



**Regulations for the doctoral programme “International PhD Programme in Molecular Medicine” offered by the Medical Faculty of Ulm University and the International Graduate School of Molecular Medicine for the award of the doctoral degree PhD/Dr.rer.nat of 17 December 2025**

Pursuant to § 38 (4) sentence 1 of the Federal State Higher Education Act Baden-Württemberg (Landeshochschulgesetz – LHG) in the version dated 1 January 2005 (State Gazette p. 1 ff), amended several times and most recently by Article 1 of the Act of 12 November 2024 (State Gazette p. 26, 43), the Senate of Ulm University, with the approval of the Medical Faculty and the International Graduate School in Molecular Medicine, adopted the following regulations on 10 December 2025. The President gave his consent to these regulations on 17 December 2025 in accordance with § 38 (4) sentence 1 LHG.

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**1. Section: Scope of application, aim of the doctoral programme**

**§1 Scope of application, aim of the doctoral programme**

- (1) These regulations apply both to the PhD and to the “Dr. rer. nat.” degree. The PhD degree is obtained at the Medical Faculty and the doctoral degree “Dr.rer.nat.” is obtained at the International Graduate School at Ulm University (IGradU); both are awarded by the University.
- (2) Doctoral degrees in accordance with these regulations may be awarded to those who meet the requirements for admission to the doctoral programme in accordance with § 2, provide proof of successful participation in the courses provided for in these regulations in accordance with §§ 8, 9 and demonstrate their qualifications by means of an academic thesis (doctoral thesis in accordance with § 14), to work independently in a scientific capacity and demonstrate in the defence (§ 16) thorough knowledge in the subject areas to which the doctoral thesis relates in terms of content and is worthy within the meaning of the statutory provisions on the award of academic degrees.

- (3) The Regulatory framework for doctoral studies of Ulm University as amended forms the basis for these regulations under consideration of § 1 a (2) sentences 2 and 3 of the Regulatory framework as amended. Insofar as no special provisions are made in these regulations for this doctoral programme and the doctoral procedure, the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies shall apply. Otherwise, the provisions of the General study and examination regulations for bachelor's and master's programmes at Ulm University (General Framework - ASPO) apply *mutatis mutandis* to the forms of examination, non-attendance, deception and breach of regulations.
- (4) The establishment of the doctoral programme aims to strengthen the qualifications of young academics for science and research. The doctoral programme provides project-oriented, structured education in research with the aim of enabling students to work on a molecular medical topic scientifically, in depth and independently over a defined period of time in accordance with the principles of Ulm University's statutes for ensuring good scientific practice and to present the knowledge acquired to a scientific committee.
- (5) Communication in the doctoral programme is in text form in accordance with § 126 b BGB, unless written form is expressly provided for in these regulations.

## **2. Section: Admission requirements for the doctoral programme and the award of a doctoral degree as well as acceptance as a doctoral student**

### **§ 2 Admission requirements**

- (1) Prerequisites for admission to the PhD programme are: proof of
  1. a degree in a Diplom, Magister or master's degree programme or a state examination, generally at a university (university degree programme) with a standard period of study of at least four years in a degree programme relevant to the doctorate, passed with above-average results in accordance with paragraph 2. These include the degree programmes in molecular medicine or degree programmes with essentially the same content, in particular human medicine, veterinary medicine, biology, chemistry, biochemistry, molecular biotechnology, pharmacy, but also other natural science subjects such as or degree programmes with natural science content such as bioinformatics and biophysics. Graduates of other subjects, in particular computer science, engineering, physics or mathematics, may also be considered if they are deemed suitable for a doctorate in the field of medicine; the PhD committee decides on exceptions in justified cases after a relevant higher education programme in accordance with sentence 1.
  2. adequate English language skills, to be demonstrated in a faculty talk followed by a discussion (cf. No. 4 and No. 5),
  3. a confirmation of supervision by a supervisor from Ulm University, who must be habilitated or have an equivalent scientific qualification, with a title and brief description of the doctoral project in the field of experimental biomedical sciences and details of the funding of the project,

4. a 15-minute presentation in English, given to and assessed by the Faculty, on the scientific work to date with an outlook on the planned PhD project, followed by a 5-minute discussion,

or if the higher education programme does not provide for a thesis (state examination),

5. a 15-minute presentation in English on a current topic in molecular medicine with an outlook on the planned PhD project and followed by a 5-minute discussion; the presentation must be given to the Faculty and assessed as above-average. In this case, the topic in accordance with paragraph 1 no. 5 is set by the PhD committee four weeks before the presentation date.

(2) Above-average examination results must be provided as proof of above-average higher education qualifications. Above-average examination results are deemed to be given if

a) an overall grade of at least 2.0 or proof that applicants are in the top 10% of their examination period with their final grade in accordance with paragraph 1 no. 1.

Otherwise, above-average achievements can also be demonstrated by

b) evidence of professional training related to the degree programme or academic achievements that were completed after graduation and which can provide particular information about the aptitude for the doctoral programme (e.g. subject-specific publications).

(3) When assessing the presentations in accordance with paragraph 1 nos. 4 and 5, particular consideration will be given to

a) structuring of the presentation,

b) problem-solving and methodological competence and

c) English language skills.

Applicants will be informed of the time and place of the lecture by the PhD committee in good time.

(4) Furthermore, admission may be granted after completion of a bachelor's programme at a university in a subject relevant to the doctorate in accordance with paragraph 1 no. 1 if the graduates are particularly qualified. This is the case if the bachelor's programme was completed at a university with a 4-year standard period of study, an experimental bachelor's thesis was completed, the final grade is at least 2.0 and the applicant proves his/her suitability for a doctoral thesis in a presentation with subsequent discussion before the PhD committee in accordance with paragraph 1 no. 4. In justified cases, the PhD committee may attach a condition to the admission.

(5) The PhD committee decides on the equivalence of the previous education and the comparability of the degrees as well as on the above-average performance. If the qualification is not one of the equivalences generally regulated by the Central Office for Foreign Education at the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany, a confirmation of equivalence must be obtained from there. In the event that the grading of the foreign higher education qualification is not classified by the Central Office for Foreign Education, the PhD committee will check the comparability of this higher

education qualification grading with an overall grade of at least "good". If equivalence is not established, the PhD committee will check whether equivalence can be established after fulfilment of conditions.

- (6) Applicants are obliged to submit their application for admission electronically (online application procedure). If the electronic application is not possible due to a case of hardship for which the applicant is not responsible, the application can be submitted in person or in writing upon justified request.
- (7) The application for admission to the doctoral programme and acceptance as a doctoral student must be accompanied by the documents in accordance with § 7 para. 2 nos. 1-5 of the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies (with the exception of the doctoral agreement) and the following additional documents:
  - a) a timely application for the PhD programme on the form provided by Ulm University,
  - b) an examination certificate showing the overall grade including the transcript of records,
  - c) a CV showing the applicant's professional and scientific career,

The PhD committee decides on the admission of applicants to the doctoral programme in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 and on acceptance as a doctoral student after conclusion of the doctoral agreement in accordance with § 4 (4) sentence 2.

- (8) Admission to the doctoral procedure and acceptance as a doctoral candidate must be refused beyond § 7 (5) no. 1 – 5 Regulatory framework for doctoral studies if
  - a) the faculty talk, the discussion and the language skills were not assessed as at least good (2.0) by the PhD committee on a scale of 1 - 5 with 1 being the best grade.
- (9) In any other respect, the statutes of Ulm University on admission, enrolment, re-registration, leave and termination of enrolment as amended remain unaffected.

### **§ 3 Admission of students from the master's programmes in Molecular Medicine and Molecular and Translational Neurosciences (MTN) at Ulm University to the doctoral programme and fast-track procedure**

- (1) Graduates of the master's programmes in Molecular Medicine and Molecular and Translational Neurosciences (MTN) at Ulm University are exempt from presenting at the Selection Day in accordance with § 2 (1) no. 4 if at least one member of the PhD committee was present at the master's defence.
- (2) Particularly qualified master's students on the Molecular Medicine master's programme at Ulm University who have an average grade of 1.4 or better before admission to the master's thesis are given the opportunity to take part in the application procedure for admission to the doctoral programme (fast-track doctorate). A relevant application must be submitted to the coordination office of the IGradU no later than two weeks after passing the last examination that entitles the student to write the master's thesis. The further procedure for the fast-track programme is described in Appendix 1 of these doctoral regulations, which are an integral part of these regulations.

#### **§ 4 PhD committee, thesis advisory committee**

- (1) The PhD committee is responsible for all regulations relating to the doctoral programme in the admission, study, examination and doctoral degree regulations. The PhD committee is the examination board within the meaning of § 7 of these regulations and the doctoral committee within the meaning of § 4 of the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies.
- (2) The PhD committee, in which all Faculties involved in the degree programme should be represented, generally has no more than twelve voting members. The members of the PhD committee are appointed by the Medical Faculty in consultation with other Faculties of Ulm University involved in the degree programme. The term of office is at least 2 years, reappointment is permitted. The PhD committee appoints the chair and the deputy chair of the PhD committee.
- (3) The chair and the majority of the members of the PhD committee must be full-time professors or habilitated scientists working at Ulm University or Ulm University Hospital. In addition, the PhD committee may include a doctoral research assistant from the Junior Faculty of the Graduate School and a student of the doctoral programme as a voting member; the student has an advisory capacity.
- (4) At the suggestion of the doctoral student and the first supervisor, the PhD committee appoints a group of three supervisors, the thesis advisory committee (TAC), for each doctoral student on the doctoral programme. The TAC concludes a doctoral agreement with the doctoral students, which is based on the model attached to the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies. The TAC is made up of two supervisors in accordance with § 5 para. 2 (a-d) or para. 3 of the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies (TAC-1 and TAC-2), at least one of whom must be a Principal Investigator (PI) of the Graduate School, and a subject-related reviewer (TAC-3). The subject-related reviewer should be a person from outside the university. No two supervisors may be appointed to a TAC who come from the same institute or clinic at Ulm University. In addition to the three members of the TAC, a fourth member can be appointed from the Junior Faculty of the Graduate School. Special scientific achievements within the meaning of the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies refer to young scientists who meet the following criteria or equivalent criteria: Junior faculty status, independent acquisition of third-party funding with a funding period of at least 24 months within the framework of a reviewed application process, doctoral students financed from this funding with the aim of obtaining a doctorate within the IGradU; funding programmes that qualify for the supervision of doctoral students in this sense are determined by the doctoral committee.
- (5) The TAC has the following tasks:
  - a) supervision and individual subject-specific counselling for doctoral students throughout the entire duration of the doctoral programme,
  - b) conducting the interim evaluation 1 and the interim evaluation 2,
  - c) assessment of the doctoral thesis
  - d) co-assessment of the doctoral thesis.

### **3. Section: Degree programme**

#### **§ 5 Standard period of study, programme organisation, scope of teaching**

- (1) The standard period of study for the doctoral programme is three years. The doctoral programme is taught over three academic years.
- (2) The courses offered in the doctoral programme span three academic years. This includes the courses of the compulsory and compulsory elective areas.
- (3) In addition, a doctoral thesis must be written and a public university presentation on the thesis (defence) must be held.

#### **§ 6 Examination organisation and deadlines**

- (1) The doctoral programme consists of oral examinations (interim evaluation 1 and 2), a thesis written by the doctoral students and a defence.
- (2) The first year of the programme is completed with interim evaluation 1 and the second year with interim evaluation 2. Both interim evaluations are not graded, but assessed.

The respective interim evaluation must be repeated if the TAC determines that the student has failed this evaluation due to serious deficiencies in presentation or scientific background knowledge. After the respective interim evaluation, there should be a joint discussion regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the doctoral students as well as suggestions for the further implementation of the doctoral thesis.

- (3) The dates of the interim evaluations 1 and 2 will be announced in good time by the coordination office in the form determined by the PhD committee. The registration period begins 8 weeks before the respective examination date and ends two weeks before. The location and permitted aids will be announced with the dates.
- (4) After completing the third year of study or the fourth year of study after applying for an extension in due time, doctoral students must have submitted the thesis and completed the compulsory and compulsory elective courses prescribed in the curriculum in accordance with § 8 (1b), (2b) and (4b).

#### **§ 7 PhD committee (examination board)**

- (1) The PhD committee
  1. ensures that the provisions of these study and examination regulations are complied with,
  2. ensures that the interim evaluations and the defence are carried out properly,
  3. regularly reports to the Medical Faculty on the development of examinations and study times, including the actual time taken to complete the doctoral thesis,
  4. makes suggestions for the reform of these study and examination regulations,
  5. decides on disputes concerning the interpretation of these study and examination regulations,

6. decides on all other tasks assigned to it by these study and examination regulations.

To fulfil its functions the PhD committee utilizes the administrative services of the Studiensekretariat of Ulm University.

- (2) The members of the PhD committee are entitled to attend interim evaluations.
- (3) The current rules of procedure of Ulm University apply.
- (4) Incriminating decisions of the PhD committee must be communicated to the doctoral students in writing or, if possible, electronically (provision for retrieval). They must be substantiated and contain information about legal redress. The person concerned may lodge an objection in writing to the coordination office of the IGradU within one month of notification against incriminating decisions issued on the basis of these regulations.

#### **4. Section: Interim evaluations**

##### **§ 8 Admission to the interim evaluations and the third year of study**

- (1) Admission to the first interim evaluation can only be granted to those who
  - a) fulfil the admission requirements of § 2 of these regulations for the doctoral programme,
  - b) have submitted the written project plan and
  - c) have provided proof of regular and successful participation in the following courses in the first year of the programme in accordance with the curriculum:

##### **Compulsory courses:**

- Journal Club I
- Progress Report I (written)
- Seminar "Improve your textbook knowledge"
- Seminar "Good Scientific Practice"
- Submission of the written project plan
- Participation in the spring and fall meetings of the Graduate School

##### **Compulsory elective courses:**

- An elective course ("activity")
- 30 external scientific lectures ("external talks") from the fields represented in the IGradU, e.g. lectures at conferences, guest lectures at the institutes.

Regular attendance is usually 85% of the planned courses per year. This regulation does not apply to the seminar "Good Scientific Practice", for which no absences are foreseen. For the seminar "Improve your textbook knowledge", regular attendance is given if 85% of this course has been attended. The required attendances at the seminar "Improve your textbook knowledge" can be completed within two years.

Attendance at progress report seminars is 85% if at least 12 progress report presentations (PR talks) per semester, i.e. 24 per year, have been heard. A progress report talk must be given by the student.

Seminars, workshops or excursions lasting at least 1 day or a total of 8 hours are considered compulsory elective courses in the sense of an "activity". In terms of the lecture series, 30 optional lectures by external speakers must be attended in one year.

IGradU organises a spring conference and a fall conference once a year, at which the interim evaluations are carried out. Participation in the events is also mandatory for doctoral students who do not take their first or second interim evaluation. Exceptions are regulated by the PhD committee.

- (2) Admission to the second interim evaluation can only be granted to students who
- a) fulfil the requirements of 1 a) and b),
  - b) have provided proof of regular and successful participation in the following courses in the second year of the programme in accordance with the curriculum:

**Compulsory courses:**

- Journal Club II
- Progress Report II
- Participation in the spring and fall meetings of the Graduate School

**Compulsory elective courses:**

- Compulsory internships
- Two electives ("activities")
- 30 external scientific lectures ("external talks") from the fields represented in the IGradU, e.g. lectures at conferences, guest lectures at the institutes.

- c) and if the first interim evaluation was successful.

The compulsory internships must be completed by the end of the 2nd year of study and last 10 days in at least two different fields. They may not be completed at the institute or clinic where the doctoral thesis is carried out.

- (3) The first interim evaluation can be passed subject to conditions; fulfilment of these conditions is a prerequisite for admission to the second interim evaluation.
- (4) Admission to the third year of study is restricted to persons who
- a) fulfil the requirements of paragraph 1 a) and b), and
  - b) have passed the second interim evaluation.

In the third year of study, students must provide proof of regular and successful participation in the following courses with the corresponding credit points in accordance with the curriculum:

**Compulsory courses**

- Journal Club III

- Progress Report III
- Participation in the spring and fall meetings of the Graduate School

**Compulsory elective courses:**

- Two electives (“activities”)
  - 30 external scientific lectures ("external talks") from the fields represented in the IGradU, e.g. lectures at conferences, guest lectures at the institutes.
- (5) In special cases, in particular in the case of evidence of participation in qualification programmes in research training groups, these students may, with the approval of the PhD committee, be partially or completely exempted from the courses specified in § 8 (1-4).
  - (6) After the second interim evaluation, the PhD student must inform the PhD committee whether he/she wishes to use the title PhD or Dr. rer. nat. after successful completion.
  - (7) The coordination office of the IGradU decides on admission to the interim evaluations after examining the required documents and evidence in accordance with (1) and (2). These documents must be submitted at least 8 weeks before the respective interim evaluation. The exact submission deadline will be announced at least 4 weeks in advance. Furthermore, the coordination office decides on admission to the third year of study and the PhD committee decides on admission to the defence. If the doctoral student cannot be admitted to one of these examinations, he/she will be informed of this by the coordination office in the case of rejection of admission to the interim evaluations and admission to the third year of study and by the PhD committee in the case of rejection of admission to the defence.
  - (8) Admission must be denied if the requirements defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 4 and 5 are not met.

**\$ 9 Interim evaluations**

- (1) For their interim evaluations during the spring and fall meetings, the doctoral students organise the evaluation date (poster session) with their TAC independently. In the oral interim evaluations, which should not exceed 60 minutes, the doctoral students should report on the progress of their work and demonstrate that they can place their results in the context of their subject area and identify and solve theoretical and practical problems relating to their doctoral thesis. The oral evaluations are also intended to determine whether doctoral students have project-related basic knowledge as well as in-depth knowledge in the defined subject areas.
- (2) The interim evaluations by the TAC are based on a poster presentation (first interim evaluation) or a lecture and a poster presentation (second interim evaluation). At least two members of the TAC must be present. In exceptional cases, one member of the TAC may be represented by a principal investigator of the Graduate School.

- (3) The main results of the oral evaluations are to be recorded in a protocol and signed by the members of the TAC. The result of the evaluation must be announced to the doctoral students following the oral examinations.
- (4) Doctoral students who are to undergo the same evaluation at a later date may be admitted as listeners, subject to space constraints. Admission does not include the discussion and announcement of the evaluation result. The public is excluded for important reasons or at the request of the doctoral student.

#### **§ 10 Repeatability of interim evaluations**

- (1) The interim evaluations can only be repeated once after unsuccessful participation. The repetition must take place at the latest during the next IGradU spring or fall meeting following the failed attempt, unless the doctoral student is not responsible for missing the deadline.
- (2) After failing the interim evaluation at last attempt or not completing it on time (§ 6 para. 2), the doctoral student loses the right to take examinations for the doctoral programme, unless the doctoral student is not responsible for missing the deadline. The decision on this is made by the PhD committee.

#### **§ 11 Default, withdrawal, deception**

- (1) If the doctoral student does not take part in an interim evaluation without valid reasons or if he/she withdraws after the start of the examination discussion without valid reasons, the interim evaluation is deemed to have been unsuccessful and therefore "failed". The decision as to the valid reasons lies with the PhD committee.
- (2) Withdrawal, deception, breach of regulations and compensation for disadvantages are otherwise subject to the corresponding provisions of the General study and examination regulations for the bachelor's and master's degree programmes at Ulm University (ASPO) as amended. The coordination office must be notified immediately of the reasons given for the withdrawal or failure and these must be substantiated. If the doctoral student claims the illness of a child whom he/she is caring for or a relative in need of care, he/she must have complied with the deadlines for the initial registration for the interim evaluation, the repetition of interim evaluations and the adherence to completion deadlines for the doctoral thesis. If the reasons for the withdrawal or failure are recognised, the PhD committee will set a new date for the interim evaluation; this is usually the next possible date, provided that the recognised reasons do not conflict with this. In such case, the previously obtained results are recognised. If the reasons are not recognised, the interim evaluation is deemed to have been "failed".
- (3) The PhD committee decides whether to recognise the reasons for the default or withdrawal.

#### **§ 12 Language of instruction and examination**

- (1) The courses are held in English.

- (2) The interim evaluations and the defence are held in English.
- (3) The assessments are to be written in English.

## **5 Section: Doctoral thesis and defence**

### **§ 13 Passing the doctoral programme, commencement of the doctoral procedure**

- (1) The opening of the doctoral procedure requires that the doctoral students have successfully completed the interim evaluation, have published a publication (first authorship or shared first authorship) in a peer-reviewed journal and have fulfilled the requirements for the third year in accordance with § 8 (1) and (2). The application to open the doctoral procedure must be submitted to the coordination office in text form in accordance with § 126 b BGB (German Civil Code); the PhD committee will decide on this. A list of academic publications must also be submitted in text form to the coordination office up to one week before submission of the application to open the procedure. The application for the opening of the doctoral procedure must be accompanied by
  - a) five printed copies of the doctoral thesis in English, in accordance with the IGradU guidelines for the preparation of a written doctoral thesis, including a written affidavit of independent achievement and adherence to the guidelines of good scientific practice of Ulm University,
  - b) a German-language version of the affidavit as described under a)
  - c) an electronic copy of the doctoral thesis
  - d) current curriculum vitae with a description of the professional and academic career, signed and dated
  - e) at least one original article as author or co-author
  - f) current proof of enrolment
  - g) proof of attended external lectures / and compulsory elective courses ("activities")
  - h) confirmation of regular participation in the Institute's Journal Club
  - i) confirmation of the doctoral student regarding copyrights/rights of use and illustrations etc.
- (2) The doctoral programme is passed if the interim evaluations have been successfully completed, the thesis has been accepted on time and the defence has been passed on time.

### **§ 14 Doctoral thesis**

- (1) The doctoral thesis is an examination achievement. Doctoral students must demonstrate that they are able to independently work on and present a defined problem in molecular medicine using suitable methods within a specified period of time. The doctoral thesis must be written in English.
- (2) Scientific progress must be recognisable and significant results of the thesis must have been published or accepted for publication in the form of one or more original articles in respected English-language peer-reviewed scientific journals. The doctoral student must

be the first author of at least one article. In exceptional cases, publications in forms other than the respected English-language scientific journals with peer review mentioned in sentence 1 may also be accepted. Further details are regulated by the guidelines of the PhD committee.

- (3) In justified exceptional cases, upon application by the doctoral student to the coordination office IGradU with the approval of a majority of the PhD committee members, an accepted publication with first authorship can be waived (exemption) if a manuscript with first authorship of the doctoral student was submitted to an English-language scientific journal with peer review up to three months before the end of the maximum submission deadline of the doctoral thesis, i.e. usually before the end of the 4th year of the doctoral programme. The application for exemption can only be submitted three months before the expiry of the latest submission deadline for the doctoral thesis of a total of four years after enrolment and must be submitted at least one month before the expiry of this deadline. The doctoral student's application for exemption includes a letter of support from the supervisor, the manuscript and a confirmation of receipt from the journal. The coordination office forwards this application to the PhD committee for a decision. If the PhD committee decides that the doctoral student's thesis can be submitted without an accepted first authorship, the doctoral student will be informed of this no later than the last day of their PhD programme and informed that the thesis must be submitted no later than one month after the maximum deadline (4 years) has expired. If, after reviewing the application, the PhD committee is of the opinion that, in the absence of an accepted publication with first authorship, the exemption rule in paragraph 2 sentence 3 does not apply, the PhD student may be invited by the PhD committee to give a scientific presentation on the doctoral topic (so-called green talk) within 4 weeks of the end of the 4th year, if at least two thirds of the PhD committee agree. At least 4 members of the PhD committee must be present at this presentation and the majority of the PhD committee members present must give their consent after the presentation that a published first authorship can be waived as a prerequisite for the opening of the doctoral procedure.
- (4) The submission of a cumulative doctoral thesis is only possible on condition that at least three related original papers (cumulative thesis) with a significant individual contribution by the doctoral student have been published or accepted for publication in respected peer-reviewed journals. In addition, the doctoral student must have written two of the articles as first author. In the thesis, the doctoral student must submit a detailed introduction together with the submitted publications, in which the work is placed in a comprehensive scientific context. In addition, a summary of the work must be submitted in which the scientific contribution to the subject area is emphasised. A cumulative doctoral thesis is only possible with the agreement of the supervisor. It must demonstrate the doctoral student's ability to conduct independent scientific research and present the results of their work appropriately. If parts of the thesis are published in co-authorship with other scientists, the individual performance of the doctoral student must be clearly distinguishable and assessable in all articles. The doctoral student must enclose a declaration written by him/her about his/her contribution to the thesis, which must be confirmed by the thesis supervisor in text form in accordance with § 126 b BGB.
- (5) The doctoral thesis must be commenced upon admission to the doctoral programme. The date of commencement of the doctoral programme is the date of enrolment. The

date of commencement of the doctoral programme must be recorded. The duration of the doctoral programme is 3 years. At the request of the doctoral student, the PhD committee can extend the duration by up to a further year. The decision on this is made by the PhD committee.

- (6) The doctoral thesis shall be deemed “not completed on time” and the doctoral programme shall be deemed not successfully completed if the doctoral thesis has not been submitted within the deadline specified in paragraph 5 for the submission of the doctoral thesis, unless the doctoral student is not responsible for exceeding the deadline. The decision on this is made by the PhD committee upon request.
- (7) The topic, task and scope of the thesis must be limited in such a way that the deadline for completion in accordance with paragraph 5 can be met.

### **§ 15 Submission and assessment of the doctoral thesis**

- (1) Five printed copies of the doctoral thesis and an electronic version must be submitted to the chair of the PhD committee by the deadline. The time of submission must be recorded.
- (2) When submitting the thesis, the doctoral student must provide an affidavit stating the independent nature of the scientific work performed. In addition, the doctoral student must provide proof of the rights of use of the illustrations used in his or her thesis. This also applies to the rights of use of own illustrations that have been published in a journal in original papers or reviews. These certificates must be submitted with the doctoral thesis.
- (3) The doctoral thesis is assessed by the PhD committee in consultation with the TAC. The TAC submits two independent reviews to the PhD committee, which are prepared by TAC member 1 and TAC member 3 (§ 4 (5)). If a member of the junior faculty has been appointed as an additional member of the TAC, this member will prepare his or her own review with equal rights.
- (4) The reviews must be signed by the chair of the PhD committee. The reviews must be prepared independently of each other in writing within six weeks. The reviewers recommend the acceptance of the doctoral thesis with a grade:

1.0 – 1.3 = very good (magna cum laude)

1.7 – 2.3 = good (cum laude)

2.7 – 3.3 = sufficient (rite)

4 = not sufficient (non-sufficit)

The grades 0.7 and 3.7 are not awarded. In exceptional cases, the doctoral thesis may be graded “summa cum laude” in accordance with § 16 (7).

- (5) The overall grade for the doctoral thesis is the arithmetic mean of the individual grades. When calculating the grade for the doctoral thesis, only the first decimal place after the decimal point is taken into account; all other decimal places are cancelled without rounding.

- (6) A further review by an external scientist who is recognised in the field and who fulfils the requirements of § 5 (2) or (3) of the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies at Ulm University must be obtained if either all reviewers have assessed the doctoral thesis as "summa cum laude", if the difference between the proposed grades is two or greater, or if one reviewer, but not all, has assessed the thesis as "insufficient". In the latter case, the doctoral thesis is deemed to have been definitively rejected if the external assessor consulted also rates the thesis as "insufficient".
- (7) If two reviewers recommend the rejection of the doctoral thesis, the thesis is definitively rejected. If all reviewers assess the doctoral thesis or, in the case of paragraph 6, the additional reviewer with at least "rite", the doctoral thesis is deemed to have been accepted.
- (8) The PhD committee decides on the acceptance or rejection of the doctoral thesis on the basis of the reviews. If a review identifies deficiencies in the doctoral thesis without rejecting it as a whole, the rectification of the deficiencies may be made a condition for acceptance of the thesis. The PhD committee will request the doctoral student to rectify the deficiencies within three months. If the doctoral student is responsible for missing the deadline, the doctoral thesis is deemed to have been rejected. In consultation with the reviewer, the PhD committee decides whether to accept or reject the revised, resubmitted doctoral thesis. If the PhD committee rejects the doctoral thesis in consultation with the reviewer, it is deemed to have been rejected. If the doctoral thesis is rejected in accordance with paragraphs 6, 7 and 8, the doctoral procedure is concluded. The rejected doctoral thesis remains on file together with the reviews.
- (9) Once all reviews have been received and the doctoral thesis has been accepted, it shall be made available for inspection together with the reviews. The members of the Faculty according to § 5 (2 a-b) of the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies of Ulm University, supervisors, the members of the examination board and the doctoral student him/herself are entitled to inspect the thesis. The display period is ten working days after receipt of the last review. The place of display is the coordination office of the IGradU.

#### **§ 16 Defence, assessment of the defence and formation of the overall grade**

- (1) The defence is an examination achievement. It consists of a 30-minute presentation in English by the doctoral student on the doctoral thesis and a subsequent public discussion, which covers topics and methods related to the doctoral thesis and fundamental aspects of his/her field of specialisation and does not exceed 60 minutes. The defence must be held within six weeks of the announcement of the display period.
- (2) The PhD committee appoints an examination board for the defence consisting of at least 4 persons. This is made up of members of the TAC and at least one member of the PhD committee and other examiners appointed by the PhD committee. A member of the PhD committee chairs the examination board. The TAC members, other examiners appointed by the PhD committee and the members of the PhD committee are entitled to vote on the assessment of the defence.

In the case of a "summa cum laude" preliminary grade, at least 2 members of the PhD committee must participate in the defence as reviewers. Each member of the

examination board submits their grade individually for the assessment of the defence. The arithmetic mean of these individual grades is used to determine the overall grade.

(3) The examination board according to paragraph (2) evaluates as follows:

1.0 – 1.3 = very good (magna cum laude)

1.7 – 2.3 = good (cum laude)

2.7 – 3.3 = sufficient (rite)

4 = not sufficient (non-sufficit)

The grades 0.7 and 3.7 are not awarded.

- (4) If the defence is not passed, it can only be repeated once, no later than two months after the first attempt. The defence is failed at last attempt if the repetition is not passed or the application for repetition was not submitted on time, unless the doctoral student is not responsible for missing the deadline. The decision on this is made by the PhD committee upon request.
- (5) After the defence, the examination board determines the overall grade of the examination results. The chair of the examination board hands the doctoral student a provisional certificate, which contains the written and oral grade of the doctorate as well as the overall grade.
- (6) The overall grade of the doctorate is the arithmetic mean of the doctoral thesis and the defence, truncated to one decimal place. The doctoral thesis is given a weighting factor of 6 and the defence a weighting factor of 4.
- (7) Exceptionally, the overall grade “with honours” (summa cum laude) may be awarded if all reviewers have recommended that the doctoral thesis be awarded this grade and the defence was awarded an unrounded average of 1.0.

### **§ 17 Examination certificate of the doctoral programme**

- (1) The Studiensekretariat (student administration and examinations office) must issue a certificate (hereinafter referred to as “academic transcript”) immediately, at the latest within four weeks, stating that the doctoral programme has been completed. The academic transcript must be signed by the dean of the Medical Faculty and the managing director of the Graduate School.
- (2) Together with the academic transcript, the doctoral student receives a diploma supplement with the date of the certificate. The diploma supplement is signed by the chair of the PhD committee.
- (3) The academic transcript and diploma supplement are issued in English. Upon request, the certificate can also be issued in German.

## **§ 18 Additional subjects**

- (1) In addition to the interim evaluations required under § 8, the doctoral student may take an examination in other subjects (additional subjects).
- (2) The results of the examinations in these subjects will be included in the certificate at the doctoral student's request.
- (3) At the doctoral student's request, the subject area in which the doctorate was completed can be indicated as an additional subject. The PhD committee decides in individual cases.

## **6. Section: Publication of the doctoral thesis and completion of the doctorate**

### **§ 19 Publication of the doctoral thesis**

§ 16 of the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies applies to the publication of the doctoral thesis. The doctoral thesis should only be published after consultation with the first supervisor.

### **§ 20 Completion of the doctorate**

- (1) The doctorate is completed when the Dean of the Medical Faculty of Ulm University or the director of the Graduate School hands over the academic transcript and the doctoral certificate. The date of graduation is the date of the passed oral defence. The doctoral degree certificate is issued in English. It authorises the holder to use the academic degree PhD or Dr. rer. nat.
- (2) The doctoral degree certificate will only be issued once the doctoral student has provided proof of publication of his or her work.

## **7. Section: Doctoral programme carried out jointly with a foreign university or equivalent institution**

### **§ 21 Doctoral studies supervised jointly with other higher education institution**

IGradU may carry out a joint doctoral procedure together with a foreign university or a corresponding institution in agreement with Ulm University. § 23 of the Regulatory framework for doctoral studies applies accordingly.

## **8. Section: Effective date, transitional provisions**

### **§ 22 Effective date, transitional provisions**

- (1) These regulations shall enter into force on the day following their publication in the "Official Bulletin of Ulm University" and shall also apply to applicants who have already been admitted to the doctoral programme and accepted as doctoral students when these regulations as well as the Doctoral degree regulations of 11 March 2025 enter into force. At the same time, the Doctoral degree regulations for the "International PhD Programme in Molecular Medicine" of the Medical Faculty of Ulm University and the International

Graduate School in Molecular Medicine for the Award of the Doctoral Degree PhD/Dr.rer.nat” of 11 March 2025, published in the Official Bulletin of Ulm University No. 9 of 12 March 2025, page 108 - 125, shall cease to be in force, subject to paragraphs 2 and 3.

- (2) Doctoral procedures that were opened before the regulations of 11 March 2025 came into force shall be completed in accordance with the Regulations pursuant to paragraph 3.
- (3) The admission regulations, study and examination regulations and doctoral degree regulations for the doctoral programme “International PhD Programme in Molecular Medicine” of the Medical Faculty of Ulm University with the aim of obtaining a PhD and the International Graduate School of Molecular Medicine with the aim of obtaining a doctorate in natural sciences Dr. rer. nat. of 3 August 2018, published in the Official Bulletin of Ulm University No. 23 of 6 August 2018, page 237-260, shall continue to apply exclusively for and until the completion of the procedures according to paragraph 2 and shall cease to apply after their completion.

Ulm, 17 December 2025

signed

Prof. Dr.- Ing. Michael Weber

- President-

## **Annex 1 on the fast-track procedure**

Particularly qualified master's students on the Molecular Medicine master's programme at Ulm University who have an average grade of 1.4 or better before admission to the master's thesis are given the opportunity to take part in the application procedure for admission to the doctoral programme (fast-track doctorate).

The following documents must be submitted:

1. curriculum vitae with a description of your professional and scientific career,
2. current transcript of records,
3. written application with details of the institute, the supervisor and the project,
4. proof of funding for the doctoral position.

After approval by the PhD committee, master's students are conditionally admitted to the doctoral programme; admission expires as soon as one of the following conditions (resolutive conditions) is not met:

- a) a master's degree programme completed with a minimum grade of 2.0
- b) successfully completed master's defence § 2 (1) no. 4
- c) a project plan submitted on time

The deadline for the project plan is determined by the PhD committee.

Upon admission to the doctoral programme in accordance with § 2 para. 1, the master's thesis is completed in the first semester in accordance with the rules of the subject-specific study and examination regulations for the English-language master's programme in Molecular Medicine at Ulm University in the currently valid version.

The defence for the master's thesis is also the entrance examination for the PhD programme in accordance with § 2 para. 1 no. 4. At least 1 representative of the PhD committee (§ 4) must be present at the master's thesis defence.

The first interim evaluation takes place 6 months after the master's thesis defence. The second interim evaluation takes place 6 months after the master's thesis defence.

During the master's thesis, all courses of the first semester provided for in the doctoral programme must be completed (see the compulsory and compulsory elective courses prescribed in the curriculum).