

Regulatory Statutes for the Doctoral Degree Programme

1 March 2012

With reference to Art 13 para. 2 of the law of 25 November 2004 governing the University of Liechtenstein and to Art. 20a of the Statutes of the University of Liechtenstein, the Senate has issued the following Regulations governing the award of doctoral degrees at the University of Liechtenstein.

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To the extent that no express differentiation is made, references to people and professional positions made in these Study and Assessment Regulations encompass both genders.

1. Selection, admission and registration

1.1. Selection and exposé

Candidates are required to present their planned research work in an exposé in accordance with the regulations listed in the “Guidelines for future doctoral students”. The supervisor reviews the qualification of each applicant in the application process and delimits the subject of the research work. The supervisor then makes a selection of the most qualified candidates.

1.2. Application and deadlines

An application can only be submitted when supervision has been accepted, a university place is available and, if a doctoral student is to be employed by the University, funding of the position is ensured. This must be confirmed in writing by the supervisor.

An application must be submitted by:

- 31 May (date of post arrival) for studies beginning the following winter semester or
- 31 October (date of post arrival) for studies beginning the following summer semester.

1.3. Admission

The Doctoral Commission assesses the application and decides on a student’s admission. It can request further information from the supervisor or candidate. If an application is judged as inadequate, it can be submitted again at the next opportunity after revision and/ or preparation of further documentation or evidence.

1.4. Registration

Acceptance as a student at the University of Liechtenstein is subject to acceptance of the application by the Doctoral Commission and payment of the tuition fees before the beginning of the first semester.

On acceptance, a student is registered on their selected programme. Students wishing to continue onto the next semester must inform the University by way of a return registration at the start of the new semester. This includes the semester in which the dissertation defence takes place.

2. Status of doctoral students and agreements

2.1. Status of doctoral students

Doctoral students are students at the University of Liechtenstein. According to the “European Charta for Researchers” (EU, 2005) doctoral students are “early stage researchers”. Their work is designated as an occupation.

2.2. Agreements

With the beginning of studies, a written Learning Agreement must be completed between the supervisor and the student. This agreement defines the nature of the collaboration and all rights and duties. Any extra credits still to be earned (see Art. 26b of the *Regulations Governing the Conferring of Doctorates*) and deadlines must be listed in the agreement. In the case of employment at the University of Liechtenstein, the scope of the activity is defined in a contract of employment.

3. Examination fees

Examination fees are included in the tuition fees. With regard to the fees charged for a re-evaluation of the pre-study or dissertation and examination at a second colloquium or dissertation defence, see the fee guidelines of the University of Liechtenstein.

4. Supervision

4.1. Requirements and duties

Supervision and co-supervision can only be carried out in those subject areas where *venia legendi (docendi)* was obtained. Supervision is understood as support and advice. In order for a professor to supervise, the corresponding time windows are necessary and the number of doctoral students to be supervised is limited to a reasonable number. The European University Association (EUA) recommends an upper limit of four to six doctoral students per supervisor.

The main task of the supervisor is to encourage independence, creativity and the skills to carry out self-critical work and scientific discourse. The responsibility of the supervisor lies in enabling the doctoral student to assume responsibility for his own scientific work and career.

4.2. Supervision by external professors

In special cases (see Art.12 of the *Regulations Governing the Conferring of Doctorates*) professors from other universities can also be appointed as supervisors. Special cases are defined as follows:

- when, during the course of a dissertation, a change of supervisor is necessary and no professor at the University of Liechtenstein can take over the supervision.
The Doctoral Commission proposes an external professor as supervisory who will be appointed as a member of the Graduate School until the completion of the dissertation. The Rector decides on the appointment. The external supervisor must have a *venia legendi (docendi)* in the field of Business Economics or Architecture / Planning. Provided no objections are made by the supervisor, the co-supervisor remains in his function. Otherwise a new co-supervisor is also appointed.
- when, within the context of a strategically important research area, dissertations are planned that cannot be supervised by a professor of the University of Liechtenstein
In this case, the Head of the Institute proposes an external professor with the applicable *venia legendi (docendi)* to the Doctoral Commission as a supervisor. The Doctoral Commission assesses the professor's qualification level. The Rector decides on the appointment. The appointed professor becomes a member of the Graduate School for a limited period. The appointed supervisor proposes the co-supervisor.

4.3. Supervision shortly before retirement

If a professor wishes to accept a doctoral student less than three years before his/her retirement, permission is required by the Doctoral Commission. The following points must be ensured, confirmed in writing and communicated to the Dean:

- a possible successor as supervisor;
- the infrastructure that is needed until conclusion of the thesis;
- the financial support of the doctoral student if the thesis has not been completed before the time of retirement.

Responsibility for compliance with these commitments lies with the Dean.

4.4. Supervision after resignation

If a supervisor leaves the University of Liechtenstein, he or she is not permitted to accept supervision any further doctoral students at the University of Liechtenstein after the date of resignation. In consultation with the Dean, the supervisor must ensure and confirm in writing the following points:

- supervision will continue until conclusion of the dissertation (defence);
- the necessary infrastructure will be ensured until the conclusion of the dissertation and
- the financial support of the doctoral students affected will be guaranteed.

If in exceptional cases, supervision cannot be continued, a successor will be appointed in consultation with the Dean. The responsibility for compliance with these commitments lies with the Dean.

4.5. Change of supervisor or co-supervisor

If supervision or co-supervision is not possible due to the following reasons:

- unforeseeable changes in the work in terms of content
- irreparable personal differences or
- other aspects that cause a conflict of interest with the supervisor or co-supervisor

then the co-supervisor must inform the supervisor, or the supervisor the Dean, immediately and with suitable proof. The Doctoral Commission decides over further measures. The members of the Doctoral Examination Board are to be informed.

5. Doctoral Examination Board

The Doctoral Examination Board is proposed - after submission of the dissertation - by the Doctoral Commission and is confirmed by the Dean.

6. Recognition of credits

6.1. Recognition of credits on acceptance to a doctoral degree programme

On a student's application, the Doctoral Commission decides over the recognition of credits that were earned within the framework of other doctoral studies (Art. 8 and 42 *Regulations Governing the Conferring of Doctorates*). The application is supported and founded by the supervisor. With regard to the preparation phase, a maximum of half of the required ECTS points can be recognised from credits earned. No ECTS points are recognised for the dissertation phase.

Courses held by the applicants themselves on a subject applicable to their programme do not count as credits and will not be recognised. Publications in refereed scientific journals can be recognised as pre-earned credits.

6.2. Recognition of credits from core modules that cannot be offered by the University of Liechtenstein

In accordance with Art. 40 of the Ordinance, doctoral students must complete subject modules and/or method modules at other universities or similar institutions, if the University of Liechtenstein cannot offer these modules itself.

Before attending i.e. registering with another university, the doctoral student is required to inform their supervisor and draw up a written agreement with the Academic Director of the doctoral degree programme in question and the Module Coordinator, stating the module to be attended and the scope and nature of the credit supervision. With regard to the recognition of the credits earned, the doctoral student must present a confirmation from the host institution confirming attendance and proving the credits that were earned. Remuneration of any attendance fees will be paid in accordance with the *Guidelines for the remuneration of costs incurred when attending core modules*.

Credits to be earned in the dissertation phase cannot be earned in advance in the preparation phase.

7. Research proposal and colloquium

The research proposal (Art. 43 of the *Regulations Governing the Conferring of Doctorates*) is a **research plan** and outlines the research subject and methodology, specifies conditions relating to form, content and schedule, and formally demonstrates the time windows agreed for the research work. The research plan contains the following points in minimum:

- Summary of the planned research activities
- Aims, contents, results: statements on academic aims, contents and possible results to be expected from the dissertation
- short description of the status of the research in the field of the foreseen work with the titles of the most important relevant works by other authors
- if applicable: short description of the status of the student's own research in the field of the foreseen work with the titles of any works already published
- Details on the innovation content of the planned work with regard to
 - a) the status of the student's own research and development (if applicable), and
 - b) related to the status of other researchers.
- Has preparatory work already been conducted and if yes, when and what?
- Details on the working procedure / methodology
- Details of schedule and milestones
- Quality assurance measures

If a **cumulative dissertation** is to be written, the decision for this must be briefly expounded. Journals for publication purposes and the number of publications planned must be stated.

The formal design of the research proposal must comply with the *Guidelines for Academic Work at the University of Liechtenstein*. A document template will be provided.

At the **Colloquium** the working procedure that was described is to be expounded. It takes 40 to 60 minutes and is conducted at the University of Liechtenstein. Only in substantiated exceptional cases can the colloquium be held outside the University of Liechtenstein. If the co-supervisor cannot be present, a live video conference is set up. The supervisor can invite other University members or other persons to attend. Details on the procedure are regulated in the fact sheet *Research Proposal/Colloquium – Organisation and Procedure*.

The supervisor decides in consultation with the doctoral student over the date of submission of the research proposal and over the procedure of the colloquium.

8. Dissertation and defence

8.1. Determination and change of subject of dissertation

At the time of application, a title for the research work is proposed. The subject is fixed when the research proposal is submitted. The supervisor must confirm the subject when accepting the research proposal by filling out the *Disposition of the Dissertation* form. A change of subject is defined as a new direction within the specialist field. Any change must be approved by the supervisor in cooperation with the co-supervisor and communicated to the Dean.

8.2. Form of the dissertation

The dissertation can be submitted in the form of a treatise or a cumulative dissertation. In the case of a cumulative dissertation, research results are documented in the form of a number of individual publications. It must meet the following requirements:

- the publications must be closely connected in terms of time of publication and subject matter based on an overriding structure that organises the aims and methodology of the research work
- Individual publications must meet the requirements of high-quality academic publication formats in the discipline
- as a whole, the publications must make an equally valuable academic contribution as a dissertation in the form of a treatise.

The cumulative dissertation is presented to the Thesis Committee in the form of a completed entity that must be given a succinct title. Besides the individual publications, chapters can be supplemented that contribute to the presentation of the whole.

The supervisor and co-supervisor each draw up an approval of the dissertation in which the work is acknowledged for the scope of its contribution to the academic world.

8.3. Format of the dissertation

The layout of the dissertation must comply with the *Guidelines for Academic Work at the University of Liechtenstein*. A document template is made available.

8.4. Declarations and CV

In conjunction with the dissertation, the following declarations must be provided by the doctoral student:

- a declaration that the dissertation was written without unlawful help (declaration on oath)
- that the dissertation has never been submitted to another institution with the right to award doctorates

At the end of the dissertation, a short CV is to be added. These declarations are to be personally signed by the doctoral student.

8.5. Copyright law

Copyright law is to be observed, including the restrictive instructions contained in these Regulations. The dissertation and its components must be seen as parts of the examination until completion of the doctoral degree programme.

8.6. Assessment of the doctoral dissertation

In the assessment of the dissertation, not only scientific quality but also quality in terms of form and language will be assessed.

8.7. Execution, submission and publication of the doctoral dissertation

The dissertation is to be presented to the Doctoral Examination Board in the form of an assessment copy and a copy for library purposes is to be made available to the public.

8.7.1. Copy for assessment

The assessment copy of the dissertation is to be submitted in accordance with the *Guidelines for Academic Work at the University of Liechtenstein* in paper form and saved on an electronic data storage device. The content of both copies must be identical. The number of copies to be submitted is based on the number of members of the Doctoral Examination Board plus an additional copy.

On the instruction of the Doctoral Examination Board, a copy must be made available to the professors at the University of Liechtenstein at least two weeks before the defence.

8.7.2. Obligatory copy for library purposes

General conditions

The candidate must publish the dissertation within a year after a successful defence in the form authorised by the Doctoral Examination Board and supply obligatory copies for library purposes. In exceptional cases, the Dean can grant an extension of this deadline.

The obligatory copies must be la *Guidelines for Academic Work at the University of Liechtenstein*. The supervisor and the co-supervisor have the right to supervise the printing process.

Permission to publish subject to conditions

If the dissertation was accepted subject to conditions, the supervisor and the co-supervisor must confirm in writing that the conditions have been fulfilled. This amended version constitutes the form to be published.

Forms of publication

Publication can take place in one of the two following forms:

- **Publication through the University of Liechtenstein library**

Two compulsory paper copies are to be submitted plus an electronic version. The compulsory printed copies and the electronic version must be identical.

- **Additional publication for the book trade**

A further publication for the book trade, for a series of institute papers or for any similar purpose can only take place after the doctoral degree title has been fully awarded. The doctoral student is obliged to mark the publication with a special endorsement stating that it is a copy of a dissertation approved by the Graduate School of the University of Liechtenstein and to submit for approval by the supervisor and co-supervisor any expansion to the content (including the addition of a foreword, an afterword or similar supplements), abridgement or amendment to the work or the title before printing.

Pre-Publishing

The doctoral student is entitled to publish parts of the dissertation in agreement with the supervisor before its final acceptance.

8.8. Unaccepted dissertations

If a dissertation is returned for revision or refused, the Dean will inform the doctoral student with a written communication. If a revision can be made, the next steps and the deadline for the revision will be detailed in the written communication. The time period for the second submission of the dissertation may not exceed 12 months.

8.9. Time schedules

8.9.1. Approval of the dissertation

The supervisor and the co-supervisor are required to assess the dissertation within three months after its submission and present their approval. In exceptional cases, the Dean can grant a deadline extension.

8.9.2. Defence

The defence must take place within a month after presentation of the approval. The date is set by the Chair of the Doctoral Examination Board. In exceptional cases, the Doctoral Examination Board decides on a deadline extension. The defence lasts 60 to 90 minutes, is open to the public and must take place at the University of Liechtenstein. All members of the Doctoral Examination Board must be present.

If the defence is not successful, the Dean will inform the doctoral student in writing of the date on which the defence can be repeated. The second defence must take place within 3 months.

8.10. Quality assurance and development

The Doctoral Commission periodically reviews whether the published theses satisfy the prescribed quality criteria. It reports to the Senate.

9. Academic collaboration with institutions outside the University of Liechtenstein

9.1. Basic principles

Academic cooperation with public and private institutions (companies, organisations, local government, etc.) is possible for dissertation purposes. The institution is required to ensure that no conditions or obstacles are set against:

- the doctoral students during the course of his/her research work
- the supervisor in supervising the doctoral student or
- a timely publishing of the research results (e.g. due to patent applications).

9.2. Confirmation

A guarantee of the stated specifications is to be confirmed in writing by the institution and presented to the Doctoral Commission at the time of application or at the latest before the start of thesis work.

10. Effect

The guidelines came into effect retrospectively on 1 March 2012.

Vaduz, 13 February 2012

Prof. DI Peter Droege, MAAS
Chair of the Senate

Amends the version dated 1 March 2011