

Code of practice for the doctoral degree program at the Faculty of Science of the University of Bern

On the legal basis of:

[Promotionsreglement \(PromR Phil.-nat. 19\) from 12.12.2019](#), valid from 01.02.2020

Innovations are marked in yellow

Supervisor of the PhD thesis (German: LeiterIn der Arbeit; according to the “Confirmation of Supervision” ErstbetreuerIn)

- entitled person according to Article 10 of the PromR
- accepts the PhD candidate/intention
- fills in together with the PhD student the **doctoral agreement** (Doktoratsvereinbarung)
- ensures that an additional independent associate supervisor is available and recorded in the doctoral agreement
- assigns **at least three month before the completion of the PhD study an external examiner** and notify her/him for approval via the Dean`s Office to the Studienausschuss
- writes the evaluation of the thesis (acceptance or decline and proposition of a mark)
- is normally one of the examiner in the doctoral examination (Doktoratsprüfung)
- requests a third evaluation in agreement with the PhD candidate if there is a difference of more than one full mark for evaluations of the supervisor and the external referee

Additional independent associate supervisor (during the PhD study)

- Four-Eyes principle of supervision: contact person for the PhD student in case of conflicts or problems with the supervisor
- must be **independent** from the supervisor (an independent co-supervisor can fulfill this task)
- recorded in the doctoral agreement

External referee (for the PhD thesis; formerly co-referee)

- **assigned in agreement with the PhD student at least three month before the completion of the PhD study** (with experience in the supervision of PhD studies)
- must be a member of another university or scientific institution
- writes the evaluation of the thesis (acceptance or decline and proposition of a mark)
- can be an examiner at the doctoral examination (Doktoratsprüfung)

Examiner (during the doctoral examination [Doktoratsprüfung])

- conducts the doctoral examination (at least two people)
- one person needs to take the chair (but not the supervisor or co-supervisor)

Chair (during the doctoral examination) [Doktoratsprüfung]

- one examiner needs to take the chair
- is a full professor or associate professor of the faculty
- cannot be the supervisor or co-supervisor
- **writes the protocol of the doctoral examination or determines the person who writes it**
- **sends the original or the signed pdf of the transcript of records together with the protocol of the doctoral examination to the Dean`s Office (Nadja Susedka) immediately after the doctoral examination**
- **IMPORTANT: Without the transcript of records and the protocol of the doctoral examination it is not possible to calculate the final mark and therefore to finish the PhD study!**

Doctoral agreement (German: Doktoratsvereinbarung *)

- at the beginning of the PhD study arranged between the supervisor and the PhD student
- contains the process, aims and general framework as well as, if necessary, further attainments
- records the additional independent associate supervisor
- adaptations are possible if necessary
- need to be deposited (maybe via the Graduate Schools) at the Dean`s Office latest at the end of the first semester (3-6 month) after admission (scan/pdf to Andrea Pérez, andrea.perez@natdek.unibe.ch)

Doctoral examination (German: Doktoratsprüfung)

- consists of a public presentation and an oral exam (discussion)
- lasts 60 to 180 minutes
- conducted by at least two examiners
- **Registration**
 - The supervisor confirms with its signature on the application form that the process, aims and general framework according to the doctoral agreement are fulfilled as well as, if necessary, additional attainments (Zusatzleistungen) of the PhD study.
 - If the PhD student was accepted to the PhD study with additional attainments (Zusatzleistungen), these need to be demonstrated.

• **Chair**

- See above

• **Protocol**

- notes the justification/history of the grading
- quality of the presentation
- content/specification of the presentation according to the example; introduction, methods, results, discussion and conclusions
- questions and the respective responses
- rating with adjectives to justify the mark

• **Grading**

- each examiner grades the doctoral examination individually with one mark according to Article 14 of the PromR
- the mark of the doctoral examination is the arithmetic mean (not rounded) of the marks of all examiners
- will be recorded in the transcript of records (so far known as „Prüfungsprotokoll“)
- Immediately after the doctoral examination, the chair has to send the original or the signed pdf of the transcript of records **and** the protocol of the doctoral examination to the Dean`s Office (Nadja Susedka).
- **Directly after the doctoral examination, candidates can be informed orally about the result of the doctoral examination but NOT about the final mark of the PhD study, since that needs to be calculated according to the respective study plan.**

Candidates will receive the final result of their PhD study from the Dean`s Office in a written form including an explanation of rights of appeal.

PhDs will receive their PhD certificate, Diploma Supplement and announcement of grade for their PhD thesis as well as their doctoral examination.

*) Doctoral agreement: Currently, the University Board of Directors creates a new form of the Mitarbeitergespräch (MAG) and/or doctoral agreement, respectively. If the Studienausschuss is not satisfied with the document, he might provide an own example for the faculty.

Good to know!

A PhD study at the Faculty of Science is possible as:

- traditional individual doctorate (freies Doktorat): candidates are employed at the university, matriculated and follow the conditions of the respective study plan
- within the scope of a structured doctoral degree program (University of Bern: TP1-Doktoratsprogramme or CUSO-Programme)
- within the scope of a graduate school (e.g. Graduate School of Climate Sciences, International Graduate School North-South, Graduate School for Cellular and Biomedical Sciences Graduate, School Gender Studies; please keep in mind that they might have higher-ranked regulations)
- a PhD study is also possible independent of the faculty if the candidate finds a supervisor who accepts the submitted PhD study

Candidates with Master degree of an University of Applied Sciences or College of Education:

- Admission of a candidate with a Master degree of an University of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschule) or College of Education (Pädagogische Hochschule) is based upon the [Reglement der Universitätsleitung](#) and on the [Liste](#) (Annex Admission requirements).

Additional attainments (ZUDOC's; German Zusatzleistungen), to be defined for the admission according to Article 8 of the PromR:

- to be fulfilled within the deadline defined by the Studienausschuss
- with Master degree of another university: up to a maximum of 30 ECTS
- Master degree of an University of Applied Sciences or College of Education: 30-60 ECTS

Co-supervision (German: Co-Leitung):

- same academic level (co-supervisor): definition of the principle supervisor. If an independent co-supervisor is available, no further additional independent associate supervisor is needed (Four-Eyes-Principle), otherwise this person needs to be assigned.
- different academic level (no right to award doctorates): another person can be assigned as supervisor if a legitimate person takes the responsibility ("day ticket"; one-time license for supervision, application via the Dean`s Office)
- evaluation of the thesis will be done together, respectively, the final mark for the PhD thesis will be given in agreement with each other

Second supervisor (German: ZweitbetreuerIn, according to "Conformation of Supervision" facultative):

- corresponds at our faculty to the co-supervisor (Co-LeiterIn)

Third evaluation:

- only necessary if there is more than one full mark of difference between evaluations of the supervisor and the external referee (e.g. 6.0 and 4.5)
- mark of the third evaluation will be allocated with the mark of the external referee
- Please note: an additional external evaluation needs an application and agreement of the Studienausschuss and delays the PhD defense and completion of the PhD study

Level of employment:

- PhD students may work up to an employment level of no more than 10% percent in teaching and research at their institute or other organizational unit. If they are involved more than 10% an additional employment is necessary.

Other regulations:

Reserved are common regulations with other faculties or universities (see e.g. Graduate Schools).