

**Doctoral Degree Regulations of Heidelberg University  
for the Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies**

of 28/09/2023

based on § 38 of the Act on Higher Education of the Land of Baden Württemberg (*Landeshochschulgesetz*; LHG), last amended on 21 December 2021 (GBl. 2022, p. 1, 2), the Senate of Heidelberg University adopted the following doctoral degree regulations on 26 September 2023.

The Rector approved them on 28 September 2023.

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**§ 1 Doctorate**

- (1) The Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies at Heidelberg University confers the academic degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Dr. phil.) for the subjects of Education Studies, Ethnology, Gerontology, Psychology, and Sports Science based on results in the doctoral degree procedure or the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Dr. phil. h. c.) based on outstanding scientific achievements in the field of Behavioural and Cultural Studies, including related fields.
- (2) The Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies is committed to the guiding recommendations of the Senate of Heidelberg University for the promotion of junior researchers and implements them in an appropriate manner.

## **§ 2 Purpose of the doctorate, results in the doctoral degree procedure, doctoral degree procedure**

The doctorate serves as proof of the ability to perform detailed scientific work.

- (1) The doctorate is based on the following results:
  - submission of an independent scientific work (doctoral thesis) or a publication-based doctoral thesis (guidelines in accordance with the annex from the doctoral subject) and
  - oral examination (defence) in that subject, one of the subjects of which is the doctoral thesis.
- (2) The faculty's bodies for doctoral degree procedures are the Doctoral committee and an examinations committee appointed by it for each doctoral degree procedure.

## **§ 3 Doctoral committee**

- (1) The Doctoral committee shall ensure that the doctoral degree procedure is running smoothly. In particular, it shall decide on acceptance as a doctoral candidate. It shall also decide on admission to the doctorate, appointment of evaluators, and composition of the examinations committee. It may delegate the latter tasks to its chairperson. The doctoral candidate has the right to nominate evaluators and members of the examinations committee.
- (2) The members of the Doctoral committee and one deputy shall be appointed by the faculty council for a term of office of two years each. If a member or deputy member resigns, their successor shall be appointed immediately thereafter for the remainder of the term of office. Reappointment is permissible.
- (3) The members of the Doctoral committee shall include the dean or the vice dean as chairperson along with four other professors or associate professors of the faculty who work full-time at Heidelberg University.
- (4) The Doctoral committee shall decide by a majority of its members. The chairperson shall have the casting vote in the case of a tie.
- (5) The Doctoral committee does not meet in public. Hearing of the person concerned shall not be affected by this.
- (6) The Doctoral committee shall inform the applicant or the doctoral candidate of its decisions in writing.

## **§ 4 Admission to the doctorate**

- (1) Doctoral candidates generally can be admitted to doctoral studies if they have successfully completed:
  1. a Master's degree programme,
  2. a degree programme at a university, teacher training college, or art college with a standard period of study of at least four years, or
  3. a degree programme based on an undergraduate degree programme at a university, university of teacher education, or another higher education institution with the right to award doctorates with an examination.

- (2) If the overall grade of the degrees mentioned in 1. to 3. of (1) is not at least “good”, admission to the doctorate may be granted if favourable evaluations on the scientific qualifications of the applicant are submitted by two professors or associate professors of the faculty. This shall also apply if there is no overall grade.
- (3) The Doctoral committee shall decide on the equivalence of examinations and on admission if the overall grade is not at least “good” or if there is no overall grade.
- (4) If the doctoral subject was not the major subject in the degree qualifying for admission and the applicant cannot provide evidence of subject-specific achievements totalling at least 120 ECTS credits, the applicant must provide evidence of their specialised knowledge to the Doctoral committee by submitting publications or other comparable written work or in a colloquium.
- (5) The colloquium is an oral examination of approximately one hour. It shall cover up to three special fields and, if necessary, supplementary general specialised subjects. The colloquium shall be conducted by two examiners who are professors or associate professors of the faculty and are appointed by the Doctoral committee. The candidate must prove that they have knowledge in the examination subject that corresponds to the standard of the usual degree examination in the major subject (Diplom (German university degree), Magister, Master, etc.) in the colloquium. This is the case if the colloquium is assessed with an overall grade of at least “good”. The overall grade shall be the arithmetic mean of the individual grades awarded by the examiners. The assessments “very good” (1), “good” (2), “satisfactory” (3), “passed” (4), “failed” (5) may be awarded here.
- (6) Particularly qualified graduates of degree programmes that are not listed under § 4 (1) (e.g., state examination degree programmes, Bachelor’s degree programmes, Diplom (German university degree), or Master’s degree programmes at universities of applied sciences or a university of cooperative education) may be admitted to doctoral studies following a positive aptitude assessment procedure. This shall include proof of the following results:
  1. Diploma with an overall grade of “very good”
  2. Proof of the ability to perform independent scientific work. This proof may be provided in three different ways:
    - (a) a peer-reviewed publication as lead author, usually based on the final thesis, which is either in print or has already been published,
    - (b) evaluation by a professor who confirms that the thesis clearly demonstrates scientific aptitude and meets the requirements of a Master’s thesis, and
    - (c) colloquium in accordance with § 4 (5).

## **§ 5 Acceptance as a doctoral candidate**

- (1) Students who meet the admission requirements in accordance with § 4 can apply to the dean’s office for acceptance as a doctoral candidate, stating the subject of their doctoral thesis. The application must include:
  - a) proof of the admission requirements in accordance with § 4,
  - b) indication of the intended subject for the doctoral thesis with a brief concept of the doctoral thesis,
  - c) description of the applicant’s educational, scientific, and professional background; in addition, other achievements, knowledge, and experience relevant to the doctoral project may also be presented,
  - d) declaration of previous or current attempts at acquiring a doctorate,
  - e) confirmation of supervision by a supervisor in accordance with § 6, which should be documented by a doctoral agreement in accordance with § 6 (4).

- (2) The Doctoral committee shall decide on acceptance as a doctoral candidate after the doctoral agreement has been concluded. Acceptance must be refused if:
  - a) requirements for admission to doctoral studies are not met,
  - b) documents are incomplete,
  - c) the subject chosen for the doctoral thesis is obviously unsuitable or the subject does not fall within the faculty's remit.
- (3) Acceptance may be refused if:
  - a) the applicant has already made more than one unsuccessful attempt at acquiring a doctorate.
  - b) there are any reasons that would justify withdrawal of an academic degree or if an academic degree has been withdrawn.
- (4) The doctoral candidate must create an Online Doctoral File by registering in the online portal provided for this purpose together with the application for acceptance.
- (5) A decision on the application generally should be made within six weeks. The applicant must be notified of a rejection of the application in writing, including the reasons.
- (6) The faculty commits to assessing a doctoral thesis as scientific work and to supporting the doctoral candidate in preparation of their doctoral thesis upon acceptance as a doctoral candidate.
- (7) The doctorate should generally be completed within four years. In justified cases, an application to the Doctoral committee may be made to extend the duration of the doctorate. Acceptance as a doctoral candidate may be revoked if the doctoral candidate cannot be expected to successfully complete the doctoral thesis in future after six years, unless the doctoral candidate is not responsible for the delay. The Doctoral committee shall decide on revocation of acceptance as a doctoral candidate. The doctoral candidate must be given an opportunity to comment before a resolution is passed.
- (8) Persons who have been accepted as doctoral candidates are obligated to register at Heidelberg University in accordance with § 60 (1). This shall not apply to any accepted doctoral candidates who are employed full-time at Heidelberg University if they have previously submitted a written statement to the Rectorate, declaring that they do not wish to be registered.
- (9) For implementation of interdisciplinary and international cooperation projects (cotutelle doctorates), the universities in question and the doctoral candidate may agree on joint regulations for the doctorate. The agreement must be notified to the Doctoral committee upon acceptance as a doctoral candidate.

## **§ 6 Scientific supervision**

- (1) Doctorates in the subjects of Education Studies, Ethnology, Gerontology, Psychology, and Sports Science must generally be supervised by a professor, associate professor, or head of a junior research group (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty. If the doctorate is to be supervised by a person from outside of the faculty, the doctoral thesis must be supervised jointly with a faculty-affiliated professor, associate professor, or head of a junior research group (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty). Both supervisors' consent must be obtained in advance. If one supervisor is a co-opted faculty member, the respective other supervisor must be a full faculty member.
- (2) The professors, associate professors, and heads of junior research groups (with the

right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty are obligated to take on supervisions within the scope of their possibilities limited by their tasks in research, teaching, and self-administration. The leading recommendations of the Senate of Heidelberg University regarding the heads of junior research groups must be observed in terms of supervision and subsequent review.

- (3) Professors from the Universities of Applied Sciences (Hochschulen für angewandte Wissenschaften; HAW) and the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University (Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg; DHBW) can also be appointed as supervisors. At the same time, the willingness of a professor, associate professor, or head of a junior research group (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty to co-supervise the thesis must be demonstrated. The supervising faculty member must agree to the appointment of the professor from the University of Applied Sciences (HAW) or the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University (DHBW).
- (4) The Doctoral committee may decide on exceptions from the above provisions of this paragraph at a duly convened meeting with a two-thirds majority of all members present, provided that the LHG does not conflict with this for individual cases, in particular for particularly qualified junior researchers within the scope of a scholarship for habilitation (postdoctoral qualification).
- (5) The doctoral candidate may nominate a supervisor to the Doctoral committee in accordance with (1), (2), and (3). The Doctoral committee shall appoint the nominated person if they are willing to accept that position and if the concept of the doctoral thesis submitted by the doctoral candidate indicates that the purpose of the doctorate (cf. § 2 (1)) is likely to be achieved.
- (6) An agreement between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor shall be entered into, including the following minimum contents:
  1. The specific doctoral thesis subject
  2. Schedules for regular supervision meetings and progress reports to document progress of the doctoral thesis project. The schedules should be adapted to both the doctoral thesis project and the doctoral candidate's living situation and should be updated accordingly. The schedule planned for the doctoral thesis project generally should not exceed a total duration of four years.
  3. Information on an individual study programme under consideration of the respective guidelines for doctoral training laid down by the faculty council that may in particular provide for integration into interdisciplinary research training groups for doctoral students or organisation of workshops and presentations on the subject of the doctoral thesis.
  4. The mutual obligation to observe the rules of good scientific practice. In particular, there shall be a mutual obligation to comply with the respective applicable versions of the recommendations of the German Research Foundation and the by-laws for safeguarding good scientific practice and for dealing with academic misconduct at Heidelberg University.
  5. Rules for resolving disputes and/or the involvement of ombudspersons in accordance with para. 7.
  6. The evaluation times to be specified when submitting the doctoral thesis.
- (7) The ombudspersons for doctoral candidates appointed by the faculty and Heidelberg University may be called in to mediate if there are any disputes. The ombudsperson may suggest a change of supervisor if the supervision relationship is strained. The Doctoral committee shall comply with this proposal by appointing a new supervisor at the doctoral candidate's request. The doctoral candidate shall have a nomination right.

- (8) The faculty council may set guidelines for doctorates that may include integration of doctoral candidates in interdisciplinary research training groups for doctoral students or the organisation of workshops for doctoral candidates in a subject or subject group with presentation of the doctoral projects.
- (9) The Doctoral committee shall strive to find a professor, an associate professor, or a head of a junior research group (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty to supervise the doctoral candidate upon the doctoral candidate's request.
- (10) A second supervisor must be appointed upon the doctoral candidate's request.

## **§ 7 Doctoral thesis**

- (1) The doctoral thesis must meet scientific standards and demonstrate the doctoral candidate's ability to perform independent scientific work in the doctoral subject. The doctoral thesis comprises a scientific paper (doctoral thesis) or a publication-based doctoral thesis (for guidelines on preparation of a publication-based doctoral thesis, see annex).
- (2) Joint theses with a verifiable independent contribution by the doctoral candidate can be submitted as a doctoral thesis or part of a doctoral thesis if the work meets the requirements to a doctoral thesis. A written declaration on the nature and scope of the personal contributions must be enclosed.
- (3) The doctoral thesis generally must be written in German or English. The Doctoral committee may allow the doctoral candidate to submit a doctoral thesis written in another language, provided that it can be reviewed by professors, associate professors, or heads of junior research groups (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty upon written request.

## **§ 8 Admission to the examination**

- (1) The doctoral candidate may apply for admission to the examination to the Dean's Office in writing after completion of the doctoral thesis. The application must include:
  - a) three copies of the doctoral thesis,
  - b) an electronic data carrier with the doctoral thesis in PDF format,
  - c) a declaration by the doctoral candidate that they have prepared the doctoral thesis independently, used only the specified aids, and marked the citations, or, in the case of joint theses, a declaration of the parts for which they are responsible,
  - d) a declaration by the doctoral candidate as to whether they have already used the doctoral thesis in the current or another form elsewhere as an examination paper or submitted it to another faculty as a doctoral thesis,
  - e) a declaration of consent that the doctoral thesis may be reviewed for compliance with generally applicable scientific standards using electronic data processing programmes. The electronic data carrier in accordance with (1) (b) must only be used for this purpose. It shall be stored safely. Copies are not permitted. Access to the electronic data carrier is restricted to the faculty board, the staff of the faculty office, and the respective appointed examinations committee. The data shall be deleted after ten years. The Doctoral committee shall decide on any exceptions upon written application.
- (2) A decision on the application generally should be made within four weeks. The doctoral candidate must be notified in writing of the rejection of the application, stating the

reasons.

- (3) Discontinuation of the doctorate or withdrawal of the application for admission to the doctoral examination procedure by the doctoral candidate shall no longer be possible after admission to the examination procedure in accordance with paragraph 2.
- (4) The doctoral thesis may already be published wholly or in part.
- (5) Approval shall be refused if
  - a) the requirements for approval are not met,
  - b) the documents are not complete, or
  - c) a doctoral thesis that has already been rejected by another examination authority or a doctoral thesis used as an examination paper in another examination procedure is submitted.
- (6) Admission may be refused if there is any reason that would justify withdrawal of an academic degree or if an academic degree has been withdrawn.

## **§ 9 Review of the doctoral thesis**

- (1) The Doctoral committee shall appoint at least two evaluators after submission of the doctoral thesis. The evaluators should be appointed within four weeks.
- (2) All persons named under § 6 (1) to (4) may be appointed as evaluators. At least half of all evaluators must be professors, professors who have been dismissed or retired, associate professors, or heads of junior research groups (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty. Persons who have been replaced as supervisors based on § 6 (7) sentence 3 shall be excluded as evaluators.
- (3) The professors, associate professors, and heads of junior research groups (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) are obligated to contribute as evaluators within the scope of their possibilities limited by their tasks in research, teaching, and self-administration. Appointment as an evaluator can only be refused in justified cases. The dean or vice dean shall make a decision on the refusal.
- (4) The evaluators shall give reasons for their assessment of the doctoral thesis in writing and propose acceptance or rejection of the doctoral thesis and, in the case of a proposal for acceptance, one of the following grades:  
excellent (0)  
very good (1)  
good (2)  
satisfactory (3)  
Intermediate grades by increasing or decreasing grades by 0.3 each are permitted. Exceptions to this are the decrease of grade 0 and increase of grade 3.
- (5) The evaluators may impose conditions on the publication of the doctoral thesis in their evaluations.
- (6) The evaluations should be submitted to the Doctoral committee no later than three months after the evaluators have been appointed. In cases of more than an inconsiderable delay (another three months), the Doctoral committee shall appoint a substitute assessor at the request of the doctoral candidate; the provisions of this paragraph shall apply accordingly to the appointment and review.

## **§ 10 Display of the doctoral thesis and the evaluations**

- (1) The display period of two weeks in the dean's office of the faculty shall commence after receipt of the evaluations by the Doctoral committee. The Doctoral committee shall decide on shortening of the display period upon written application.
- (2) All professors, associate professors, and heads of junior research groups (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty as well as the evaluators have the right to inspect doctoral theses and evaluations.
- (3) The doctoral candidate must be informed in writing that they may inspect the evaluations after the Doctoral committee has received the reviews. The doctoral thesis shall be displayed in the dean's office together with the evaluations at the same time.
- (4) Commencement of the display period, the name of the doctoral candidate, the title of the doctoral thesis, and the names of the evaluators must be communicated to the professors, associate professors, and heads of junior research groups (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty, the evaluators, and the doctoral candidate in writing.

## **§ 11 Appointment of further evaluators**

- (1) The professors, associate professors, and heads of junior research groups (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty and the doctoral candidate have the right to apply to the Doctoral committee for the appointment of an additional evaluator within the display period. The application must be justified in writing. The application must be granted. The additional evaluator should generally be appointed within three weeks of receipt of the application.
- (2) The doctoral candidate has the right to propose a further evaluator if at least two of the evaluators appointed in accordance with § 9 (1) sentence 1 or § 11 (1) sentence 3 recommend that the doctoral thesis be rejected. They shall be appointed by the Doctoral committee with their agreement.
- (3) The Doctoral committee shall appoint a further evaluator if an evaluator is appointed in accordance with paragraph 2.
- (4) § 9 shall apply accordingly if any further evaluators are appointed.

## **§ 12 Termination of the doctoral degree procedure in the case of negative evaluations**

The chair of the Doctoral committee shall determine that the doctoral degree procedure as a whole has been rejected in cases where all evaluations have consistently rejected the doctoral thesis; § 18 shall apply accordingly.

## **§ 13 Examinations committee**

- (1) The Doctoral committee shall appoint an examinations committee after the expiry of the display period and receipt of all evaluations, and shall appoint a professor, associate professor, or head of a junior research group (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty as its chairperson in cases where at least one evaluation is in favour of the doctoral thesis. The examinations committee



should be appointed within three weeks. The Doctoral committee shall inform the appointed members of the examinations committee and the doctoral candidate in writing of the composition of the examinations committee.

- (2) The examinations committee shall comprise the evaluators and two further professors, associate professors, or heads of junior research groups (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty. The Doctoral committee may appoint professors or associate professors from other faculties or universities as members of the examinations committee.
- (3) The Doctoral committee shall convene the examinations committee. The chairperson of the examinations committee shall set the date and venue for the defence no later than six weeks of receiving the evaluations. The Dean's Office shall invite the doctoral candidate and the members of the examinations committee to the defence.
- (4) Decisions of the examinations committee shall be made by majority vote. The chairperson shall have the casting vote in the case of a tie.
- (5) The examinations committee shall inform the Doctoral committee of its decisions in writing without undue delay.

#### **§ 14 Decision on the doctoral thesis**

The examinations committee shall decide on acceptance or rejection of the doctoral thesis. It can only reject the written work if at least one evaluator recommends this. The doctoral candidate must be given the opportunity to comment before the decision is made. § 18 shall apply accordingly.

#### **§ 15 Defence**

- (1) After the doctoral thesis has been accepted, the doctoral candidate must complete a two-hour defence on the doctoral thesis and three other topics in the doctoral subject. The doctoral candidate shall propose subjects for the defence in coordination with their supervisor. One-page abstracts on the subjects must be submitted to the Dean's Office no later than two weeks before the defence, to be forwarded to the members of the examinations committee.
- (2) The defence generally should take place within six weeks of the end of the display period.
- (3) The chair of the examinations committee may permit other accepted doctoral candidates to participate in this part of the defence as listeners, depending on the number of places available. Participation shall not include deliberation and announcement of the examination result. The public, including any other doctoral candidates, may be excluded from one or both main parts of the defence due to important reasons or at the request of the doctoral candidate being examined.
- (4) The defence comprises a public presentation of the defence project and a subject-related examination. The doctoral candidate should demonstrate that they can present the doctoral thesis project concisely and provide expert information in response to questions in a public university presentation of the doctoral thesis and subsequent discussion. The scope of this examination section generally should not exceed 60 minutes. The subsequent subject examination shall refer to at least two of the proposals submitted in accordance with paragraph 1 and should generally not exceed

a period of 60 minutes.

- (5) The defence shall be chaired by the chairperson of the examinations committee.
- (6) A transcript of the course and content of the defence must be compiled.

#### **§ 16 Decision on the defence result**

- (1) The examinations committee shall decide whether the doctoral candidate's defence is to be accepted or rejected in a closed session immediately after the defence.
- (2) If the defence is rejected in accordance with paragraph 1, the doctoral candidate may repeat the defence upon submitting a written application to the Doctoral committee. The application must be received by the Doctoral committee no later than three months after the first defence; the repeat examination must take place no later than six months after the first defence. No further repetitions will be possible.
- (3) The doctorate shall be refused if a rejected defence is not repeated or if the repeated defence is rejected.

#### **§ 17 Result of the doctorate**

- (1) The examinations committee shall determine the grade of the doctoral thesis based on the evaluations, the grade of the defence based on the defence, and the overall grade based on both grades in a closed session, unless the doctorate is refused in accordance with § 12, § 14, or § 16 (3).
- (2) § 9 (4) shall apply accordingly to formation of the grades for the doctoral thesis and the defence.
- (3) The overall grade shall be determined as follows as the total of the grade for the doctoral thesis weighted at two third and the grade for the defence weighted at one third:  
with a total up to and including 0.30: summa cum laude  
with a total above 0.30 to and including 1.30: magna cum laude  
with a total above 1.30 to and including 2.30: cum laude  
with a total above 2.30 to and including 3.00: rite
- (4) The overall grade "summa cum laude" shall be awarded to an excellent thesis. The definition of excellence is based on the standards applicable in the respective subjects of the faculty.
- (5) The doctoral candidate must be informed of the result of the doctorate without undue delay.

#### **§ 18 Repetition of the doctorate**

If the doctorate is rejected in accordance with § 12 or § 14, the doctoral candidate may submit a new doctoral thesis within one year. If the doctoral candidate does not exercise their right to revise the doctoral thesis or if the revised doctoral thesis is not submitted on time, the doctorate will be refused. No further repetitions shall be possible.

**§ 19 Publication of the doctoral thesis**

- (1) The doctoral thesis must be published no later than two years after the doctorate.
- (2) All rights acquired through the doctorate shall expire if the doctoral thesis is not published on time. The deadline may be extended in special cases if the doctoral candidate submits a justified application to the Doctoral committee in time. The chair of the Doctoral committee shall decide on an extension of up to 6 months, and the Doctoral committee shall decide on any extensions beyond this.
- (3) The publication may take place
  1. by way of electronic publication in Open Access on the university repository Heidelberg Document Server heiDOK operated by the University Library. Other forms of electronic publication must be coordinated with the University Library and the Doctoral committee.
  2. by printing in a publication series or as an independent book in a publisher's bookshop, provided that a minimum print run of 150 copies can be documented. A lower minimum print run is acceptable if the publisher fulfils further orders via the print-on-demand process. The doctoral candidate shall be responsible for providing proof of this.
  3. by reproduction in the reproduction process
  4. in the form specified under items 1 and 3 for publication-based doctoral thesis.
- (4) The following shall apply to publication:
  1. Two copies must be submitted to the University Library if the doctoral thesis is published in a series or as an independent book.
  2. A copy must be submitted to the University Library if the doctoral thesis is published in an electronic version.
  3. 10 copies must be submitted to the University Library if the doctoral thesis is reproduced.
- (5) The doctoral candidate must obtain written authorisation from the chairperson of the examinations committee before publishing the doctoral thesis if any conditions have been imposed. The chairperson shall make this decision in agreement with the members of the examinations committee.
- (6) All copies published after the doctorate must bear a printer's mark or a corresponding reference to the fact that it is a Heidelberg doctoral thesis. If the title is changed, reference to the title of the submitted doctoral thesis must be made.

**§ 20 Conferring of the Dr. phil. degree**

- (1) If the doctoral candidate has submitted the required copies in accordance with § 19 (2) on time, they shall be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Dr. phil.).
- (2) The doctoral certificate shall contain the title of the doctoral thesis as well as the overall grade and state the date of the defence as date of the doctorate. It shall also be issued in English.
- (3) The right to use the title of doctor is only acquired upon receipt of the doctoral certificate.

### **§ 21 Conferring of the Dr. phil. h.c.**

- (1) The faculty may award the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on an honorary basis (Dr. phil. h.c.) for outstanding scientific achievements in the field of behavioural and cultural studies, including related fields, with the Senate's approval.
- (2) This award shall require an application by at least three professors, associate professors, or heads of junior research groups (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) of the faculty. The faculty council shall appoint two professors, associate professors, or heads of junior research groups (with the right to award doctorates granted by the faculty) from among its members as reporters to prepare its decision. The faculty council shall make its decision by a majority of three quarters of its members holding a doctorate upon receiving the evaluations of the reporters.
- (3) The degree of Dr. phil. h. c. shall be awarded in the form of a degree certificate in which the faculty recognises the scientific achievements of the recipient of the degree.

### **§ 22 Withdrawal of admission; invalidity of results in the doctoral degree procedure**

- (1) If it becomes known before the doctoral certificate is issued that the doctoral candidate has misled the Doctoral committee about an admission requirement or that essential admission requirements have been incorrectly assumed to have been met, the Doctoral committee may withdraw admission to the doctorate. The same shall apply if any facts become known that would justify revocation of the doctoral degree under state law.
- (2) If it becomes known that the applicant has cheated in achieving one of the results of the doctoral degree procedure before the doctoral certificate is issued, the Doctoral committee may declare this doctoral performance or all previous doctoral performances invalid or, in serious cases, withdraw admission to the doctorate.
- (3) The person in question must be heard before the resolution is passed. The decision must be substantiated and sent to the person concerned with information on legal remedies.

### **§ 23 Withdrawal of the doctorate**

- (1) Withdrawal of the doctorate shall be subject to the provisions of state law. The Doctoral committee is responsible if there are no provisions on responsibility.
- (2) The person in question must be heard before the resolution is passed. The decision must be substantiated and sent to the person concerned with information on legal remedies.

### **§ 24 Access to files**

The doctoral candidate shall be granted access to the procedural files upon request as far as knowledge of them is necessary for assertion or defence of their legal interests. The application must be submitted to the dean or vice-dean within one year of completing the doctoral degree procedure.

**§ 25 Entering into effect and transitional provisions**

- (1) The doctoral degree regulations shall enter into effect on the first day of the month following publication in the Rector's Gazette. The doctoral degree regulations of Heidelberg University for the Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies of 2 November 2015 (Rector's Gazette of 27 November 2015) shall cease to apply at the same time.
- (2) Doctoral candidates whose examination procedures have already been opened in accordance with § 8 may submit a request to continue their doctorates in accordance with the provisions of the previous doctoral degree regulations until 31/12/2024.
- (3) Doctoral candidates in the fields of Diaconal Studies and Social Ethics may continue and complete their doctoral projects in accordance with the doctoral degree regulations of 2 November 2015 until 31/12/2026. The deadline for completing such doctorates may be extended until 31/12/2028 at the latest upon a specially justified request.

Heidelberg, 28 September 2023

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Bernhard Eitel  
Rector

**Annex to § 7 (1):**

**Guidelines for preparation of a publication-based doctoral thesis:**

1. At least three papers on related subjects relevant to the student's own research that were published in recognised journals must be submitted. The nature of the subjects of the individual papers and the selection of journals shall be determined in close coordination with the supervisor. If a journal without a peer review system is included, the submission must be accompanied by a justification from the supervisor regarding the quality of the journal. Book chapters may also be considered in exceptional cases – to be justified by the supervisor. The prerequisite shall be proof of a peer review process when the volume is published.
2. At least one of the submitted works must have already published, "in press" or "accepted". This work must be written as the lead author. Joint lead authorships are not accepted. The other papers must have already been submitted for publication and be at least "under review". In the case of author teams, the doctoral candidate must be at least in second or third place. The author's own contribution must be specified precisely for each publication by author teams.
3. A jacket section of at least 20 to 25 pages in which the applicant's own research programme and the internal context of the written work are clearly recognisable must be submitted as well. This section shall in particular serve to provide a theoretical framework for the student's own work and to place it in the context of the international state of research.
4. Only one of the appointed evaluators must be a co-author of the submitted work.
5. An evaluator from another university or research institution generally should be involved in the review process.
6. Any deviations from items 1 and 2 shall be at the supervisor's discretion, in coordination with the doctoral candidate. This decision must be well justified. The faculty's Doctoral committee shall make a decision on this.