

**Doctoral Degree Regulations of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science at Bielefeld University of 17 October 2016 in conjunction with the amendments of 1 August 2022
- Reading version -**

The versions published in the Bielefeld University Gazette – Official Announcements – are binding.

Based on § 2 (4) and § 67 (3) of the Higher Education Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (*Hochschulgesetz*, HG) of 16 September 2014 (GV. NRW. p. 574), amended by Article 9 of the Act of 14 June 2016 (GV. NRW. p. 310), the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science at Bielefeld University has issued the following doctoral degree regulations in accordance with § 1 sentence 3 of the general regulation of doctoral studies of Bielefeld University (*Rahmenpromotionsordnung*; RPO) of 15 June 2010 (Bielefeld University Gazette – Official Announcements – Vol. 39 No. 12 p. 98):

1. Doctoral degree (§ 2 RPO)

Alternatively, the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science also awards the Ph.D. degree in Human Development in Social and Cultural Research.

2. Purpose and forms of the doctoral procedure (§ 3 RPO)

(1) The doctoral procedure comprises the production of an academically significant paper (doctoral thesis) and an oral exam. The oral exam is held in the form of a disputation or colloquium upon application by the candidate.

(2) The Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science enables the doctoral studies independent of a study programme as well as the doctoral procedure in Research Training Groups and doctoral programmes, including cross-faculty ones. Further details can be found in the respective study regulations of the doctoral programmes.

3. Responsibilities (§ 4 RPO)

(1) The Faculty Conference will elect a doctoral committee that comprises the dean and two members from the group of university ~~lecturers~~ teachers, an authorised examiner from the group of lecturers, a member from the group of students, and a member of the group of staff in administration and service. In its constituting meeting, the members will elect the committee chair under the management of the dean from amongst the members of the group of university ~~lecturers~~ teachers. The dean has a casting vote in the case of a tie.

(2) The doctoral committee is competent for the tasks specified in these regulations and supervises compliance with the deadlines specified in the regulations. It also is the contact for arbitration and mediation in cases of conflict.

(3) The doctoral committee will decide on the doctoral degree to be awarded in agreement with the primary responsible supervisor and depending on the contents and academic methods of the doctoral thesis.

4. Access requirements (§ 5 RPO)

(1) Study programmes generally are deemed relevant if they were completed with a degree in psychology or sports science or a degree with a clear content reference to one of these disciplines. Decisions on exceptions are to be made by the doctoral committee; in this context, it will be relevant whether the subject-related aptitude of the applicant for the intended doctoral degree has been documented.

(2) The doctoral committee decides on access for applicants in accordance with § 5 (1) (b) RPO. The prerequisite for access is studies preparing for the doctorate in the doctorate subject at a scope of 60 credit points, to be completed in a relevant Master course in accordance with the specifications of the doctoral committee. Graduates of a three-year bachelor course in psychology or sports science or a degree programme with comparable content may also be admitted to the doctorate upon submission of a written exposé and a supervision meeting with an intended primary responsible supervisor and with their consent, provided that the Bachelor grade was 1.3 or better and the grade of the Bachelor's thesis was 1.0, and a module from the Master course chosen in coordination with the person named in sentence 3 and specified by the doctoral committee was evaluated with grade 1.3 or better.

(3) For graduates of Bachelor courses of more than three years in the subjects of psychology or sports science or degree programmes with comparable content, corresponding study requirements already completed can be partly or fully credited to the studies preparing for the doctorate upon the candidate's application and in agreement with the primary responsible supervisor, in deviation from paragraph 2.

5. Acceptance as a doctoral student (§ 6 RPO)

The application for acceptance must be addressed to the doctoral committee. The application should be filed with the faculty's doctoral committee in a timely manner after determination that the access requirements are met. In addition to the documents named in § 6 (3) RPO, the doctoral title desired by the candidate must be named in and the supervision agreement must be enclosed with the application.

5a. Admission to the structured PhD programme in the subject of psychology (§ 6 RPO)

(1) In addition to the doctorate independent of a doctoral study programme, the subject of psychology also permits acquisition of a doctorate within the scope of a structured PhD programme. In this programme, the doctoral students are enabled to participate in research-related offerings and options for exchange as well as acquisition of academic key qualifications. The decision on admission to the structured PhD programme is made by the faculty's doctoral committee based on the application in accordance with paragraph 2.

(2) The application for admission to the structured PhD programme must include the following in addition to the documents named in § 6 (3) RPO:

- a) documentation of the studies to date,
- b) an exposé for the doctoral project. The exposé must reflect the academic quality and feasibility of the doctoral project and give the impression that the applicant will be able to successfully complete their doctorate,
- c) confirmation by the supervisor that they will take over supervision of the doctorate within the scope of the structured PhD programme,
- d) plans for use of the offerings of the structured PhD programme based on individual needs and under consideration of the doctoral thesis topic. The intended academic achievements to be performed in accordance with paragraph 3 are to be coordinated and specified between the candidate and the supervisor.

(3) In particular the following academic achievements must be completed within the scope of the structured PhD programme:

- a) regular participation in and presentation of the progress of the doctoral project in a relevant research colloquium,
- b) further activities for acquisition of subject-specific competences and subject-comprehensive key qualifications, e.g., by
 - participation in courses from the department of psychology on qualifications relevant for the doctorate, in particular in the area of methods, academic writing, and subject-specific specialisation in the contents of the doctoral project,
 - participation in events in the area of promotion of young researchers, university didactics, and personnel development of Bielefeld University,
 - participation in events on subject-specific and subject-comprehensive competences outside of Bielefeld University,
 - activities in research, such as organisation of and/or contributions to workshops and symposia, contribution to publications that are not part of the doctoral thesis, and in the course of publication (e.g., peer review process),
 - contribution to teaching (e.g. courses, theses),
 - further relevant activities (e.g., participation in career development meetings).

The completed academic achievements must be documented when the doctoral procedure is opened in accordance with item 7.

(4) The doctoral committee may make further decisions on the content and progress of the doctoral programme. It will publish its decision in a suitable manner.

6. Supervision (§ 7 RPO)

(1) The doctoral committee will advise the candidate in planning of their doctoral project.

(2) Supervision of the doctoral thesis should be performed by a member of the group of university ~~lecturers~~ teachers with voting rights and technical competence or a Privatdozent*in [senior lecturer] with voting rights in the faculty. Discharged or retired professors may also supervise a doctoral thesis. A member of the faculty who holds a doctorate and has voting rights, and who must have completed another independent academic achievement in addition to the doctorate, and who has acquired doctoral student positions financed by third-party funds on their own may supervise the doctorate of a doctoral student to be employed in such a position upon their application. In this case, the doctorate must refer to the project's subject. The doctoral committee will verify that the prerequisites under sentences 3 and 4 are met and will decide on whether or not to approve the application.

(3) Members of other faculties or universities may be appointed as further supervisors for interdisciplinary or faculty-comprehensive work or cooperative doctoral projects. A supervisor appointed in the scope of a cooperative supervision procedure with a university of applied sciences must have completed their habilitation or an equivalent academic achievement. This must be formally determined by the faculty. This determination

will be valid for five years in each case.

(4) The doctoral student and the supervisor will enter into a supervision agreement that complies with the faculty's template. The supervisor must only terminate the supervision for cause.

(5) If a supervisor moves on to another university, they will retain the right to complete the supervision of any doctorates already commenced with the consent of the doctoral student and the doctoral committee. This right applies for a period of four years. They will be deemed an authorised examiner of the faculty for the perspective doctoral procedure.

(6) Anyone who wishes to produce a doctoral thesis outside of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science should contact a person from the group of university ~~lecturers~~ teachers with voting rights or a Privatdozent*in [senior lecturer] with voting rights from the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science in alignment with the subject area of their work in the earliest stage of the paper that is possible to agree on the topic and course of the paper and to warrant sufficient academic supervision.

7. Opening of the doctoral procedure (§ 8 RPO)

(1) The doctoral procedure will be opened by decision of the doctoral committee upon the candidate's application. The application for opening of the doctoral procedure must be addressed to the chair of the doctoral committee in writing.

(2) The application for opening of the doctoral procedure must include the following in addition to the documents named in § 8 RPO:

1. five copies of the doctoral thesis,
2. five copies of a summary of the doctoral thesis, not in excess of five pages,
3. a statement that the doctoral thesis has not been submitted to any other faculty before in its current or a different version. The application for opening of the doctoral procedure is to be refused if the doctoral thesis was already submitted to a different faculty in its current or a different version or if the candidate has failed the doctoral procedure at a different faculty even in the repeat procedure.
4. in the case of a cumulative doctoral thesis: a presentation of the academic context of the individual manuscripts and, if applicable, confirmation of authorship in accordance with item 9 (3) no. 1.
5. in the case of a doctorate in the structured PhD programme in accordance with item 5a: Evidence of the academic achievements completed in the scope of the structured PhD programme.

(3) The application for opening of the doctoral procedure may include suggestions for the members of the examination committee. The doctoral committee is not bound to these suggestions.

8. Examination committee (§ 9 RPO)

(1) The examination committee usually comprises three members, including two university ~~lecturers~~ teachers (i.e., professors, Junior professors, and extraordinary professors) or Privatdozenten [senior lecturers] as reviewers for the doctoral thesis. In the case of item 6 (2) sent. 3 and 4, one of the two reviewers in accordance with sentence 1 may be a member of the faculty who holds a doctorate. At least one of the reviewers must be from the group of university ~~lecturers~~ teachers from the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science of Bielefeld University with voting rights.

(2) The doctoral committee appoints the members of the respective examination committee for the individual doctoral procedure, including the reviewers for the doctoral thesis. If an authorised examiner of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science of Bielefeld University has supervised the doctoral thesis, they should be appointed as a reviewer. In the case of a cumulative doctoral thesis, the second reviewer must not be the co-author of one of the manuscripts in accordance with item 9 (3) no. 1 at the same time.

(3) The doctoral committee also appoints the chair of the examination committee from amongst the members of the examination committee. The chair must be a member of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science of Bielefeld University with voting rights and a lecturer (i.e., university ~~lecturer~~ professor, Junior professor, extraordinary professor) or Privatdozent*in [senior lecturer]. The supervisor should not be the chair of the examination committee. If another reviewer is appointed in accordance with item 9 (9) or (10), the dean will be the chair of the examination committee with voting rights. If the dean is the applicant under item 9 (9), the vice dean will be the chair. If both are applicants, the Faculty Conference determines the chair.

(4) Members of other faculties of Bielefeld University and other universities with doctorates may be appointed to the examination committee with voting rights. The members of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science of Bielefeld University must not be a minority in the examination committee, however. At least two subject-representatives of the university should be represented in the examination committee.

9. Doctoral thesis (§ 10 RPO)

(1) The doctoral thesis must cover a topic with a focus area subject to the specialist competence of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science. It must form an independently developed, and in psychology usually an empirical, contribution of the candidate to academic research. The doctoral thesis should be written in the German or English language. Upon the candidate's application to the doctoral committee, the doctoral thesis may also be written in a different language. It may be submitted either as an individual thesis, as a cumulative doctoral thesis, or as teamwork.

(2) In the case of an individual thesis, the paper submitted must not have been fully published yet. Important partial results of the research work may have been published already in coordination with the supervisor of the doctoral project before the application for opening of the doctoral procedure was filed.

(3) The following may be submitted instead of an individual thesis:

1. A cumulative doctoral thesis that must comprise at least three manuscripts that were created to cover a joint academic question, documented to have been submitted to recognised specialist journals or book series that intend for review of the manuscripts (peer review) at the time of opening of the doctoral procedure and out of which at least one must have been verifiably accepted for publication or already published. The three manuscripts must have been written as primary author. This form of doctoral thesis must have the overall academic level of an individual thesis. The cumulative doctoral thesis must include presentation of the academic context of the individual manuscripts by the candidate in a synopsis and sufficient substantiation for this. The candidate's share in the manuscripts with joint authorship must be evident from this presentation. The candidate must confirm their authorship of the individual parts in writing.
2. An intra- or interdisciplinary teamwork that meets the following requirements:
 - a) the theoretical or method-related content of a teamwork and the actual work must essentially differ from that of an individual thesis; the contribution of every candidate must correspond to the academic level of an individual thesis; it must be clearly distinguishable and capable of evaluation,
 - b) the candidates must reflect the individual authorship for particular dimensions or sections of the work in the case of teamwork,
 - c) the candidates must enclose a joint report on the course of the cooperation that reflects the essential contributions of the candidates to the joint work.

(4) The doctoral committee will make decisions on any exceptions from paragraph 3 no. 1.

(5) The dissertation is assessed by the appointed reviewers, who will receive one copy of the doctoral thesis each. The reviewers will examine in detail and independently from each other whether the submitted doctoral thesis can be accepted toward the doctoral exam results, whether it has to be rejected or returned for revision.

(6) The reviewers are to submit their opinions to the chair of the doctoral committee within two months after their appointment.

(7) The doctoral thesis is to be graded with one of the following grades if accepted:

- a) summa cum laude
- b) magna cum laude
- c) cum laude
- d) rite

If the grade "summa cum laude" is awarded, the examination committee must substantiate this evaluation separately.

(8) The opinions must be disclosed to the candidate without undue delay once they are fully available to the chair of the doctoral committee. They are afforded the opportunity to make a statement on the opinions within 14 days. Thereafter, the doctoral thesis and the opinions, as well as any statement from the candidate, must be made accessible to all members of the faculty with doctorates and to all members of the examination committee in the dean's office for three weeks. The display will be announced to the faculty by the dean in a suitable manner.

(9) The university lecturers teachers with voting rights and the habilitated members of the group of lecturers with voting rights of the faculty have the right to request appointment of a university lecturer as another reviewer from the doctoral committee during the display period. This requires a quorum of three such members of the faculty. The application must include written grounds. The doctoral committee decides on the application within a period of four weeks of hearing the examination committee.

(10) If another reviewer was appointed under paragraph 9 and the majority of reviewers recommends refusing the doctoral thesis, the candidate has the right to suggest another reviewer who meets the prerequisites of item 8 (1) sentence 1. This suggestion must be accepted. The appointment of another reviewer should be performed without undue delay.

(11) The opinions must be handed over to the members of the examination committee without undue delay as soon as they are fully available to the chair of the doctoral committee. The examination committee will decide on acceptance and grading, return for revision, or rejection of the doctoral thesis based on the opinions and any statements available. If there is a tie in the examination committee, the chair's vote is decisive. In the case of return for revision, an adequate period for repeated submission of the doctoral thesis must be specified.

(12) The decision on the doctoral thesis must be made no later than three weeks after the end of the display period of the paper and the opinions.

(13) The chair of the doctoral committee must disclose the decision on acceptance, return for revision, or rejection of the doctoral thesis to the candidate in writing within one week. In the case of acceptance, the date of the disputation must be announced at the same time. In the case of return for revision, the procedure in accordance with paragraph 8 is to be repeated after timely receipt of the paper. If the doctoral thesis is not received in time without cause, it is deemed rejected.

(14) If the doctoral thesis revised in accordance with paragraph 11 is rejected by the examination committee after timely receipt, the doctorate is failed. There will be no oral exam in this case.

(15) If the doctoral thesis was rejected, one further attempt at acquiring a doctorate with a new subject for the doctoral thesis may be made. Further attempts at acquiring a doctorate are not permitted.

10. Oral examination result (§ 11 RPO)

(1) The oral exam takes place upon the candidate's request either as a disputation or as a colloquium. It should be held no later than three months after acceptance of the doctoral thesis. The disputation comprises a presentation of the doctoral thesis by the candidate and an academic discussion conducted between the examination committee and the candidate. The subject of the disputation may also include questions from adjacent subject areas. The presentation will take 45 minutes. The subsequent examination discussion usually takes 45 - 60 minutes. Paragraph 2 sentence 3 applies accordingly. The presentation is held publicly for the university. The place and time will be published in a suitable manner. The academic discussion is public for the university with the candidate's consent.

(2) For the colloquium, the candidate must submit four hypotheses from areas of the doctoral subject to the members of the examination committee 14 days before the examination date. The colloquium usually takes 90 minutes. A record of it is to be produced, specifically containing the represented hypotheses and the essential statements of the candidate on them, as well as the evaluation of the colloquium. The colloquium will take place under consideration of the submitted hypotheses regarding matters connected to the doctoral thesis in terms of subject or methodology or adjacent issues of the subject. For candidates under item 4 (2) and (3), the colloquium also covers areas of the studies preparing for the doctorate.

(3) Supplementing § 11 (7) RPO, the oral exam is deemed failed if the candidate does not attend the disputation or colloquium without excuse, unless they were not at fault for this.

(4) The result will be disclosed to the candidate without undue delay.

11. Overall grade of the doctorate (§ 12 RPO)

(1) If the oral exam is passed, the examination committee will specify the overall grade for the doctorate at once after the examination with one of the following grades:

- a) summa cum laude
- b) magna cum laude
- c) cum laude
- d) rite.

The grade of the doctoral thesis will be weighted double for this. The overall grade "summa cum laude" will only be awarded if the doctoral thesis and the oral exam have both been evaluated with a grade of "summa cum laude".

(2) Evaluation of doctoral exam results is to be completed no later than six months after receipt of the request to open the doctoral procedure.

(3) The overall result under paragraph 1 is disclosed to the candidate without undue delay. The examination committee will submit written grounds for the grade to the doctoral committee within one week of the oral exam. The doctoral committee will disclose the result of the doctoral thesis and the oral exam to the candidate within one week and inform the dean of this.

12. Execution of the doctorate (§ 13 RPO)

- not applicable -

13. Publication of the doctoral thesis (§ 14 RPO)

The candidate is obligated to make the doctoral thesis accessible to the academic public in an appropriate manner through reproduction and distribution within twenty-four months. The doctoral thesis is made available to the academic public in an appropriate manner if the author delivers two copies printed on age-resistant wood- and acid-free paper and bound in a durable manner, to the University library for archiving free of charge in addition to the copy required for the faculty's examination files and also ensures its dissemination by:

- a) delivery of a further four copies, each in book or photo print, or
- b) proof of publication in a journal, or
- c) (1) proof of distribution in book trade by a commercial publisher via a print process with a first print run or (2) by using a print-on-demand process with guaranteed availability for at least five years, or (3) via an electronic version (e-book) guaranteed to be available for at least five years. The publication as a doctoral thesis must be indicated on the page following the title page, including the place of the doctorate, or
- d) submission of an electronic version, the data format and data carrier of which must be agreed with the University Library.

In the case of a), the University library is obligated to keep an adequate number of excess exchange copies for four years. The obligation to publish is deemed to have been met already in the cases of b) and c) when the four copies of the doctoral thesis have been submitted and an agreement with an editor or a publisher has been concluded, stating that the doctoral thesis will be published no later than twelve months after the disputation. In cases a) and d), the doctoral candidate will transfer the right to produce and distribute further copies of their doctoral thesis or to make it available in data networks within the scope of the statutory tasks of the university library. If a doctoral thesis is distributed by a commercial publishing house subject to a printing grant from public funds, an adequate number of copies is to be provided to the University library for exchange purposes.

14. Fraud and withdrawal of the doctorate (§ 15 RPO)

- not applicable -

15. Inspection (§ 16 RPO)

The candidate has the right to inspect the examination file within one month after publication of the results.

16. Objection against decisions made in the doctoral procedure (§ 17 RPO)

- not applicable -

17. Honorary doctorate (§ 18 RPO)

- not applicable -

18. Joint doctorate with other universities (§ 19 RPO)

(1) The Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science also awards the degree of doctor of philosophy (Dr. phil.) or doctor of natural sciences (Dr. rer. nat.) or the degree Ph.D. in Human Development in Social and Cultural Research in cooperation with a partner university or faculty. It also participates in awarding of a corresponding academic degree by the partner university or faculty.

(2) Implementation of the doctoral procedure in accordance with paragraph 1 requires a written agreement with the partner institution in which both parties undertake to facilitate a joint doctorate and to regulate the details of the cooperation.

(3) The provisions of items 1 to 13 and 15 will apply to the doctoral procedure in accordance with paragraph 1 sentence 1, unless otherwise specified below. The provisions of the agreement in accordance with paragraph 2 will apply to the cooperation in accordance with paragraph 1 sentence 2.

(4) Item 4 will apply subject to the proviso that the applicant must document a degree that entitles them to

attempt a doctorate at both partner institutions.

(5) Item 7 (2) applies with the proviso that the application must also include:

- a) a declaration of the partner institution that admission of the doctoral procedure is already approved or has already been declared,
- b) a declaration of the reviewer appointed by the partner institution, stating that they are willing to review the doctoral thesis,
- c) proof of completing a study programme at the partner institution in accordance with paragraph 8.

These statements are to be submitted to the doctoral committee with the application for opening of the doctoral procedure.

(6) The doctoral thesis must be written in German or in a language specified in the partnership agreement. A summary in the respective other language must be added.

(7) The supervisors of the doctoral thesis will be one authorised examiner of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science in accordance with item 6 and one authorised examiner of the partner institution each. This information and the information under paragraph 6 must be available upon completion of the partnership agreement.

(8) During the processing time, the applicant must be enrolled as a regular student or doctoral student at the partner institution for at least one semester. Students who have already completed a study programme of a corresponding duration at the partner institution may be exempted from this requirement.

(9) The doctoral thesis is reviewed by one authorised examiner of the faculty with voting rights and one reviewer specified by the partner institution each. The doctoral committee usually determines the supervisors as reviewers of the doctoral thesis. The language of the opinion is subject to paragraph 6 sentence 1 accordingly.

(10) The examination committee usually comprises four examiners in accordance with the proviso of the partnership agreement. Two of these should be authorised examiners of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science of Bielefeld University and two should be authorised examiners of the partner institution. Each faculty must be represented by at least one examiner.

(11) The language of the disputation is subject to paragraph 6 sentence 1 accordingly. In the case of contribution under paragraph 1 sentence 2, the form and duration of the oral exam will be subject to the rules contained in the partnership agreement.

(12) Completion of the doctoral procedure will be subject to § 13 RPO, subject to the proviso that a bilingual certificate will be awarded. The faculty's dean will sign and seal the German part. The partner institution will execute its part of the doctoral degree certificate in accordance with the regulations applicable to it. The certificate must indicate the international doctoral procedure. An accompanying letter will inform the candidate that the title must only be used either in the German version or in the version of the country in which the partner institution is headquartered.

19. Entering into effect and transitional provisions (§ 20 RPO)

These doctoral degree regulations will enter into effect on the day after they are announced in the Bielefeld University Gazette - Official Announcements. At the same time, the doctoral degree regulations of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science of 17 October 2016 (Bielefeld University Gazette – Official Announcements – year 40 No. 14 p. 224), amended by amendment order of 17 March 2014 (Bielefeld University Gazette – Official Announcements – year 43 no. 4 p. 51) will cease to apply; it will continue to apply to all doctoral students who have applied for access to the doctoral procedure before these doctoral degree regulations entered into effect. These regulations may be applied in that case as well upon the doctoral student's request. Such request cannot be withdrawn.

Issued based on the resolution of the Faculty Conference of the Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science of Bielefeld University of 13 July 2016.

Bielefeld, 17 October 2016

The rector
of Bielefeld University
University Professor Dr.-Ing. Gerhard Sagerer