnung der  
Fakultät

# PROMOTIONSURKUNDE

Die Fakultät für [...] der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg verleiht mit dieser Urkunde

Frau/Herrn<sup>1</sup> Vorname Nachname

geboren am ... in ... (Ort, Land),

nachdem sie/er\* in einem ordnungsgemäßen binationalen Promotionsverfahren durch ihre/seine\*  
Dissertation mit dem Thema

„Titel“

und durch Bestehen der Disputation ihre/seine\* wissenschaftliche Befähigung erwiesen hat,  
den Grad einer/eines

Doktorin/Doktors der ... (Fachbezeichnung)

Prädikat Dissertationsschrift<sup>2</sup>: ...

Note Disputation<sup>2</sup>: ...

Gesamturteil<sup>3</sup>: ...

Die Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg und die Rijksuniversiteit Groningen haben die  
Dissertation gemeinsam betreut und verleihen im Rahmen dieser Doppelpromotion zwei Doktorgrade.  
Von der Rijksuniversiteit Groningen wird der Grad verliehen: „Doctor“ oder „....“. Es darf sowohl der  
niederländische als auch der deutsche Grad geführt werden, aber jeweils nur alternativ einer von  
beiden<sup>4</sup>.

Oldenburg, Datum

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[Name]  
Dekan/in der Fakultät für ...

[Name]  
Vorsitzende/r des Promotionsausschusses der  
Fakultät für

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<sup>1</sup> Die Struktur und Formatierung der Urkundenvorlagen in Anlage 7 weicht aufgrund der speziellen Anforderungen und der gemeinsamen Erarbeitung der Anlage 7 mit der Rijksuniversiteit Groningen von den übrigen Urkundenvorlagen dieser Ordnung ab.

<sup>2</sup> Unzutreffendes streichen.

<sup>2</sup> Noten: magna cum laude (sehr gut), cum laude (gut), rite (genügend)

<sup>3</sup> Prädikate: summa cum laude (ausgezeichnet), magna cum laude (sehr gut), cum laude (gut), rite (genügend)

<sup>4</sup> ‚Cotutelle de thèse‘-Verfahren

Annex 4B2

English translation of the doctoral certificate<sup>2</sup>

School -X-  
Designation of the  
School

# CERTIFICATE (Official Translation)<sup>1</sup>

The School of ... of the Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg (Germany) hereby confers on

Name

Born on ... in ... (place, country)

having presented her/his doctoral thesis entitled

„Title“

and having passed the oral examination

the Degree of

Doctor of ... (discipline....)

Doctoral thesis grade<sup>2</sup>: ...

Oral examination grade<sup>2</sup>: ...

Overall grade<sup>3</sup>: ...

The Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg and the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen have jointly supervised the dissertation and awarded the double doctorate. The degree awarded by the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen is: “Doctor” or “....”. Both the Dutch and German degree may be used, but only one at a time.

Oldenburg, date

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Name  
Dean of the School of

Name  
Chair of the Doctoral Committee

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<sup>2</sup> The structure and the layout of the document templates and their translations in Annex 7 deviates from the other document templates in these Regulations due to the special requirements and the joint development of Annex 7 with the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.

<sup>1</sup> It is hereby certified that this is an official English translation of the original German certificate.

<sup>2</sup> Grades: magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)

<sup>3</sup> Overall grades: summa cum laude (high distinction), magna cum laude (distinction), cum laude (credit), rite (pass)