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Regulations and Procedures Governing the Doctoral Dissertation to Earn a Doctoral Degree in Economics at the School of Law and Economics of the University of Mannheim

as at 7 March 2013

(Bulletin of the President's Office No. 07/2013 of 21 March 2013, part 1, p. 18 et seqq.)

1st amendment as at 6 June 2016

(Bulletin of the President's Office No. 16/2016 of 10 June 2016, pp. 22 et seqq.)

2nd amendment as at 4 June 2019

(Bulletin of the President's Office No. 15/2019 of 12 June 2019, p. 168)

3rd amendment as at 13 December 2024

(Bulletin of the President's Office No. 01/2025 of 9 January 2025, p. 6)

This is a non-official version of the Regulations and Procedures Governing the Doctoral Dissertation to Earn a Doctoral Degree in Economics. Only the version published in the Bulletin of the President's Office is to prevail and be binding.

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Section 1 – Type and Purpose of the Doctorate

- (1) The University of Mannheim awards the degree of the Doctor of Economics (Dr. rer. pol.) based on the successful completion of a dissertation, a doctoral program and an oral defense (cf. section 8 et seqq.).
- (2) The doctoral dissertation, which is usually written in English, shall result from independent work, make a significant contribution to academics and be made available for the scientific community in accordance with these Regulations. It may consist of several scientific articles. The dissertation, the doctoral program and the oral defense serve to prove that the doctoral student is able to pursue independent scientific research.

Section 2 – Doctoral Committee

- (1) The doctoral committee of the Department of Economics makes decisions in the doctoral process, unless another body is in charge according to these Regulations.
- (2) The committee is composed of full professors, junior professors and senior academic staff members (Privatdozent*innen) of the Department of Economics as well as managers of Emmy Noether Research Groups or post-doctoral researchers who participate in a program of the German Research Foundation (DFG), the EU or a similar program and work at the department. Senior academic staff members (Privatdozent*innen) who work part-time and less than fifty percent of their work time for the University of Mannheim only have an advisory role in the decision-making processes. The dean, the head of department or a designated full professor chairs the doctoral committee.
- (3) The doctoral committee has a quorum if at least a quarter of the members who are eligible to vote are present. Its meetings are not open to the public. Provided that a meeting of the doctoral committee has been called at least two weeks in advance including an agenda and no member has requested to discuss an item on the agenda, the decision on the respective item may be taken by way of a written, electronic procedure. The doctoral committee may delegate its tasks to the chair of the doctoral committee in accordance with section 3 subsection 1, section 7 subsection 2 and section 12 subsection 1, sentence 2 and subsection 2 sentence 4. The decision to delegate tasks to the chair may be revoked at any time. A decision whether an applicant is accepted as a doctoral student cannot be delegated to the chair of the committee.
- (4) All decisions of the committee are minuted. In the event of a tie, the chair has the deciding vote.
- (3) The discussions as well as the respective documents are subject to confidentiality.

Section 3 – Examiners

- (1) Examiners shall be full professors, professors emeriti, professors on leave, junior professors and senior academic staff members (Privatdozent*innen) of the Department of Economics as well as managers of Emmy Noether Research Groups or post-doctoral researchers who participate in a program of the German Research Foundation (DFG), the EU or a similar program and work at the department. The doctoral committee may appoint professors emeriti and honorary professors, with their consent, as examiners and supervisors.

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- (2) Full professors, junior professors, managers of Emmy Noether Research Groups, post-doctoral researchers who participate in a program of the German Research Foundation (DFG), the EU or a similar program and senior academic staff members (Privatdozent*innen) who used to work at the department may be appointed as examiners of the doctoral students they have supervised.
- (3) In consultation with the doctoral committee, the dean or the head of the department may also appoint university teachers of other departments or schools of the University of Mannheim as well as German and international university teachers of other universities as examiners for individual doctoral procedures if the respective university teacher agrees and has the necessary professional qualifications.

Section 4 – Application for Admission as a Doctoral Student

- (1) The application for admission as a doctoral student shall be submitted in writing to the dean or head of department.
- (2) Along with the application, the following documents must be submitted:
 - a) the confirmation of admission to the Center for Doctoral Studies in Economics (CDSE) of the Graduate School of Economic and Social Sciences (GESS),
 - b) the “Doctoral Milestones”, equivalent to the Advising Agreement, issued by the CDSE administration during the admission as a doctoral student and signed by the chair of the doctoral committee. The “Doctoral Milestones” shall include the name of the mentor assigned to the student as a supervisor for the first two years of the structured doctoral program (course stage). Mentors shall be examiners according to section 3 subsection 1(1) of these Regulations.

Section 5 – Admission Requirements

Doctoral students must be members of the Center for Doctoral Studies in Economics (CDSE) of the Graduate School of Economic and Social Sciences (GESS). In justified cases, the doctoral committee may waive this requirement.

Section 6 – Acceptance as a Doctoral Student

If all admission requirements have been met and there are no reasons for rejection according to section 7, the doctoral committee shall admit the applicant. If the applicant is admitted, the dean or the head of department accepts them to the list of doctoral students of the school. The applicant receives a confirmation on the acceptance to the list.

Section 7 – Admission as a Doctoral Student, Revocation of Admission

- (1) The application for admission can be denied on the grounds of reasons that would legally justify the revocation of the doctoral degree.
- (2) The admission as a doctoral student expires if the doctorate is not completed within a maximum of ten semesters. As a rule, the doctorate shall be completed after no more than six years. In justified cases and

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upon request, the doctoral student may interrupt the doctorate or extend the aforementioned period of time. The doctoral committee decides on the matter.

Section 8 – Admission to the Doctoral Process

- (1) The doctoral student shall submit a written request to obtain a doctoral degree to the dean or head of department.
- (2) The request shall include:
 - a) the doctoral dissertation in triplicate as well as the doctoral dissertation in electronic form in a common file format on an appropriate storage device. All versions shall include a declaration of the candidate that it is their own work and that no other sources or means except the ones listed have been employed. The copies of the dissertation and the storage device submitted become property of the university.
 - b) a signed declaration of consent with the following wording: “I hereby declare that I consent to my paper being electronically stored and sent to a third party by the university in order to be checked for plagiarism.”
 - c) a proof that the doctoral student has completed a doctoral program at the Center for Doctoral Studies in Economics (CDSE) of the University of Mannheim in accordance with the Study Regulations for the doctoral program in Economics or a proof that the candidate has completed a program that the admission and examination committee of the CDSE considers to be equivalent,
- (3) The request to obtain a doctoral degree may be withdrawn provided the dissertation has not been rejected and the oral defense not yet begun.
- (4) For admission, the documents according to section 4 shall have been submitted and the admission requirements according to section 5 shall have been met. In case of a rejection to the doctoral process, section 7 applies.

Section 9 – Acceptance of the Doctoral Dissertation

- (1) The dean or head of department checks the request and decides on the admission. In addition, they appoint a main evaluator from the dissertation committee (cf. section 9 of the Study Regulations of the CDSE) and at least one second evaluator. The main evaluator shall be an examiner according to section 3 subsection 1 and someone who has advised the doctoral student. At least one of the evaluators shall be a tenured professor or a professor with an equivalent status at the Department of Economics University of Mannheim who is not on leave.
- (2) If the evaluators support the acceptance of the dissertation in their evaluations, the dean or head of department gives all members of the doctoral committee the opportunity to read the dissertation within an appropriate period of time and make a statement. As a rule, this period is three weeks and shall be during lecture periods.

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- (3) dissertation is considered accepted if the evaluators support its acceptance and none of the members of the doctoral committee object to the recommendation in writing during the designated period (subsection 2). In case of a disagreement regarding the acceptance, the doctoral committee decides. If needed, the committee may obtain an evaluation from a third evaluator.
- (4) Each evaluator who supports the acceptance of the dissertation shall grade it by assigning one of the following grades: “summa cum laude”, “magna cum laude”, “cum laude” or “rite”.
- (5) If the doctoral committee or the evaluators reject the dissertation, the doctoral examination is considered failed. The doctoral student shall be informed of this in writing. All higher education institutions in Germany that have the right to confer doctoral degrees in Economics will be informed of the rejection.

Section 10 – Examination Committee

- (1) The dean or the head of department appoints the members of the examination committee.
- (2) The members of the examination committee shall be the evaluators and at least one more examiner, including the chair or the examination committee. The dean or head of department, the vice dean or a professor appointed by the dean or head of department chairs the committee. A main evaluator may not be appointed chair. At least two members of the examination committee shall be tenured professors or professors with an equivalent status at the University of Mannheim.
- (3) In exceptional and justified cases, the dean or the head of department may exempt up to one of the evaluators from their examination committee membership if a qualified substitute according to section 3 is appointed.

Section 11 – Oral Defense and Final Grade

- (1) Doctoral students shall defend their dissertation publicly in an oral defense. The oral defense is conducted by the chair of the examination committee. The members of the examination committee and the doctoral committee are authorized to ask questions and to respond. The examination lasts at least one and no longer than two hours. The oral defense may only be held if all members of the examination committee are present. After the oral defense, the examination committee deliberates and decides on a final grade for the doctorate based on the evaluations of the dissertation, the results of the doctoral program and the oral defense. Afterwards, the committee informs the doctoral students of the results. The committee’s decisions are based on a majority of votes; in the event of a tie, the vote of the chair shall decide the matter. The doctoral process is completed with the determination of a grade according to section 9 subsection 4. The oral defense may be conducted with digital support in a way where not all examiners are present on campus but participate in the oral defense by means of electronic communication. In order for a digitally supported oral defense to be admissible, the following requirements apply:
 1. Consent from the examination committee and from the candidate;
 2. the candidate and the chair of the examination committee need to be physically present;
 3. and the oral defense needs to be conducted in a classroom that is equipped for digitally supported classes.

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The decision according to sentence 9 is made by the chair of the examination committee. The candidate is informed of the decision at least two weeks before the oral defense.

- (2) The oral defense, the grading process according to subsection 1 and the notification of the result shall be recorded in minutes.
- (3) Doctoral students who fail the oral defense may present themselves again within 12 months but no earlier than 6 months after their first attempt.

Section 12 – Printing

- (1) The dissertation shall be published in the version that has been approved by the evaluators. If one of the evaluators does not approve, the doctoral committee decides on the approval.
- (2) Altogether, 55 printed copies of the dissertation shall be given to the university free of charge. However, the number of mandatory copies can be reduced to 5 if the dissertation is published
 1. by a publishing house with at least 80 copies, or
 2. in a relevant scientific magazine, or
 3. in electronic form in a format that is approved by the university library and stored on a University of Mannheim server upon approval of the university.

All mandatory copies shall include a short CV. In justified cases, the dean or head of department may allow the printing of a shortened version in agreement with the doctoral committee.

- (3) The mandatory copies shall be delivered within one year after doctoral students have been informed of their grade. If doctoral students fail to deliver the copies in time, they forfeit all rights acquired with the examination. The dean or head of department may extend the deadline upon reasoned request.
- (4) The cover page of the dissertation shall read “Inauguraldissertation zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades eines Doktors der Wirtschaftswissenschaften der Universität Mannheim“. The back of the cover page shall indicate the name of the dean or head of department as well as the names of the supervisors and evaluators and the date of the oral defense. If the dissertation is published with a publishing house, the publication shall indicate that it is based on a dissertation at the University of Mannheim.

Section 13 – Granting of Doctoral Degree

- (1) Once the mandatory copies have been submitted, the doctoral degree is granted with the handover of the doctoral degree certificate. With the official granting of the degree, the doctoral student is authorized to use the title “doctor”.
- (2) The doctoral degree certificate is signed by the President of the University of Mannheim and the head of the department. It bears the date of the oral defense.

Section 14 – Annulment and Revocation of the Doctoral Degree

- (1) The doctoral degree shall be annulled if it becomes evident that, before the degree has been granted, the doctoral student cheated during the admission to the doctoral process or during one of the examinations.

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- (2) The doctoral committee is responsible for the revocation of the doctoral degree.

Section 14a – Ombudsperson

In case of conflicts between the doctoral student and the supervisor, the parties may consult the respective ombudsperson. All details in regards to the appointment of ombudspersons are governed by the Statutes of the University of Mannheim on the Appointment of Ombudspersons for Doctoral Students and their Supervisors (Satzung der Universität Mannheim zur Bestellung von Ombudspersonen für Promovierende und deren Betreuer/innen).

Section 15 – Renewal of the Doctoral Degree Certificate, Honorary Doctoral Degree

- (1) In order to honor its graduates, the school or the department can renew doctoral degree certificates on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the awarding of the doctorate. In the laudation, the school honors the academic and public achievements of the graduate.
- (2) The School of Law and Economics of the University of Mannheim awards the honorary doctoral degree in Business (doctor rerum politicarum honoris causa - Dr. rer. pol. h.c.). The honorary doctoral degree may be awarded to people for outstanding achievements in research fields of the School of Law and Economics. Suggestions, including in-depth reasoning, shall be submitted to the dean. People holding a statutory office at the University of Mannheim or serving as an elected member of one of the statutory bodies of the University of Mannheim may submit a suggestion for an honorary doctoral degree to the dean. The honorary doctoral degree is awarded on the basis of unanimous decisions of the school council of the School of Law and Economics and the senate of the University of Mannheim. The dean awards the honorary doctoral degree. The honorary doctoral degree can be revoked on the grounds of reasons which, if known, would have prevented its conferment in the first place or on the grounds of reasons which have arisen after the conferment. Sentence 5 applies to the revocation of the honorary doctoral degree accordingly.

Section 16 – Final Provisions

- (1) These Regulations and Procedures Governing the Doctoral Dissertation become effective on 1 August 2014. At the same time, the Regulations and Procedures Governing the Doctoral Dissertation to Earn a Doctoral Degree in Economics at the Department of Economics of 27 March 2006 cease to be effective.
- (2) Doctoral students who have submitted a request to obtain a doctoral degree to the dean or the head of department before these Regulations and Procedures Governing the Doctoral Dissertation became effective may request to continue the doctorate according to the respective valid version of the Regulations and Procedures Governing the Doctoral Dissertation of 27 March 2006.

Article 2 of the first amendment of 6 June 2016:

The amendment becomes effective the day after its announcement in the Bulletin of the President's Office ("Bekanntmachungen des Rektorats") of the University of Mannheim.

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Article 2 of the second amendment of 4 June 2019:

This amendment becomes effective the day after its announcement in the Bulletin of the President's Office ("Bekanntmachungen des Rektorats") of the University of Mannheim.

Article 2 of the third amendment of 9 January 2025:

This amendment becomes effective the day after its announcement in the Bulletin of the President's Office ("Bekanntmachungen des Rektorats") of the University of Mannheim.

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