

Implementation Provisions for the Doctoral Regulations for the Faculties of Agricultural Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Business, Economics and Social Sciences from 1 February 2019

valid as of 1 February 2019

including the amendment from 9 December 2020

including the amendment from 27 January 2021

including the amendment from 14 April 2021

including the amendment from 25 May 2022

including the amendment from 1 February 2023

Based on Sec. 4(11) of the University of Hohenheim's Joint Doctoral Regulations, the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences' doctoral committee has passed the following implementation provisions.

Purpose of the Implementation Provisions

The implementation provisions govern details of individual sections that are not specified in the doctoral regulations. They serve to ensure a standardized implementation of the doctoral regulations and are binding. They also aim to create transparency and predictability for doctoral candidates and supervisors.

Regarding Sec. 4 Doctoral Committee

The doctoral committee sets its meeting dates for each semester in advance. These are announced on the homepage of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences.

Regarding Sec. 6 Mentor group

For participants in the doctoral study program, the mentor group also assumes the function of the advisory team in the doctoral study program in accordance with Sec. 6 of the doctoral regulations. An additional advisory team is not necessary.

For participants in the doctoral study program, the interim evaluation of the mentor group to be carried out in accordance with Sec. 6 of the doctoral regulations corresponds to the interim report required as part of the *interim evaluation in the doctoral study program*. The submission of an interim evaluation according to Sec. 6(3) of the doctoral regulations is therefore sufficient.

Regarding Sec. 8 Reviewers and examiners

Upon the suggestion of the primary supervisor, it is possible to include in the review retired persons according to Sec. 8 who are still actively involved in the scientific community. It is the responsibility of the primary supervisor to ensure that the retired individual is still actively involved

in the scientific community. For an advisory task that has already begun, the general rule is that it may be completed - even if the supervisor has retired in the meantime.

Regarding Sec. 9 Examination board

The doctoral committee shall generally approve only one external examiner. Exceptions must be well justified. Here, external refers to all examining persons who are not members of the faculty. However, "external" does not include external privatdoctents and extraordinary professors (außerplanmäßige Professorinnen und Professoren) who are still members of the faculty, as well as external professors who supervised the doctoral candidate in question during their active period of service at Hohenheim.

When appointing the examination board, the doctoral committee determines which member of its ranks from among the university lecturers will conduct the oral examination and informs the doctoral candidate, the supervisor, and the Graduate Academy of this by means of an extract from the minutes. This member cannot also be an examiner in that examination.

Section 2: Admission

Regarding Sec. 10(2) General admission requirements "Above-average grades"

Grades are considered above average if the grade point average of the final examination is 2.5 or better or if the examination is in the better half of the ranking list of the same examination year at the university at which the relevant degree (usually Master's) was obtained.

The Dean's Office of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences checks whether this criterion is fulfilled.

Regarding Sec. 10(3) General Admission Requirements and Sec. 11(3) Applicants with a Foreign University Degree "Conditions / Additional requirements - Knowledge Examinations"

Applicants with a **non-agricultural degree** may be admitted if they can provide evidence of a comparable qualification. To provide evidence of this qualification, upon the suggestion of the supervisor, the doctoral committee selects three compulsory modules from the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences' Master's programs. The three modules should be represented by different module supervisors. In these modules, knowledge exams are taken.

The **average grade**¹ of all **three** knowledge exams must be 2.5 or better. Each knowledge examination can be repeated once within 2 months of the announcement of the result if the candidate fails or if the grade is worse than 2.5. A second repetition of a knowledge examination is not possible no matter the circumstances. If the **grade point average of 2.5** is not achieved even after exhausting the repetition options, the application for acceptance as a doctoral candidate is to be rejected.

The candidates must learn the examination material on their own in consultation with the examiners. The language of the examination is not bound to the language of the module. The three tests must be taken within six months of passing the language test or, if you have already passed the language test, within six months of the date on which the decision was made.

If the deadline is missed, the candidate will not be admitted to the doctoral examination. On reasoned request, the time limit for taking the knowledge tests may be extended. The chairperson of the doctoral committee decides on the application for an extension of the deadline. If the candidate is not responsible for the reason the deadline was missed, the extension will be approved.

¹ = sum of the grades of the three knowledge tests divided by three

If the candidate is accepted and participates in the doctoral study program, two of the knowledge exams necessary for acceptance as a doctoral candidate can be recognized as modules for the doctoral study program upon the suggestion of the supervisor.

Admission is granted conditionally until the additional work is completed / conditions are fulfilled. If the requirement is not fulfilled within the specified period, admission is automatically revoked. The Graduate Academy is responsible for verifying that the additional requirements have been met and for monitoring the deadlines.

The same applies to applicants with a **university degree in agricultural science** obtained abroad. For university graduates with a degree in agricultural sciences from the countries of the EU and the countries Switzerland, Norway, **Great Britain**, Canada, United States of America, New Zealand, and Australia, the knowledge tests are not compulsory. However, the doctoral committee may require additional work to be done.

Regarding Sec. 10(4) General admission requirements “Proof of language proficiency”

The faculty requires proof of sufficient language skills. The language for which the proof of language proficiency is to be provided is determined by the language of the dissertation.

Doctoral candidates who wish to complete their doctoral studies in German and whose native language is not German must provide proof of **language skills in German**. Proof can be provided using:

1. the “Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang” (**DSH**), if it was passed with at least level DSH-2,
2. the official “Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache” (**TestDaF** with at least performance level TDN-4),
3. the language examination at Goethe Institutes (at least Zentrale Mittelstufenprüfung / **ZMP** or Prüfung Wirtschaftsdeutsch),
4. the completion of the certificate **UNicert III** German as a Foreign Language at the Language Center of the University of Hohenheim (no minimum required grade),
5. the completion of the “Deutsches Sprachdiplom” of the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (at least **DSD-II**), or
6. proof that the Master's degree or *Diplom* program, including the associated examinations, was completed entirely in German.

If the doctoral thesis is to be completed in whole or in part in a language other than German, the doctoral committee may require proof of sufficient language skills in this language instead.

The following tests and minimum grades are accepted as proof of **English language proficiency**:

Test	Minimum grade / score
1. TOEFL Internet-based test (ibt)	90
2. IELTS Academic	6.5
3. Cambridge EFL Exam ¹⁾	CAE
4. Cambridge Business English Certificate (BEC)	BEC Higher
5. London Chamber of Commerce LCCI Examinations Board	Level 3 (Distinction of Credit)
6. TELC / Certificate in English ²⁾	B2 (at least "good")
7. Trinity Certificate / ISE ³⁾	ISE III
8. Certificate UNlcert II English ⁴⁾	without minimum grade requirement
9. ALTE Level ⁵⁾	4

¹⁾ Certificate in Advanced English (CAE)

²⁾ The European Language Certificates

³⁾ Integrated Skills in English Examination (ISE)

⁴⁾ At the University of Hohenheim's Language Center

⁵⁾ Association of Language Testers in Europe

For other languages approved on a case-by-case basis, evidence of an equivalent level may be required.

The period of validity of the language tests is not limited.

Applicants from the following nations whose native language is English are not required to provide proof of English language proficiency:

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United States of America,
- from the Caribbean: Antiqua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevi, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago,
- from South America: Belize, Guyana.

The same applies to applicants who have already successfully completed their Master's degree - completely in English - at a recognized university in the EU, Norway, Switzerland, and Iceland or in one of the above-mentioned English-speaking countries.

The examination and recognition of the language documents is carried out by the Graduate Academy. The documents must be presented in the original. Proof of sufficient language skills must be provided within a period of 6 months after the decision has been made. If the deadline is missed, the candidate will not be admitted to the doctoral examination. On reasoned request, the deadline for showing proof of language proficiency may be extended. The chairperson of the doctoral committee decides on the application for an extension of the deadline. If the candidate is not responsible for the reason the deadline was missed, the extension will be approved.

Regarding § 11(2) Applicants with a foreign university degree

The equivalence of the degree is checked by the Office of International Affairs, if necessary with the assistance of the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB).

The Office of International Affairs checks whether the above-average condition is fulfilled in accordance with the regulations in Sec. 10(2).

Regarding Sec. 13(1) Particularly qualified graduates of Bachelor's degree programs(*fast track*)

The possibility for *fast track* is limited to **graduates of Bachelor's degree programs in agricultural sciences**. The combination of a non-agricultural Bachelor's degree and *fast track* is not possible.

The **recommendations** must be comprehensibly justified. In particular, they should explain the information on which the recommendation is based and what the applicant's particular strengths are for a doctoral project without a previous regular Master's degree. One of the recommendations should come from the person supervising the doctoral project.

The **choice of modules and their number** (between 2 and 6) is made on a case-by-case basis. The doctoral committee **generally assumes that there are 6 modules to be completed**. When selecting modules, the topic of the doctorate is taken into account in order to identify the most suitable Master's program (or subject area). In general, four compulsory modules and two semi-elective modules from the degree program or subject area are set as the modules the candidate needs to complete. If there are fewer than four compulsory modules in a subject area, the number of semi-elective modules is increased accordingly. When selecting the modules, it is ensured that all work can be completed within one year. The number of modules to be taken may be fewer than 6 if additional credits have already been taken in one or more of the previously specified Master's modules during the Bachelor's program. With the application for starting the orientation phase, the applicant submits **proposals for the module examinations** (including, if applicable, modules to be recognized) agreed with the supervisor. The doctoral committee may deviate from these proposals. There is no formal application document.

The doctoral committee determines the date on which the one-year orientation period starts.

Regarding Sec. 15(1) Decision on acceptance as a doctoral candidate

The doctoral committee may delegate individual tasks to the chairperson.

Section 3: Examination

Regarding Sec. 17(2) Dissertation “language of the dissertation”

The dissertation can be written in German or English. Other languages must be approved by the doctoral committee on a case-by-case basis. Approval depends on whether there is a sufficient number of professors in the faculty who speak the requested language and whether it is ensured that the content of the dissertation can be disseminated internationally to a sufficient degree. Regardless of the language, the dissertation must contain an abstract in German and English.

Regarding Sec. 17(5) to (7) Dissertation “cumulative dissertation”

Publication of a cumulative dissertation includes at least three manuscripts published or submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals listed in relevant literature databases. At least one of these articles must have the status “accepted for publication.” The doctoral candidate must be listed as first author of at least two of the articles. Shared first authorships count proportionally, i.e. the number of submitted articles must be increased accordingly. The use of

the same publication in more than one cumulative dissertation is possible in principle. The remaining manuscripts may have the status "submitted," in which case proof of submission must also be provided.

Together with the cumulative dissertation, the following must be submitted additionally and separately as a printout and in electronic form (pdf)

- a list of the publications included in the dissertation and
- for each of these publications, a declaration signed by all authors of their contribution to the publication. If an author is not available, the supervisor's signature is sufficient in exceptional cases. There is a form on the faculty's homepage for the declaration of co-authorship ("Declaration of co-authorship"). The declarations are submitted to the reviewers together with the dissertation.

Research-related patents are handled in the same way as publications.

Regarding Sec. 19(5) Reviewing the dissertation "distinction 0 = outstanding"

If both reviewers rate the dissertation as "0 = outstanding" according to § 23 (3), a third review by an additional reviewer must be requested.

The chairperson of the doctoral committee decides on the third reviewer in consultation with the dissertation supervisor. The third reviewer does not receive the two reviews already completed, but is informed that the first two reviewers assessed the dissertation with "outstanding." The deadline for submitting the third review is set out in Sec. 19 (3) of the doctoral regulations. The procedure according to Sec. 20 of the doctoral regulations will only be continued after the third review has been submitted.

The assessment of a dissertation with "outstanding" should only be made in exceptional cases. To achieve this grade, each individual review must come to this recommendation. When evaluating the dissertation with "outstanding", the factors to be considered should be: important, unique, and new methodological knowledge; outstanding concept and interpretation of the work; future prospects of the scientific findings; and an impressive presentation in terms of argumentation and form.

Regarding Sec. 20 Continuation of the process

If the process is continued after the evaluation of the dissertation, the Graduate Academy, on behalf of the chairperson of the doctoral committee, immediately notifies all professors, junior professors, and private lecturers working full-time at the faculty of the continuation of the procedure by email, enclosing the summary and the evaluations in the form of pdf files. The professors of the faculty have the opportunity to lodge an objection within a period of 2 weeks.

The examination date can already be scheduled after the reviews have been received. However, the examination can take place at the earliest 2 weeks after the end of the 2-week objection period for professors. The doctoral candidate is responsible for scheduling the appointment for the examination. The appointment is subject to the condition that no dissenting review is received during the objection period.

Entry into Force for these Implementation Provisions

Decision of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences' doctoral committee from 31 Jan 2019 and 17 Apr 2019.

Transitional provisions for those who do not apply to remain in the old regulations by 31 January 2020:

Regarding Sec. 6 Mentor group

The joint doctoral regulations from 1 Feb 2019 provide for the appointment of a mentor group for each doctoral student.

For doctoral candidates of the faculty who were already accepted before the joint doctoral regulations come into force, a one-year period will run from 1 Feb 2019 during which they can apply to remain in their previous doctoral regulations.

In order to support these doctoral candidates in their decision to transfer to the new joint doctoral regulations, the doctoral committee may decide not to appoint a mentor group.

Regarding Sec. 16 Maximum duration of the doctorate

For doctoral projects that were started before the joint doctoral regulations came into force, the previous deadlines for completing the dissertation continue to apply.