

Doctoral Regulations of TU Berlin (unofficial translation)

as of 05.02.2014

Content

Section 1 – Scope and Basics.....	2
Section 2 – Objective and Content of the Doctorate.....	2
Section 3 – Admission Requirements.....	3
Section 4 – Application as Doctoral Candidate.....	4
Section 5 – Admission to the Doctoral Procedure	4
Section 6 – Commencement of the Doctoral Procedure.....	5
Section 7 – Evaluation of the Dissertation	6
Section 8 – Scientific Defense.....	7
Section 9 – Publication of the Dissertation	8
Section10 – Awarding the Doctorate.....	9
Section 11 – Withdrawal of the Doctoral Application, Suspension of the Doctoral Procedure..	9
Section 12 – Joint Doctoral Procedure with Foreign Educational Institutions.....	10
Section 13 – Honorary Doctorates	10
Section 14 – Revocation of a Doctoral Degree.....	11
Section 15 – Transitional Arrangements	11
Section 16 – Effectiveness.....	11
Annex to the Doctoral Regulations of Technische Universität Berlin.....	12

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Please note that this is an **non-binding translation** of the Doctoral Regulations of 23 October 2006 (Official Gazette (AMBI.) TU 6/2008, p. 106ff), last altered by the amendments of 13 January 2010 (Official Gazette (AMBI.) TU 3/2011, p. 34) and 15 January 2014 (AMBI. TU 2/2014, p. 24ff).

In case of inconsistencies between the German and the English version, the German version of the agreement shall take precedence.

Section 1 – Scope and Basics

(1) These regulations governing the conferral of doctorates apply to the following university degrees: Dr.-Ing. (Doctor of Engineering Sciences), Dr. rer. nat. (Doctor of Science), Dr. phil. (Doctor of Philosophy), and Dr. rer. oec. (Doctor of Economic Sciences) at Technische Universität Berlin. The responsibilities of the faculties for the awarding of these doctoral degrees are set out in Appendix 1.

(2) The faculties may present proposals to the Academic Senate for awarding one of the doctoral degrees in subsection 1 *honoris causa* (h.c.) in recognition of outstanding achievement.

(3) The doctoral degrees cited in subsection 1 shall be awarded only once per academic chair.

Section 2 – Objective and Content of the Doctorate

(1) The doctoral process establishes that the doctoral candidate has the capacity to make an independent contribution to scientific research and development. This is demonstrated through the acceptance of a written dissertation and a successful scientific defense.

(2) The dissertation is a scientific treatise written by the doctoral candidate that advances the scientific state of the art in a research area. The focus of the dissertation depends on the doctoral degree: for Dr.-Ing., the focus is on an engineering science, for Dr. rer. nat., it is on a mathematical or natural science, for Dr. phil., the humanities or the social sciences, and for Dr. rer. oec., economics or business administration. The dissertation shall be written in German or English. With the approval of the faculty board, it may also be written in another language. An abstract of the dissertation must be provided in both German and English, irrespective of which language the dissertation is written in. The subject area must be represented by a professor or junior professor within the faculty. A prior partial or complete publication of the dissertation is permitted.

(3) The dissertation as a scientific treatise can consist of separate published papers or papers submitted for publication (*kumulative Dissertation* or dissertation by publication). Such work must follow an internal logic which has to be coherently demonstrated by an overall introduction and concluding discussion. Further details regarding the type and number of contributions are determined by the faculties.

(4) 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 that they have substantially contributed to the concept, content or methodology.

(5) In the scientific defense, the doctoral candidate should present the methodological approach and the scientific results of the dissertation and thereby demonstrate that they are capable of carefully structuring and evaluating the problems and findings of the dissertation and understanding their significance within the relevant discipline.

Section 3 – Admission Requirements

(1) In order to be admitted as doctoral candidate, an applicant must have successfully completed a master's degree at a university or university of applied sciences (Fachhochschule) or a comparable degree (*Diplom, Magister, or Staatsexamen*). The aforementioned university degrees have to be successfully completed in an engineering field for a Dr.-Ing., in mathematics or a natural science for a Dr. rer. nat., in the fields of the humanities or social sciences for a Dr. phil., and in economics or business science for a Dr. rer. oec. If the doctoral degree does not correspond to previous university studies, the faculty board may require additional coursework and examinations.

(2) Academically outstanding candidates with a bachelor's degree can be directly admitted to a doctoral degree on the basis of a qualification procedure. They are not required to obtain a further degree as defined in sentence 1 above.

Academic aptitude is determined by

1. the successful completion of at least one and up to three admission exams in the subject area of the proposed doctoral research and related fields and one published work in a relevant publication with academic quality assurance. As a rule, the candidate should generally be the lead author of the published text.

or

2. the successful completion of the entry phase of a graduate school or a comparable program. The entry phase must have a minimum duration of two semesters, be recognized by the faculty and be completed by at least one exam.

At least one of the admission exams referred to in sentence 2, no. 1 may not be conducted by the supervisor. The admission exam verifies that the applicant has the required scientific and methodical abilities in the intended field of doctoral studies. The attendance of courses prior to the exam is not required. The faculty board may determine specific rules for the content, form and conducting of the admission exam. A failed admission exam cannot be repeated at the same or another faculty of Technische Universität Berlin.

(3) An applicant completing a *Diplom* degree at a university of applied sciences, (Fachhochschule) with an overall grade of "with distinction", "very good", or "good", is required to further demonstrate their academic aptitude to pursue a doctorate. Such proof is provided by the applicant passing at least one and up to three admission exams in the subject area of their intended doctorate and related fields as per subsection 2. Admission exams are to be taken after the candidate has applied for admission as doctoral candidate in accordance with Section 4. The admission examination verifies that the applicant has the required academic skills in the field of their intended doctorate.

(4) If the applicant has conducted and completed university studies abroad, the faculty board is entitled to accept the equivalence of the university degree with a German university degree under consideration of an expert evaluation to be obtained from the Executive Board of Technische Universität Berlin. In the event that the faculty board does not accept equivalence, additional studies and examinations may be required or the application

declined.

(5) The additional required qualifications referred to in subsection 2 to 4, and the required proof referred to in subsection 2, must be submitted prior to the application to commence the doctoral procedure.

(6) The faculty board must decline admission as doctoral candidate if the thesis or similar work of the applicant has already been negatively evaluated within the scope of a doctoral procedure at a university.

Section 4 – Application as Doctoral Candidate

(1) The applicant must declare in writing their intention to apply as doctoral candidate at the selected faculty at the earliest possible date. The application must contain a description of the intended subject of the dissertation, a work plan, as well as the documentation referred to in Section 5 (1), sentence 3, nos. 1-3; candidates that have completed a *Diplom* degree at a university of applied sciences (Fachhochschule) must attach their *Diplom* thesis, as well as any possible additional scientific theses. If the thesis is to be supervised by a professor or junior professor of the faculty, or by a junior research group leader, the supervisor must provide a letter of acceptance. Furthermore, the candidate and their supervisor or supervisors shall conclude a supervision agreement in accordance with the relevant provisions of Technische Universität Berlin. The aforementioned provisions are passed by the committee which oversees the doctoral regulations of Technische University Berlin. The dean assesses the application and informs the applicant of either acceptance and possible conditions, or a denial in writing in accordance with subsection 3.

(2) In the case of acceptance, the applicant is entitled to reasonable support for completing their thesis from the faculty, within the scope of the available materials and personnel. There is no entitlement to a workplace at the University. Once the supervisor has declared their consent, they are obliged to supervise the applicant unless they can substantiate important reasons for terminating their supervisory role to the faculty board.

(3) The faculty board may reject the application only if:

1. the field or research topic of the intended dissertation is not represented by a full-time professor in the faculty;
2. the thesis seems not to be practicable within the scope of the materials and personnel available or due to the subject;
3. the requirements stated in Section 3 are not met.

This rejection must be substantiated in writing to the applicant. Section 11(4), sentence 1 applies accordingly.

(4) With the acceptance of the application, the doctoral applicant becomes a doctoral candidate. Unless employed by Technische Universität Berlin, the doctoral candidate is required to register as a student at Technische Universität Berlin in accordance with Section 25 (2) BerlHG (Higher Education Act of Berlin).

Section 5 – Admission to the Doctoral Procedure

(1) The application for admission to the doctoral procedure must be directed in writing to the proper faculty. Application is also permissible if the intention to become a doctoral

candidate has not been registered in accordance with Section 4 (1), or if the faculty board has rejected the application.

The application for admission to the doctoral procedure must include:

1. A declaration of awareness of the current regulations governing the conferral of doctorates at Technische Universität Berlin;
2. Documentation as specified in Section 3;
3. A curriculum vitae in tabular form;
4. Four printed copies of the dissertation and an electronic version in a pdf file. If the thesis is to be assessed by more than two reviewers, the appropriate number of copies must be provided.
5. Details as to what extent the dissertation or parts of it have already been published, plus a list of these publications and a copy, if applicable. In the case of co-authored publications, a list with names and proof of the applicant's own contribution as per Section 2 (4);
6. A statutory declaration to the effect that the dissertation has been written independently, that aids and sources have been specified and, in cases of co-authored pieces, that the demonstration of the applicant's own contribution is correct;
7. A declaration as to whether, earlier, or simultaneously, an application for admission as doctoral candidate in accordance with Section 4 or a doctoral procedure has been applied for at another university or faculty. If applicable, complete details should be provided concerning the outcome (see also Section 7 (4), sentence 3).

(2) The doctoral applicant may propose the reviewer of the dissertation, whose selection must be justified, in writing, and submitted with the application to the doctoral procedure.

(3) The application to the doctoral procedure and all submitted documents will remain with the faculty for up to ten years; thereafter they will be stored in the University Archive.

Section 6 – Commencement of the Doctoral Procedure

(1) The dean of the faculty will examine the application for the doctoral procedure and determine whether all required conditions are met. If so, the application to the doctoral procedure will be presented immediately to the faculty board for consultation and decision. In the case of denial by the faculty board, the procedure laid out in Section 11 (4) is to be followed.

(2) The members of the faculty board, as well as the professors and junior professors that are members of the faculty are entitled to inspect the submitted documents.

(3) If the faculty board endorses the application for admission to the doctoral procedure, it will nominate a doctoral committee. This committee consists of a chairman and at least two reviewers, one of whom should not be a member of Technische Universität Berlin. One of the reviewers can also be a co-author of findings or publications which are part of the

thesis. In duly justified cases, two reviewers can be co-authors if at least one further reviewer is named.

(4) The chairman and one reviewer of the doctoral committee must be professors or junior professors of the faculty. In duly justified cases, the faculty may decide that extraordinary (*außerplanmäßig*) professors whose main occupation and employment is at Technische Universität Berlin may be treated equally to full professors regarding the evaluation of doctoral theses. Provided that a professor has been appointed as supervisor in accordance with Section 4 (1), they will also satisfy the requirements of sentence 1, even after retirement or if acting as an emeritus professor. The additional reviewers may also be professors with leave of absence or retired professors, outside lecturers, or extraordinary professors or honorary professors of the faculty. Reviewers may also be professors of another faculty of Technische Universität Berlin or of another university. In justified cases a reviewer may also be chosen from the circle of other scientists holding a doctoral degree.

(5) The dean of the faculty will inform the doctoral candidate of the opening of the doctoral procedure and composition of the doctoral committee.

(6) If the faculty board rejects the application of admission to the doctoral procedure, the dean will immediately inform the applicant. The rejection will be substantiated in writing by the faculty board and issued with an instruction concerning the right to appeal. The dean will also inform the Executive Board of Technische Universität Berlin.

Section 7 – Evaluation of the Dissertation

(1) The reviewers will individually and independently judge whether the submitted dissertation fulfills the requirements of a doctorate. They will produce written assessments with one of the following classifications:

very good,
good,
satisfactory,
acceptable, or
not acceptable.

Before completing their assessments, the reviewers will inform the doctoral candidate about any objections in order to give them the opportunity to amend or slightly modify the dissertation.

(2) Assessments should not be presented later than three months after the opening of the doctoral procedure or after submission of an amended version to the dean of the faculty. Copies of the assessments will be submitted to the chair of the doctoral committee by the dean. Any delay must be explained to the chair of the doctoral committee.

(3) Should the majority of reviewers assess the dissertation positively, the chair of the doctoral committee will propose to the dean the continuation of the doctoral procedure.

(4) Should the majority of reviewers assess the dissertation negatively, the dissertation is rejected and the doctoral procedure will be discontinued. The dean of the faculty will issue the doctoral applicant a written notification informing them of the suspension of the doctoral procedure (as per Section 11 (4) sentence 1). A rejected dissertation may not be presented as a doctoral thesis at another faculty of Technische Universität Berlin.

(5) Should exactly half of the experts evaluate the dissertation negatively, the faculty board,

in consultation with the doctoral committee and the doctoral candidate, will nominate an additional reviewer who should be professor of another university. The continuation or suspension of the doctoral procedure will then be decided on majority basis.

Section 8 – Scientific Defense

(1) Provided that the doctoral procedure is continued, the dean will arrange with the doctoral committee and the doctoral candidate a date for the scientific defense. The dean will invite the following persons to attend:

- a) Members of the doctoral committee, additional reviewers and the doctoral candidate;
- b) Members of the faculty board, professors, junior professors, external lecturers, extraordinary professors or honorary professors as well as teaching and research assistants with an advanced degree (PhD) who are members of the faculty, and the Executive Board;
- c) Upon receipt of a justified proposal by the doctoral candidate or members of the faculty board: additional scientists who do not have to be members of Technische Universität Berlin. These should be invited at least 14 days prior to the scheduled date.

The dissertation is displayed in the faculty administration for review by the persons referred to sentence 2 for a period of at least 14 days prior to the scientific defense. Members of the doctoral committee, professors, and members of the faculty board will have access to the evaluations in accordance with Section 7. The dean may grant access to the evaluations to the persons cited under sentence 2, letter c).

(2) The scientific defense is public and held in German or English; the chair of the doctoral committee may permit exceptions provided that all members of the doctoral committee are in agreement. The presence of all members of the doctoral committee is required during the entire defense. A simultaneous defense with several doctoral candidates is not permitted.

(3) The scientific defense consists of a talk of normally 30 minutes given by the doctoral candidate about the dissertation and a subsequent discussion with the reviewers about the subject area of the dissertation. Thereafter, with the consent of the doctoral committee's chairman, the audience may direct questions to the doctoral candidate on the subject of the dissertation. This discussion normally lasts one hour. The scientific defense lasts at least 90 minutes, but should not exceed 120 minutes.

(4) Immediately after the scientific defense, the doctoral committee will decide in a non-public meeting whether the doctoral candidate has passed the scientific debate with the classification:

very good,
good,
satisfactory or
acceptable,

or whether the doctorate cannot be awarded due to the evaluation of the scientific debate. Additionally, the doctoral committee aggregates the decisions of the reviewers into a joint decision of:

very good,
good,

satisfactory or acceptable.

On the basis of the joint decisions concerning the dissertation and the scientific debate, the doctoral committee will decide whether the doctoral procedure has been passed overall with either:

distinction (or summa cum laude),
very good (or magna cum laude),
good (or cum laude).

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.

(5) A written record should be prepared regarding the scientific defense, containing (at least) the following information:

- Place, date and duration of the scientific defense;
- Name of doctoral applicant;
- Title of dissertation;
- Members of the doctoral committee;
- Assessment of the dissertation;
- Decision of the scientific debate;
- Overall decision;
- Remarks concerning the publication;
- Attendance list.

The record will be signed by the chair of the doctoral committee and by the reviewers.

(6) The chair of the doctoral committee immediately informs the doctoral candidate of the result and issues a preliminary certificate. Minor or stylistic modifications to the dissertation may be agreed between the doctoral candidate and the doctoral committee. The dean will be informed of the overall result of the doctorate and advise the faculty board in the public part of its next meeting concerning the doctorate, though without announcing the grade.

(7) If the doctorate cannot be completed due to the results of the scientific defense, the defense may be repeated once within the next 12 months, and only if the doctoral candidate has applied to repeat within one month after notification of the results.

(8) If the doctoral candidate has not applied to repeat a failed scientific defense, or if the doctoral candidate has not passed the repeated scientific defense, the doctoral procedure will be suspended. The doctoral candidate will be advised accordingly. Section 11 (4) 4 applies for giving a decision.

Section 9 – Publication of the Dissertation

(1) Before the doctorate can be awarded to the candidate after passing the scientific defense, the dissertation must be disclosed to the scientific public in a reasonable manner by reproduction and distribution within twelve months of the scientific defense. In duly justified cases and on application to the faculty, this period may be extended.

(2) Disclosure of the dissertation in a reasonable manner to the scientific public is deemed as fulfilled if the author provides the University Library free of charge a copy of the thesis in

the version approved by the doctoral committee for the purpose of dissemination. The University Library determines if the copy provided fulfills the relevant requirements. The copy can be provided in the following forms:

1. One bound and durable copy and an electronic version, whose data format and data carrier must conform to the requirements of the University Library, or
2. Fifteen bound and durable copies in letterpress, or
3. In the case of monographs, three copies, as long as a commercial publisher agrees to distribute and commits through a contract to making the work available on the market for four years, designated as a dissertation and stating Technische Universität Berlin as the place of dissertation.

(3) The copies provided to the University Library have to include a title page according to the requirements of the University. A sample of the title page is available at the University Library.

(4) Furthermore, the candidate has to transfer the abstract electronically as per Section 2 (2) sentence 5 for the purpose of its dissemination via bibliographic databases.

Section 10 – Awarding the Doctorate

(1) The dean completes the doctorate procedure by presenting the doctoral certificate as soon as the doctoral candidate has prepared the documentation in accordance with Section 9 and submitted this to the University Library.

(2) The bi-lingual certificate states the subject, the overall decision of the doctoral procedure, the date of the scientific defense, and bears the dated signatures of the president and the dean, as well as the seal of Technische Universität Berlin.

(3) The awarding of the doctoral certificate entitles the doctoral candidate to use the respectively awarded degree.

(4) The faculty administration maintains a file of submitted doctoral applications and awarded doctorates.

Section 11 – Withdrawal of the Doctoral Application, Suspension of the Doctoral Procedure

(1) The faculty can only comply with a doctoral candidate's request for withdrawal of the doctoral application if no written evaluation has been submitted.

(2) Should the doctoral candidate fail or refuse to comply with a request from the dean with respect to the doctoral procedure, without providing acceptable reason to the faculty board, or if the doctoral candidate fails to submit the revised version of a dissertation without providing good reason within a period of twelve months after a positively assessed scientific defense, the doctoral procedure will be discontinued through a written declaration from the faculty board.²The same also applies if, after a written opinion from a reviewer has been submitted, the doctoral candidate states that they do not wish to continue the doctoral procedure.

(3) If it is determined prior to awarding the doctoral certificate that the doctoral candidate has deliberately made scientific misrepresentations, the faculty board will decide, upon providing the doctoral candidate the opportunity to comment on the accusations, whether

the doctoral procedure should be continued. If there are doubts concerning the validity of the accusations, the procedure will be suspended until clarification.

(4) The dean must issue, substantiate and provide the notifications including an instruction concerning the right to an appeal in writing. The Executive Board is to be notified.

Section 12 – Joint Doctoral Procedure with Foreign Educational Institutions

(1) In order to foster international cooperation, the faculty may carry out a joint doctoral procedure with foreign universities or comparable educational institutions.

(2) The framework for the joint doctoral procedure shall be laid down on a case-by-case basis in a contractual agreement stipulating that the provisions of these Regulations apply to the joint doctoral procedure. Any deviation from these doctoral regulations may be incorporated within the contractual provision in accordance with the subsequent rules.

(3) It must be ensured that the acquired degree can be held in the country in which the university or comparable educational institution has its seat, and with which the contractual provision is to be concluded.

(4) The submission of a dissertation and a scientific defense is required for the joint doctorate. In the event that the dissertation and/or the scientific defense are completed in the national language of the foreign university/comparable educational institution, or a language other than German, a written abstract or summary must be provided in German. A significant part of the work on the dissertation must be completed at Technische Universität Berlin.

(5) Apart from the chair of the doctoral committee, each university or comparable educational institution should employ the same number of reviewers to assess the joint doctorate.

(6) The doctoral documents are retained by the university or comparable educational institution where the oral doctoral performance takes place; the other university or comparable educational institution will also receive a copy.

(7) A bilingual doctoral certificate, referring to the joint doctoral procedure and stating the doctoral degree to be held in the respective country, from the university or comparable educational institution at which the scientific defense took place, will be awarded and signed and sealed by both universities or comparable educational institutions.

Section 13 – Honorary Doctorates

(1) At the request of a faculty, Technische Universität Berlin may award, by decision of the Academic Senate, the following academic degrees in recognition of outstanding academic merit pertaining to one of its functions: Dr.-Ing. E. h. (Honorary Doctor of Engineering Sciences), Dr. rer. nat. h. c. (Honorary Doctor of Natural Sciences), Dr. phil. h. c. (Honorary Doctor of Philosophy) and Dr. rer. oec. h. c. (Honorary Doctor of Economics). The person being awarded the degree may not be an active member of Technische Universität Berlin.

(2) The resolutions of the faculty board require two readings. Both votes are secret.

(3) The Academic Senate must also decide on the honorary doctorate. Details are governed by the regulations of the Academic Senate.

(4) An additional conferral of the academic honorary degree according to subsection 1 is

only possible if a previous conferral has been made by another university and for other reasons.

(5) The honorary doctorate is awarded by presenting the certificate, signed by the president and the dean, bearing the seal of Technische Universität Berlin and stating the merits of the doctorate holder.

(6) All German-speaking universities will be notified of the conferral of the degree by the Executive Board of Technische Universität Berlin.

Section 14 – Revocation of a Doctoral Degree

(1) The revocation of academic degrees occurs pursuant to Section 1 in accordance with the statutory provisions.

(2) The Executive Board of Technische Universität Berlin notifies all German-speaking universities and the member of the Senate of Berlin with responsibility for universities of the revocation.

(3) The aforementioned provisions apply correspondingly to the revocation of honorary degrees.

Section 15 – Transitional Arrangements

Doctoral procedures that were commenced prior to the enactment of these regulations will be concluded in accordance with the regulations that have thus far been in effect. Applicants who had already applied for acceptance as doctoral candidates at the time of the enactment of this regulation may, within a period of two years after the enactment, conclude their doctorate in accordance with the regulations which were in effect at the time of their application.

The choice should be made irrevocably with the application when commencing the doctoral procedure.

Section 16 – Effectiveness

(1) This regulation will come into effect the day after publication in the Official Gazette (AMBI.) of Technische Universität Berlin.

(2) Except in the sphere of Section 15, the regulations for the conferring of the degree Dr. Ing. (Doctor of Engineering Science) in their revised version of 31 March 1996 (AMBI. TU no. 91996), last amendment on 29 November 2000 (AMBI. TU 2001 page 113), the regulations for the conferring of the degree Dr. rer. nat. (Doctor of Natural Sciences) at Technische Universität Berlin, 8 October 1993 (AMBI. TU No. 2 dated 28 February 1994), last amendment on 29 November 2000 (AMBI. TU 2001 page 111), the regulations for the conferring of the degree Dr. Phil. (Doctor of Philosophy) in their revised version of 9 July 1996 (AMBI. TU No. 6 of 2 September 1996), last amendment on 14 June 2000 (AMBI. TU 2001, page 115), and the regulations of the faculties of economy and management, as well as computer sciences at Technische Universität Berlin for the conferral of the degree Dr. rer. oec. (Doctor of Economic Sciences) dated 11 May and 29 June 1988 (AMBI. TU page 141), last amendment on 22 May 2002 (AMBI. TU 2002, page 82), will cease to be effective.

Annex to the Doctoral Regulations of Technische Universität Berlin

Responsibilities of the faculties for the awarding of doctoral degrees:

The degree Dr.-Ing. (Doctor of Engineering Sciences) is awarded by Faculties II, III, IV, V, VI and VII.

The degree Dr. rer. nat. (Doctor of Natural Sciences) is awarded by Faculties I, II, III, I V, V, VI and VII.

The degree Dr. phil. (Doctor of Philosophy) is awarded by Faculties I, V und VI.

The degree Dr. rer. oec. (Doctor of Economic Sciences) is awarded by Faculties VI and VII.