

Information sheet on doctoral studies for Dr.rer.nat. of the Faculty of Engineering, Computer Sciences and Psychology

All doctoral candidates at the Faculty of Engineering, Computer Science and Psychology in Ulm must familiarise themselves with the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies (RPO) and the subject-specific doctoral degree regulations (PO). Only the "Regulatory framework for doctoral studies" dated 25 July 2019 in conjunction with the "Doctoral degree regulations of Ulm University for the Faculty of Engineering, Computer Science and Psychology for the award of the degree of Doctor of Natural Sciences (Dr.rer.nat.)" dated 18 January 2021 are legally binding. The Faculty of Engineering, Computer Science and Psychology has its own doctoral committee (Dr.rer.nat. (PA)), which also conducts interdisciplinary doctoral programmes if necessary. This information sheet is merely a supplementary guide. In general, the doctoral procedure consists of several phases:

- a) If applicable, determination of aptitude procedure / supplementary achievements according to § 7 RPO
- b) Admission to doctoral studies / application to be accepted as a doctoral candidate and doctoral agreement
- c) Doctoral project
- d) Presentation of the planned doctoral thesis topic
- e) Submission of the doctoral thesis and application to commence the doctoral procedure
- f) Oral examination (doctoral colloquium)
- g) Publication of the doctoral thesis

1. Admission to doctoral studies / application to be accepted as a doctoral candidate and doctoral agreement

To be admitted to doctoral studies, an application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate must be submitted and a doctoral agreement must be concluded with the supervisor. An application form is available from the doctoral office ("Promotionssekretariat") and at the following URL: <https://www.uni-ulm.de/in/fakultaet/fakultaet/promotion/>. In addition to the documents requested in the application form, a brief description of the proposed doctoral thesis topic must be submitted (length: approx. ¼ page).

2. Foreign higher education degrees § 6 (4) RPO

In the case of foreign candidates, the equivalence of the relevant degree or higher education institution must be determined. The doctoral committee may specify supplementary requirements for admission to doctoral studies. For this purpose, certified foreign bachelor's and master's degree certificates and transcripts (in the original language and their official translations into German or English) that are relevant to the field of computer science or psychology must be submitted, along with a transcript of records or Europass Diploma Supplement, each with an overall grade.

3. Supplementary achievements according to § 7 (4) RPO

The doctoral committee may specify supplementary requirements for admission to doctoral studies.

4. Enrolment and, if required, application for extension of the admission application § 3 (2) RPO

Accepted doctoral candidates are enrolled according to § 60 (1) LHG. Once the application for admission as a doctoral candidate has been approved, the doctoral office will notify the *Studiensekretariat* (student administration and examinations office). The *Studiensekretariat* is responsible for enrolment. Doctoral candidates who are employed full-time at Ulm University can declare in writing to the Board that they do not wish to enrol. This declaration must be accompanied by confirmation of employment from Human Resources. Enrolment is possible no later than the end of the maximum duration of the doctoral studies, which is six years. Upon expiry of the maximum duration of the doctoral studies, enrolment of the doctoral candidate will finally be terminated. At the request of doctoral candidates, the doctoral committee may extend the duration of the doctoral studies and the status as a doctoral candidate (application forms are available here: <https://www.uni-ulm.de/in/fakultaet/fakultaet/promotion/>).

5. Presentation according to § 8 (2) PO

Sufficiently in advance of the planned submission of their thesis, doctoral candidates should give a presentation on their work lasting approximately 45 minutes. On this occasion, the reviewers may request changes, which the doctoral candidates should take into account as far as possible before submitting their thesis. The date for this is set by the doctoral candidates and agreed upon with all professors relevant to the topic, in particular the prospective reviewers and elected members. The date is also coordinated with the doctoral office and announced as a specialist lecture, usually 14 days in advance. Doctoral candidates should submit the information required for the announcement to the doctoral office four weeks before the lecture date. The announcement includes the name of the supervisor, first name, last name, academic degree, institute/workplace of the doctoral candidate, as well as the date, time, location of the presentation, and the title and abstract agreed upon with the supervisors.

6. Submission of the thesis

To submit the thesis, a check list and pre-formulated cover letters or explanations are available from the doctoral office and at the following URL: <https://www.uni-ulm.de/in/fakultaet/fakultaet/promotion/>. Together with the application, doctoral

candidates should submit a two-page summary of the thesis electronically (What is the research question? What is new? What is the scientific progress? What was implemented? How does it relate to other work? How does it differ from other work? ...). As a minimum requirement, doctoral candidates are obliged to comply with the statutes of Ulm University for ensuring good scientific practice.

Doctoral candidates should be aware that several weeks will pass between the start of the procedure and the oral doctoral examination (due to the time required for the start of the doctoral procedure (approx. 3-8 weeks), the review process (approx. 8 weeks), the necessary PA decisions and scheduling, the necessary correspondence (2-4 days), the display period (during the lecture period: 2 weeks – otherwise possibly more), and the period pursuant to § 12 (1) PO (at least 5 working days)). Only if the procedure is initiated at an early stage within the semester is there a chance that the oral examination can still take place during (lecture period of) the same semester .

7. Selection of reviewers and elected members

As a rule, the first person to review the thesis is the doctoral supervisor ("Doktorvater"/"Doktormutter") (a professor from the Faculty of Engineering, Computer Science and Psychology) and the second is a professor from a related field, who is usually affiliated with another German or foreign higher education institution authorised to award doctorates. In interdisciplinary theses, it often makes sense to call upon a person from another faculty or an external university for a second or third review. In addition, a third person is required for a review if the final grade is to be awarded "with distinction" (§ 11 (3) PO). The proposal for the composition of the examination board is checked by the PA and then approved if appropriate. When selecting the second and, if applicable, third reviewers, care must be taken to ensure that they are as independent as possible.

The reviewers are asked by the PA to review the thesis within a reasonable period of time and, if applicable, to recommend its acceptance and propose a grade in their review. As so-called "elected members", doctoral candidates may propose one or two additional professors who are broadly related to their field of study; these professors then form the examination committee together with the reviewers and the members of the doctoral committee. The elected members and, if possible, all reviewers must attend the oral examination. Of the 10 PA members, only one person needs to be present for a valid doctoral examination (§ 9 (1) PO). The reviewers and elected members may also be members of the doctoral committee. As a rule, the examination board consists of 5 members, and the chair of the doctoral committee chairs the oral examination/colloquium.

As soon as the reviews have been received, the faculty professors and the members of the examination board will be notified that the reviews are available for inspection; at the same time, they will receive the two-page summary (see point 6 above). During the semester break, an extended display period may apply. After the display period has expired, the PA will decide whether to accept the doctoral thesis.

8. Oral examination

The oral doctoral examination (colloquium) can take place at the earliest 5 working days after the expiry of the display period, cf. § 12 (1) PO. To this end, doctoral candidates make the necessary arrangements with all professors involved. The doctoral office will only make the final appointment / announcement / room reservation once it is clear that all parties involved agree with the date, so that a valid examination can take place (cf. § 12 (2) PO).

The doctoral colloquium comprises a presentation by the candidate (25 minutes), a question and answer session on the presentation/thesis itself, and a general question and answer session on fundamental topics in the field.

All full and associate professors at the faculty are entitled to ask questions. The question and answer session lasts approximately one hour. At this point, it may be worth noting that the presentation is intended for a "general" audience and is not only for the reviewers. The reviewers have already studied the work intensively and have already submitted a grade for the written thesis. This is followed by a closed-door consultation of the examination board regarding the oral doctoral performance. The doctoral candidate is then informed of the result and the overall grade. If they pass, they receive a provisional certificate confirming that they have passed their doctorate, which is valid for one year.

9. Publication of the doctoral thesis and degree certificate (§ 16 RPO)

The doctoral degree certificate – and the right to use the title of doctor – will only be awarded after the thesis has been published in the appropriate manner (deposit copies) and the confirmation referred to in point 2 has been submitted:

1. Doctoral theses are subject to publication and submission requirements. Doctoral candidates have various options for fulfilling their submission requirements (see: <http://www.uni-ulm.de/index.php?id=1774>). The publication management team will inform the doctoral office as soon as the publication has been released.
2. The doctoral office (and in some cases also the publication management) requires a statement from the first reviewer confirming that the content of the reviewer's copies matches that of the deposit copies (§ 16, 1 RPO). Doctoral candidates request this statement from their supervisor.