

## **Implementing Regulations for the Conduct of Doctorates at Faculty IV**

### ***Resolution of faculty council IV 10/25-07.07.2021 ( 11 : 0 : 0 )***

*The Faculty Council IV passes the "Implementing Regulations for the Conduct of Doctorates at Faculty IV" for the Doctorate Regulations for the Technical University of Berlin of 18 November 2020 and 12 May 2021 (AMBl. TU 12/2021 p. 132 ff.), entered into force on 25 June 2021.*

### ***Supplemented by resolution faculty council IV 2/30-19.01.2022 ( 5 : 4 : 3 )***

***This is an unofficial translation. In case of inconsistency between the German and the English version the German version prevails.***

## **Motivation**

The aim of these implementing regulations are,

- securing the high quality of doctorates
- securing equal and fair treatment of the candidates
- determining regulations regarding the content and
- informing candidates at an early stage

These guidelines do not affect the doctoral regulations of Technische Universität Berlin of 18 November 2020 and 12 May 2021 (AMBl. TU 12/2021 p. 132 ff.), entered into force on 25 June 2021.

## **Doctorates**

§2 (1) of the doctoral regulations: *„The doctoral process establishes the qualification that the doctoral candidate has the capability of achieving an independent contribution to scientific research and development. This capability is demonstrated through the acceptance of a written dissertation and a successful scientific defense.“*

Within the framework of a doctorate, significant research results in *one* thematic area should be developed.

## **Procedure of the doctorate**

§ 2 (2) S. 6 of the doctoral regulations: *“The subject area must be represented by a full professor, university lecturer, junior professor, junior research group leader, or a full-time extraordinary professor within the faculty.“*

At Faculty IV, the status of "Doktorand\*in" (doctoral candidate) is introduced so that the doctoral candidates of Faculty IV are known to the ombudspersons and can be informed and

advised by them. Regardless of the employment relationship or the source of funding, the supervisor reports the name of the doctoral candidate and the preliminary field of work to the faculty administration approximately 6 months after the start of the research work. The names of the doctoral candidates as well as the fields of work are published in order to facilitate contact between the doctoral candidates in similar or adjacent fields of work. If the field of work changes, the doctoral candidate must inform the faculty administration independently. The registration of employees in the status of doctoral candidate is not the same as the application as a doctoral candidate (Anmeldung der Promotionsabsicht), but is to be regarded as a superior step. The application as a doctoral candidate usually takes place later.

The duration of a doctorate is typically 3 to 5 years. In the first years of the doctoral period, regular advice and supervision is provided by the supervisor, as well as the development of the publication strategy. The progress of the work should be regularly presented and discussed in colloquia.

Approximately 1 year before the end of the doctorate, the doctoral candidate, with the help of the supervisor, should begin to close any thematic gaps, summarise the work and plan the doctoral committee.

According to § 2 (3) of the doctoral regulations, the dissertation may already have been partially or completely pre-published. Publications on the thesis topic prior to the doctorate are strongly encouraged and should usually be available, but are not a prerequisite for the doctorate.

The application as a doctoral candidate shortly before the end of the work can only take place after consultation with the supervisor.

## **Doctoral Thesis**

The doctoral thesis can be written in the form of a monograph or in the form of a cumulative doctoral thesis.

### *Pre-publications*

§2 (4) of the doctoral regulations: *„Prepublication of scientific findings which constitute part of the dissertation or a cumulative dissertation is also possible on the basis of co-authorship. In cases of co-authored work, the applicant has to demonstrate which substantial contribution to the concept, content or methodology of the work they have made.“* The own scientific contribution must be clearly marked and identified. A percentage is not sufficient for this purpose. In the case of a monograph, the author's own scientific contribution is evident from the monograph itself and therefore does not have to be explicitly marked.

### *Cumulative Theses at Faculty IV*

A cumulative thesis includes at least 3 contributions that have been published or accepted for publication in publication organs with scientific quality assessment. Furthermore, the regulations of the "Regulations for cumulative theses" (Merkblatt zu kumulativen Arbeiten) apply.

## **Doctoral Committee (or Doctoral Examination Board)**

The doctoral committee consists of at least 4 members (chair + at least 3 reviewers):

- a chairperson
- a full-time professor or junior professor or university lecturer (Hochschuldozent\*in/Privatdozent\*in) or post-doctoral research group leader (Nachwuchsgruppenleiter\*in) or visiting professor (Gastprofessor\*in) of the faculty. By decision of the faculty, in particularly justified cases, persons permanently employed full-time at the Technische Universität who have been awarded an extraordinary professorship or honorary professorship may assess thesis in the same way as full-time professors.
- one external reviewer, who must be a professor at another university, including retired or dismissed professors; researchers who are not full-time professors, but who themselves have "doctoral rights" at their own research institutions, such as Senior Lecturer/Reader (UK) or Habilitation à diriger la recherche [HDR] (FR), may also act as external reviewers
- a further reviewer from another university or research institution in Germany or abroad, in particularly justifiable cases also from the circle of other academics with doctorates

The Faculty Council may additionally appoint reviewers who only evaluate the thesis. They may not be in a cooperative relationship with the doctoral candidate and are not members of the doctoral committee. However, their judgement must be taken into account by the doctoral committee.

§ 6 (3) S. 3 of the doctoral regulations: *“If one or more of the reviewers is also a co-author of findings or publications, at least the same number of reviewers must participate who have not had or do not have a cooperative scientific relationship with the doctoral candidate.”*

According to the doctoral regulations, the reports should be submitted to the dean not later than three months after the commencement of the doctoral procedure.

Members of the Dean's Office or their representatives are admitted to all doctoral procedures or scientific defenses as guests with the right to speak but without the right to vote of the doctoral committee.

The doctoral candidate and all members of the doctoral committee must be present during the entire defense. With the consent of the doctoral candidate and the other members of the doctoral committee, external reviewers may be connected via video conference. If the doctoral candidate or a member of the doctoral committee is unable to attend the scientific defense due to force majeure, the chairperson of the doctoral committee may, in agreement with the doctoral candidate, provide for participation via video conference. If the entire doctoral committee is unable to attend the scientific defense due to force majeure, the chairperson of the doctoral committee may, with the consent of the doctoral candidate and the other members of the doctoral examination committee, provide for the scientific defense to be held as a virtual defense via video conference.

§ 8 (4) of the doctoral regulations: *“The overall decision “passed with distinction” may only be awarded if all reviewers assessed the dissertation as “very good,” without qualification,*

*and the scientific defense has been assessed as “very good” without qualification by all members of the doctoral committee.*“

### **Consultation of the doctoral reports by the doctoral candidates before the scientific defense**

With the resolution of January 19, 2022, the Faculty Council of Faculty IV grants the doctoral candidates the right to view their doctoral reports before the scientific defense. The doctoral candidate submits an informal request to the chairperson of the doctoral committee. The doctoral reports can then be viewed on site in the Office for Doctoral Affairs.

In particularly justified individual cases, the reports can also be made available digitally with the consent of the chairperson of the doctoral committee.

### **Assessment criteria for doctoral theses**

„sehr gut“very good

The research question was solved in a very good way and was excellently presented. Furthermore, the result is very valuable for the scientific and/or technical progress in this research area. The work also distinguishes itself by methodical progress and a high degree of originality and creativity. The candidate shows an over average degree of creativity, which shows itself in the presented thesis.

„gut“ good

The task of the thesis was resolved in a good way. There are hardly any open issues in its methods and its scientific-technical presentation. The focus was well chosen and, if necessary, corrected with the progress of the thesis. The result of the thesis is a clear scientific-technical progress. The candidate meets the state of the art in scientific and technical terms.

„befriedigend“ satisfactory

Without doubt the thesis can be accepted. It meets more than the minimal requirements to scientific-technical content and presentation. The following points could be applicable for grading it less than ‚good‘:

- weaknesses in the presentation
- methodical and/or technical weaknesses
- weaknesses in evaluation of technical relevance and focus of the topic
- corrections of questions that only concern neighboring areas of the topic were made only after being asked by the evaluators
- uncritical or missing use of literature

„ausreichend“ acceptable

There are weaknesses in the presentation. Subsequent corrections of excerpts which are close to the core area of the topic were necessary. However, the shortcomings are not so strong that they show that the candidate is not capable of solving a technical problem with scientific methods independently. It is possible to state that the candidate has basically solved a problem with scientific methods and the weaknesses lie only in the presentation and in that the candidate does not have full proficiency in the methods.

„nicht ausreichend“  
not acceptable

The dissertation does not meet the minimal standards of a doctoral thesis.