

This English version of the Doctoral Degree Regulations of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, and the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science of Leibniz Universität Hannover and QUEST Leibniz Research School is for information only and is not legally binding.

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The Faculty Councils of the respective faculties of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover adopted the following revised Joint Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Natural Sciences (Dr. rer. nat.) as follows: Faculty of Natural Sciences: 9 January 2013; Faculty for Mathematics and Physics: 30 January 2013; Faculty for Electrical Engineering and Computer Science: 14 January 2013; QUEST Leibniz Research School: 1 March 2013. The Presidential Executive Committee approved the Regulations on 6 March 2013 as per Section 37 Para. 1 No. 5. b) Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (NHG). The Regulations come into force on the day of their university-wide publication in the Announcement Bulletin of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover.

**Joint Regulations  
for the Degree of  
Doctor of Natural Sciences (Dr. rer. nat.)  
at Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover**

**Section 1 Conferral of the Academic Degree of Dr. rer. nat.**

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover (hereinafter called Leibniz Universität Hannover) confers the academic degree of "Doctor of Natural Sciences" (Doctor rerum naturalium, abbreviated: Dr. rer. nat.), through the faculties specified in the Appendix and in compliance with the following Regulations.

**Section 2 Doctoral Work**

- (1) The doctorate shall serve as proof of the recipient's ability to conduct in-depth, independent scientific work in one or more fields of the natural sciences.
- (2) This proof shall be provided by means of a doctoral thesis (Section 8) and either an oral examination (Section 9) or a thesis defence (Section 10).
- (3) The doctoral thesis must primarily be able to be categorised into one of the fields listed in the Appendix; this is the field of the doctoral thesis.
- (4) Doctoral studies may be carried out in either a doctoral programme of structured training for doctoral students or in a doctoral course of study, under the responsibility of one or more faculties, or outside such a programme or course of study.

**Section 3 Admission Requirements**

(1) <sup>1</sup>To be admitted for doctoral studies, applicants must, as a rule, have successfully completed a course of study leading to a Diplom, Magister, Staatsexamen or Master in the field of the doctorate, at either a state or a state-recognised university in Germany. <sup>2</sup>Insofar as is deemed necessary for the discipline, conditions may be imposed as per Para. 4.

<sup>3</sup>The decision shall be taken by the competent Faculty Council.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Foreign final degrees require approval. <sup>2</sup>Approval is conditional on their being equivalent to German degrees. <sup>3</sup>In the decision on the equivalence of foreign degrees, the equivalence agreements approved by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Rectors' Conference or appropriate statutory rules shall be taken into account. <sup>4</sup>In case of doubt about the equivalence, the Central Office for Foreign Education should be consulted. <sup>5</sup>Conditions may be imposed as per Para. 4. <sup>6</sup>The decision shall be taken by the competent Faculty Council.

(3) <sup>1</sup>Persons with a German Bachelor's degree may be admitted to doctoral studies on the basis of assessment tests if they demonstrate outstanding ability. <sup>2</sup>Moreover, conditions may be imposed as per Para. 4, which correspond to the requirements of an additional course of study usually of two semesters' duration at Leibniz Universität Hannover. <sup>3</sup>The decision shall be taken by the competent Faculty Council.

(4) <sup>1</sup>Applicants on whom conditions have been imposed as per Paras 1, 2, or 3 must pass assessment tests in three subjects from one or more fields as listed in the Appendix. <sup>2</sup>The assessment tests are to prove

applicants have the skills and knowledge equivalent to those attainable in a completed course of study as per Para. 1 or a combination of such courses of study at Leibniz Universität Hannover. <sup>3</sup>In their application, applicants may make suggestions as to the subjects for the assessment tests as per Section 4. <sup>4</sup>Course and examination results achieved previously shall be taken into account appropriately and may replace individual assessment tests. <sup>5</sup>The competent Faculty Council shall stipulate the subjects for the assessment test and appoint the examiners. <sup>6</sup>The applicant must be notified in writing of the decision. <sup>7</sup>The applicant shall arrange examination dates with the examiners. <sup>8</sup>Subsequent to the examination, the examiners shall provide the applicant with verbal notification of the examination result, while the Dean shall be notified in writing. <sup>9</sup>The assessment tests must normally be completed within the next semester, or, in the case of Para. 3, within the three semesters immediately following the Faculty Council's decision. <sup>10</sup>Examinations failed may be repeated once. <sup>11</sup>Further repeats require the Faculty Council's consent upon the applicant's request.

#### **Section 4 Acceptance as Doctoral Candidate**

(1) By accepting a doctoral candidate the faculty declares its basic willingness to assess a doctoral thesis on the proposed subject matter as scientific work by means of persons with the status of examiner for the doctoral degree (hereinafter referred to as "qualified examiners"), and to supervise the doctoral candidate in preparing the doctoral thesis.

(2) <sup>1</sup>A doctoral candidate shall be accepted on application provided the applicant meets the admission requirements according to Section 3. <sup>2</sup>Persons proposing to write a doctoral thesis should direct their application to be admitted to doctoral studies, i.e. to be accepted as a doctoral candidate, to the faculty where the field of the doctoral thesis is taught when commencing work on their doctoral thesis. <sup>3</sup>The application shall be made in writing and submitted to the Dean of the competent faculty. <sup>4</sup>The faculty accepting such an application for processing shall be responsible for the procedure for the doctoral examination.

(3) <sup>1</sup>The application must be accompanied by:

- a) a CV with a description of the personal and professional development including educational background, supplemented, where applicable, by a complete list of scientific publications,
- b) evidence of degrees obtained,
- c) a statement of the research topic of the doctoral thesis and the field of the doctorate as per Section 2 Para. 3,
- d) a Supervision Agreement as per Section 5 Para. 4,
- e) a statement as to current or previous doctorate applications; where applicable, details are required as to when, on which topic, at which university and faculty commencement of the procedure for the doctoral examination has been applied for,
- f) where applicable, suggestions for assessment tests as per Section 3 Para. 4.

<sup>2</sup>The application and the documents attached shall remain in the Dean's office.

(4) <sup>1</sup>The competent Faculty Council shall normally decide on the application within three months, in the case of doctoral programmes the decision shall be taken at the start of the respective doctoral programme. <sup>2</sup>Conditions as per Section 3 Para. 4 shall be included in the notification of acceptance as a doctoral candidate. <sup>3</sup>The acceptance shall be subject to a time limit.

(5) <sup>1</sup>The decision on acceptance or rejection as a doctoral candidate shall be communicated to the applicant in writing. <sup>2</sup>A rejection shall include the grounds for this rejection and advice on legal remedies.

(6) The acceptance as a doctoral candidate may be revoked for cause, especially if time limits set as per Section 3 Para. 4 for the fulfilment of conditions are exceeded without cause, or if the doctoral candidate has seriously breached duties arising from the Supervision Agreement.

(7) Persons who have been accepted as doctoral candidates shall enrol as doctoral students at Leibniz Universität Hannover as per Section 9 Para. 2 NHG.

#### **Section 5 Supervision**

(1) As a matter of principle, qualified examiners shall act as supervisors.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The following persons are deemed to be qualified examiners:

- a) members of the group of university lecturers of the competent faculty,
- b) assistant professors (Privatdozent/-innen) who are members of the competent faculty, as well as other habilitated members of the competent faculty.

<sup>2</sup>With the consent of the competent Faculty Council, assistant professors or other habilitated members of Leibniz Universität as well as qualified examiners belonging to other faculties of Leibniz Universität Hannover or the natural science disciplines of Hannover Medical School (MHH) and the University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Foundation may be authorised to act as supervisors.

(3) Junior research group leaders who are supported through a programme of a research promotion institution with external evaluation procedure, especially through the Emmy Noether Programme of the DFG, the Volkswagen Foundation, the European Research Council or through organisations of equal standing, or junior research group leaders who have been appointed to their position in internal appointment proceedings involving external experts, may likewise be authorised to act as qualified examiners if so decided by the Faculty Council.

(4) <sup>1</sup>On request, cooperative supervisions by several supervisors as per Paras. 1 to 3 may also be permitted.

<sup>2</sup>The supervisory team may also include a qualified examiner belonging to another university.

(5) <sup>1</sup>The Supervision Agreement shall govern the framework conditions for the supervision of doctoral candidates by the supervisor(s). <sup>2</sup>The Supervision Agreement shall at least include:

- a) names and signatures of the doctoral candidate and of the supervisor(s),
- b) the preliminary research topic of the doctoral thesis with a project outline,
- c) a declaration of the willingness of the supervisor(s) to provide appropriate scientific supervision of the doctoral candidate,
- d) the commitment of the doctoral candidate to report to the supervisor on the project status on a regular basis, and the supervisor's commitment to receive regular reports on the status of the doctoral thesis.

(6) Any updates of the Supervision Agreement shall be made known to the Dean's office.

### **Section 6 Application for Admission to the Doctoral Examination**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The application for admission to the doctoral examination shall be made in writing and submitted to the Dean of the competent faculty no earlier than three months after having been accepted as a doctoral candidate and after the conditions as per Section 4 have been fulfilled. <sup>2</sup>The application must be accompanied by:

- a) a CV with a description of the personal and professional development,
- b) a complete list of scientific publications,
- c) four identical copies of a doctoral thesis in printed form and an identical, electronically readable version. The doctoral thesis shall be written in German or English. If a well-founded application is submitted, the Faculty Council may decide to allow the doctoral thesis to be written in another language.
- d) Declarations of the doctoral candidate,
  1. to know and have adhered to the stipulations of the applicable Doctoral Degree Regulations and to agree to take an examination according to the requirements of the Doctoral Degree Regulations,
  2. to be the author of the doctoral thesis (statement of authorship), not to have adopted texts originating from third persons nor texts from their own examined work, unless duly marked as such, and to have specified in the doctoral thesis all means and sources utilised,
  3. not to have provided third persons with monetary benefits, either directly or indirectly, for intermediary activities or for composing the content of the doctoral thesis (i. e., the scientific work has not been acquired from, or imparted by, either in part or in whole, third persons for remuneration or other return service),
  4. not to have previously submitted the doctoral thesis as examination work for another examination,
  5. whether the same paper, or a paper similar in essential parts, has already been submitted to another faculty or university as a doctoral thesis and, if so, what result was achieved; at the same time the candidate must specify if a different paper has been submitted as a doctoral thesis elsewhere and, if so, what result was achieved,
  6. to agree to the doctoral thesis being scrutinised for its adherence to generally accepted scientific standards, particularly also by using electronic data processing programmes.

(2) <sup>1</sup>When applying for admission to the doctoral examination, the doctoral candidate shall make a statement as to whether they have chosen the oral examination (Section 9) or the thesis defence (Section 10). <sup>2</sup>If the doctoral candidate opts for the oral examination, two examination subjects selected as per Section 9 Para. 2 must be indicated. <sup>3</sup>To accelerate proceedings, the supervisor shall make proposals as to the appointment of reviewers and the composition of the Examination Board (Section 7) as well as to the place and time of the oral examination (Section 9) or the thesis defence (Section 10).

- (3) The application, one copy of the doctoral thesis submitted as well as the documents submitted shall remain in the Dean's office.
- (4) <sup>1</sup>The application for admission to the doctoral examination may be withdrawn. <sup>2</sup>Withdrawal is not possible if an expert opinion has already been received in the Dean's office.

### **Section 7 Commencement of the Procedure for the Doctoral Examination**

- (1) <sup>1</sup>The competent Faculty Council shall decide on the commencement of the procedure for the doctoral examination. <sup>2</sup>The doctoral candidate shall receive written notification about the commencement. <sup>3</sup>If the doctoral candidate has chosen the oral examination, the Faculty Council shall also decide on the subject combination selected.
- (2) <sup>1</sup>When commencing the procedure for the doctoral examination, the Faculty Council shall appoint referees and co-referees (reviewers) for the doctoral thesis, as well as an Examination Board. <sup>2</sup>The Examination Board shall discuss and decide on the acceptance and assessment or the rejection of the doctoral thesis, on the basis of written expert opinions. <sup>3</sup>The Board shall organise the oral examination or the thesis defence and shall assess this examination performance.
- (3) <sup>1</sup>For the examination of the doctoral thesis, the Faculty Council shall appoint a qualified examiner for the subject of the natural sciences chiefly relevant to the doctoral thesis as the referee. <sup>2</sup>In exceptional cases, qualified examiners from one of the universities specified in Section 5 Para. 2 may be appointed referees within three years of their leaving the university.
- (4) <sup>1</sup>Furthermore, for the examination of the doctoral thesis the Faculty Council shall appoint as co-referees one or more qualified examiner(s) from the universities specified in Section 5 Para. 2 or other universities with the right to confer doctorates. <sup>2</sup>On request, a qualified examiner from another university may also be involved as a further referee.
- (5) If the doctoral thesis is relevant to a field of a faculty other than the competent faculty as per Section 4, and if it appears necessary in order to assess the scientific achievement of the doctoral candidate, a reviewer from such a faculty shall be appointed if the Faculty Council so decides.
- (6) If the doctoral thesis has been suggested and co-supervised by a person not belonging to any university, such person may be requested to give an expert opinion if the Faculty Council so decides.
- (7) <sup>1</sup>The competent Faculty Council shall appoint at least three qualified examiners as members of the Examination Board and shall appoint a qualified examiner from the competent faculty as chairperson. <sup>2</sup>At least two members must be full-time employees at one of the universities mentioned in Section 5 Para. 2. <sup>3</sup>For the oral examination, the Examination Board shall usually include, as per Section 9, two examiners for the major subject selected and at least one examiner for the minor subject selected. <sup>4</sup>The reviewers may be members of the Examination Board, but the supervisor and the referee must not be the chairperson of the Board. <sup>5</sup>If, in accordance with Para. 6, a person not being a member of a university has been requested to give an expert opinion, such person shall be asked to play an advisory role in the Examination Board's work.
- (8) <sup>1</sup>The Examination Board shall meet in closed sessions. <sup>2</sup>Its decisions shall be documented in minutes of the proceedings. <sup>3</sup>The Examination Board shall have a quorum when all members appointed are present. <sup>4</sup>Video conference participation by one Board member at maximum, with the exception of the chairperson, is permissible for the whole course of the meeting.
- (9) <sup>1</sup>The members of the Examination Board are obliged to maintain confidentiality in respect of facts known to them from closed sessions, unless such a fact has already been generally disclosed or, in terms of its relevance, does not need to be kept confidential. <sup>2</sup>Duties of confidentiality arising from the employment and working relationship remain unaffected.
- (10) The rights of qualified examiners to participate in procedures for doctoral examinations shall generally remain unaffected by the conferral of emeritus status, or their retirement.

## Section 8 Doctoral Thesis

(1) <sup>1</sup>The doctoral thesis of the doctoral candidate shall prove their ability to achieve results through independent scientific work which are conducive to the further development of the field of the doctoral thesis.

<sup>2</sup>The doctoral thesis is a scientific paper written independently by the doctoral candidate which constitutes scientific progress. <sup>3</sup>The doctoral thesis must deal with a coherent specialist issue and must include a self-contained presentation of the research work and its results. <sup>4</sup>The doctoral thesis must not have been published previously; parts of the doctoral thesis may already have been published prior to their submission.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The doctoral thesis shall begin with an abstract in German and an abstract in English of one page maximum. <sup>2</sup>The doctoral thesis shall end with a short CV including information on the educational background.

(3) <sup>1</sup>Where a doctoral thesis consists of several scientific publications (cumulative thesis), the cumulative work must have arisen from a common scientific issue. <sup>2</sup>It must be preceded by a detailed description dealing with a critical classification of the research topics and main findings from the publications within the context of the scientific literature on the topic, and setting out the candidate's own individual contributions and, where applicable, the contributions made by further authors to the publications in question.

(4) The reviewers shall individually and independently of each other assess in detail whether the doctoral thesis submitted may be approved as doctoral work.

(5) <sup>1</sup>Each reviewer shall compile a written expert opinion, recommending either acceptance or rejection of the doctoral thesis and giving reasons for the recommendation made. <sup>2</sup>The recommendation for acceptance may include conditions. <sup>3</sup>If it is recommended that the doctoral thesis be accepted, this must be accompanied by a well-founded proposal as to the grade to be awarded. <sup>4</sup>The following grades may be awarded:

excellent	= 0
very good	= 1
good	= 2
satisfactory	= 3

<sup>5</sup>Where only two reviewers have been appointed and both of them have assessed the doctoral thesis as being "excellent", the Faculty Council may appoint further reviewers.

(6) <sup>1</sup>The expert opinions shall usually be available within six weeks of the procedure for the doctoral examination being commenced. <sup>2</sup>Failing this, the Faculty Council may appoint other reviewers.

(7) <sup>1</sup>The doctoral thesis and the expert opinions as well as any advisory opinions shall be displayed for at least two weeks, usually during semester time, for inspection by the qualified examiners of the competent faculty. <sup>2</sup>Such persons are entitled to raise an objection to a thesis assessment suggested during the time the opinions are displayed. <sup>3</sup>Reasons must be provided for the objection and it must be submitted to the Dean in written form.

(8) The doctoral thesis is deemed to have been accepted when all reviewers have recommended its acceptance and no objection as per Para. 7 to the acceptance of the doctoral thesis has been raised.

(9) <sup>1</sup>The doctoral thesis is deemed to have been rejected when all reviewers have recommended rejection and no objection as per Para. 7 has been raised thereto. <sup>2</sup>The doctoral procedure is therewith completed, and the Dean of the faculty shall inform the person concerned in writing accordingly, including the reasons for the rejection and advice on legal remedies.

(10) <sup>1</sup>If acceptance has been recommended with conditions as per Para. 5, the Examination Board shall decide on the conditions to be fulfilled. <sup>2</sup>The chairperson of the Examination Board shall inform the person concerned and the Dean accordingly, and shall stipulate an appropriate deadline for working on the conditions. <sup>3</sup>The Board shall decide whether such conditions have been fulfilled.

(11) <sup>1</sup>If a decision on acceptance of the doctoral thesis has not been made in the procedure as per Paras. 8 to 10, the Faculty Council shall appoint further, preferably external, co-referees and further Examination Board members, where appropriate, so that the Board includes at least five qualified examiners, and a different chairperson, where appropriate. <sup>2</sup>Paras. 4 to 6 shall apply accordingly. <sup>3</sup>After the display period (Para. 7) of the additionally requested expert opinions has expired, the Examination Board shall deliberate, taking into consideration all expert opinions available and all objections received. <sup>4</sup>Persons who have raised an objection as per Para. 7, may participate in the meeting in an advisory capacity. <sup>5</sup>The Examination Board shall decide whether to accept the doctoral thesis and, in case of acceptance, decide on the grade. <sup>6</sup>If it is unable to accept the doctoral thesis immediately, but it is anticipated that the doctoral thesis will be successfully completed within an appropriate period after conditions placed on the scientific work have been fulfilled, the Examination Board shall initially decide only on the conditions to be fulfilled. <sup>7</sup>When so doing, an adequate period for the fulfilment of the conditions must be stipulated. <sup>8</sup>On application by the doctoral candidate for cause, the period may be extended as decided by the Examination Board. <sup>9</sup>Where conditions are not fulfilled within the time limit, the doctoral thesis is considered to have been rejected. <sup>10</sup>The Dean shall

inform the person concerned in writing, including advice on legal remedies. <sup>11</sup>After the conditions have been fulfilled, the Examination Board shall again decide whether to accept the doctoral thesis and on its assessment, where appropriate. <sup>12</sup>Should the doctoral thesis be rejected, the doctoral procedure is finished. <sup>13</sup>The Dean of the faculty shall give written notice to the person concerned, including the reasons for the rejection and advice on legal remedies.

### **Section 9 Oral Examination**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The oral examination shall encompass one major subject and one minor subject as per Para. 2. <sup>2</sup>The oral examination in the major subject is to prove that the doctoral candidate's command of this subject is of an adequate breadth and depth. <sup>3</sup>This includes the ability to critically discuss the problem and results of the doctoral thesis, and to categorise them within the overall field of the major subject. <sup>4</sup>The oral examination in the minor subject shall serve to ascertain whether the doctoral candidate has in-depth content-specific and methodological knowledge as well as a clear overview of recent developments.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The major subject must be a subject selected from the field of the doctoral thesis to which the object of the essential parts of the doctoral thesis is assigned. <sup>2</sup>The subjects from the fields listed in the Appendix may be combined as major and minor subjects as desired. <sup>3</sup>The competent Faculty Council can resolve to also allow other subjects as minor subjects. <sup>4</sup>It is not permissible to combine subjects which exhibit a considerable overlap

(3) <sup>1</sup>If the doctoral thesis has been accepted, the Dean of the competent faculty shall arrange a date forthwith, normally during semester time, and a place in suitable rooms for the oral examination if this mode of examination was selected. <sup>2</sup>The place and date of the oral examination shall be communicated in writing to the doctoral candidate and the members of the Examination Board stating the title of the doctoral thesis, and shall furthermore be announced to the university public at the universities as per Section 5 Para. 2. <sup>3</sup>There shall be at least five working days between announcement and examination. <sup>4</sup>The examination shall be presided over by the chairperson of the Examination Board.

(4) <sup>1</sup>The qualified examiners from the faculties specified in the Appendix shall have the right to attend the oral examinations. <sup>2</sup>Further observers may be admitted with the consent of the doctoral candidate and the chairperson.

(5) <sup>1</sup>Each doctoral candidate shall be examined individually. <sup>2</sup>The examination shall begin with a short presentation of 15 - 20 minutes duration in which the doctoral candidate shall outline the essential content and results of the doctoral thesis. <sup>3</sup>The short presentation shall normally be open to the university public; with the agreement of the doctoral candidate, the chairperson may restrict admission to participants as per Para. 4. <sup>4</sup>The subsequent non-public oral examination shall have an overall duration of 60 minutes minimum, 100 minutes maximum, of which at least 30 minutes are in the major subject. <sup>5</sup>In the oral examination, every qualified examiner present may ask questions about the doctoral thesis after the examinations in the major and minor subjects.

### **Section 10 Thesis Defence**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The thesis defence shall comprise a scientific presentation outlining the essential content and results of the doctoral thesis, followed by a discussion. <sup>2</sup>The thesis defence is intended to show that the doctoral candidate is able to critically discuss the thesis results and categorise them into the scientific environment. <sup>3</sup>This includes the ability to demonstrate and explain in-depth, content-specific and methodological knowledge in the scientific fields chiefly relevant to the doctoral thesis.

(2) <sup>1</sup>If the doctoral thesis has been accepted, the Dean of the competent faculty shall arrange a date forthwith, normally during semester time, as well as a place in suitable rooms for the thesis defence, should this mode of examination have been selected. <sup>2</sup>The place and date of the thesis defence shall be communicated in writing to the doctoral candidate and the Examination Board members stating the title of the doctoral thesis, and shall furthermore be announced to the university public at the universities as per Section 5 Para. 2. <sup>3</sup>There shall be at least five working days between announcement and examination. <sup>4</sup>The examination shall be presided over by the chairperson of the Examination Board.

(3) The thesis defence shall be open to the university public.

(4) <sup>1</sup>Each doctoral candidate shall be examined individually. <sup>2</sup>The thesis defence shall begin with a presentation of 45 minutes duration maximum, held by the doctoral candidate. <sup>3</sup>After the presentation, the members of the Examination Board shall have the first right to ask questions relating to the presentation and the scientific environment of the doctoral thesis. <sup>4</sup>Afterwards, the other attendees shall be given the opportunity to ask questions about the presentation. <sup>5</sup>The duration of the thesis defence shall be at least 75 minutes, but shall not exceed 120 minutes.

## **Section 11 Assessment of the Oral Examination or Thesis Defence and Overall Assessment of the Doctoral Work**

(1) The overall assessment is made up of the grades for the doctoral thesis and either the oral examination or the thesis defence.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Directly after the oral examination or the thesis defence, the Examination Board shall meet and ascertain if and with which grade the doctoral candidate has passed the oral examination or the thesis defence, which grade is to be allocated to the doctoral thesis, and which overall assessment is to be awarded to the doctoral work. <sup>2</sup>The qualified examiners from the faculties specified in the Appendix who were present at the oral examination or thesis defence may attend the Examination Board meeting in an advisory capacity.

<sup>3</sup>The assessment of each Board member shall carry equal weight. <sup>4</sup>When reaching their decision on the oral examination, the impression received from the short presentation shall also be taken into account. <sup>5</sup>When assessing the thesis defence, the quality of the presentation and the thematic relevance of the questions asked shall be taken into consideration as well. <sup>6</sup>The examinations shall be assessed by means of grades as per Section 8 Para. 5, or the examination in question shall be assessed as a fail.

(3) <sup>1</sup>When deciding on the grade of the doctoral thesis, the assessments awarded by all reviewers shall carry equal weight. <sup>2</sup>For "excellent" to be awarded as the overall grade of the doctoral thesis, all expert opinions must propose this grade, and at least three expert opinions, including one from a university other than those specified under Section 5 Para. 2, must be available. <sup>3</sup>Before commencing the procedure for the doctoral examination, the supervisor shall notify the Faculty Council (Section 7 Para. 2) that it is expected the grade "excellent" will be awarded, and submit proposals for further reviewers as defined at Clause 2. <sup>4</sup>If, in accordance with Section 8 Para. 11, a grade for the doctoral thesis is already available, it must be adopted.

(4) <sup>1</sup>When determining the overall assessment for the doctoral work, the grade of the doctoral thesis shall carry a weighting of 2/3. <sup>2</sup>Depending on the overall impression gained from these examination results, the Examination Board may, as an additional assessment decision, round up or round down the result of each average calculation between two integer grades to the nearest integer grades as per Section 8 Para. 4. <sup>3</sup>The overall grade of "excellent" may only be awarded if both the doctoral thesis and the oral examination or thesis defence have each been assessed as "excellent".

(5) <sup>1</sup>If the doctoral candidate fails to appear at the oral examination or thesis defence or breaks off the oral examination or thesis defence, they shall be deemed to have failed such oral examination or thesis defence, unless adequate grounds are provided. <sup>2</sup>Where adequate grounds have been provided, the Dean shall set a new date, allowing for Section 9 Para. 2 or Section 10 Para. 2, respectively.

(6) Brief minutes must be taken of the oral examination or the thesis defence. <sup>2</sup>Besides the place, date, time the examination commenced and concluded, the minutes shall contain

1. the names of the doctoral candidate, the examiners, as well as further attendees in the case of an oral examination,
2. the title of the doctoral thesis,
3. the statement that the examination has been passed,
4. the grade of the oral examination or the thesis defence,
5. the grade of the doctoral thesis,
6. the overall grade of the doctoral work.

<sup>3</sup>The minutes must be signed by the chairperson of the Examination Board and made available to the Dean directly after the end of the oral examination or thesis defence.

(7) <sup>1</sup>The chairperson of the Examination Board shall inform the doctoral candidate without delay about the results specified in Para. 6 and shall provide the doctoral candidate with a preliminary certificate. <sup>2</sup>Such certificate shall include the doctoral thesis title, the overall grade of the doctoral work, the grade of the doctoral thesis, as well as the grade of the oral examination or the thesis defence. <sup>3</sup>The certificate shall further state that it does not yet entitle its owner to hold the title of doctor.

(8) <sup>1</sup>Where the doctoral candidate is judged to have failed the oral examination or thesis defence, the doctoral candidate may, on application to the Dean, repeat the oral examination or thesis defence once after three months at the earliest and after twelve months at the latest. <sup>2</sup>If the doctoral candidate fails a further attempt or when a repeat has not been applied for, their attempt to obtain a doctorate is considered to have finally failed. <sup>3</sup>The Dean of the faculty shall issue the person concerned with the relevant notification, including advice on legal remedies.

(9) <sup>1</sup>The Examination Board may impose conditions on the doctoral candidate as to the final version of the doctoral thesis to be published. <sup>2</sup>The imposition of such conditions must be specified in the minutes of the examination. <sup>3</sup>The chairperson of the Examination Board shall examine whether the conditions have been fulfilled, approve the final version, where appropriate, certify to the doctoral candidate that this is the case, and notify the Dean accordingly.

(10) The doctorate concludes when the doctoral candidate has passed the oral examination or thesis defence.

### **Section 12 Publication of Doctoral Thesis**

(1) <sup>1</sup>Within one year of passing the oral examination or thesis defence, the doctoral candidate shall publish the approved final version of their doctoral thesis (Section 8 Paras. 8, 10, 11; Section 11 Para. 9). <sup>2</sup>The regulations for the publication of the doctoral thesis as well as the number of copies to be deposited shall be determined by the competent faculty in compliance with the general guidelines decided upon by the Senate of Leibniz Universität Hannover.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Where the doctoral candidate fails to adhere to the delivery deadline, the rights he or she acquired in the course of the procedure for the doctoral examination shall expire. <sup>2</sup>The preliminary certificate as per Section 11 Para. 7 must be returned. <sup>3</sup>In response to a well-founded request by the doctoral candidate, the Dean shall decide on an appropriate extension of the publication deadline.

### **Section 13 Doctoral Diploma and Conferral of the Doctoral Degree**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The Dean shall confer the doctorate by handing over or delivering the doctoral diploma. <sup>2</sup>The doctoral diploma shall state, in addition to the degree obtained, the title of the doctoral thesis and the overall grade of the doctorate as well as the grades of the doctoral thesis and of the oral examination or thesis defence. <sup>3</sup>The doctoral diploma shall bear the personal signatures of the President of Leibniz Universität Hannover and the Dean of the faculty, and shall be furnished with the seal of Leibniz Universität Hannover. <sup>4</sup>The date the doctorate was conferred shall be specified as the date of the oral examination or thesis defence.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The doctoral diploma shall not be delivered before it is proved that the doctoral thesis has been published in accordance with Section 12 and the other conditions according to the Appendix have been fulfilled. <sup>2</sup>Only when the doctoral diploma has been handed over is the doctoral candidate entitled to hold the doctoral title.

### **Section 14 Renewal of Doctoral Diploma**

At the request of a faculty member, the doctoral diploma may be renewed to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the oral examination or the thesis defence, subject to a resolution taken by the Faculty Council.

### **Section 15 Revocation of Doctoral Degree**

(1) <sup>1</sup>A doctoral degree already awarded may be revoked by being withdrawn or rescinded. <sup>2</sup>The revocation of the doctoral degree must comply with the legal stipulations applicable in such cases, giving due regard to the Guidelines of Leibniz Universität Hannover for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice and for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct.

(2) <sup>1</sup>If the requirements for admission to doctoral studies were not fulfilled and without the candidate having committed a deception or an attempt deception, and if this fact does not become known until after the doctoral diploma has been handed over, this deficiency shall be remedied by the submitted and accepted doctoral thesis and by passing the oral examination or thesis defence. <sup>2</sup>In this case, the doctoral degree cannot be revoked.

**Section 16 Inspection**

<sup>1</sup>Upon request, the doctoral candidate shall have the right to inspect the records of the doctoral procedure within one month of delivery of the doctoral diploma or receipt of a negative notification. <sup>2</sup>For just cause, this deadline may be extended on the application of the doctoral candidate.

**Section 17 Appeal against Decisions in the Procedure for the Doctoral Examination**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The applicant must be informed in writing as to the decisions about their admission to the procedure for the doctoral examination, about the acceptance or rejection of their doctoral thesis, and about the oral examination or thesis defence. <sup>2</sup>Each negative notification from the faculty and/or the Examination Board shall include the grounds therefor and advice on legal remedies.

(2) Within one month of having been informed of such a decision, the person concerned may file a written appeal, to be submitted to the Dean of the competent faculty.

**Section 18 Honorary Doctorate**

(1) Leibniz Universität Hannover may confer, through the faculties specified in the Appendix and with the agreement of the Senate, the academic degree of "Doktor/ Doktorin der Naturwissenschaften ehrenhalber" (Doctor rerum naturalium honoris causa, abbreviated: Dr. rer. nat. h. c.) to honour excellent achievements in the natural sciences.

(2) Those honoured must not be a member of Leibniz Universität Hannover.

(3) <sup>1</sup>A corresponding application must be filed by at least five university lecturers of the faculties listed in the Appendix or the natural science disciplines of Hannover Medical School or the University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Foundation. <sup>2</sup>The faculty whose field is chiefly related to the work to be honoured shall decide on the award.

(4) The honorary doctorate shall be conferred by handing over a diploma, personally signed by the president of Leibniz Universität Hannover and by the Dean of the faculty and furnished with the seal of Leibniz Universität Hannover, accentuating the merits of the person on whom the honorary doctorate is to be conferred.

(5) The conferral of the honorary doctorate shall be communicated to all ministries and all universities entitled to confer doctoral degrees within the territories where the German Constitution applies.

(6) For any revocation of such an honorary degree, the Leibniz Universität Hannover Code of Honour and Section 15 shall apply accordingly.

**Section 19 Amendment of the Doctoral Degree Regulations**

These Joint Doctoral Degree Regulations may only be amended by unanimous resolution of all the faculties listed in the Appendix.

**Section 20 Alternative Competences**

<sup>1</sup>Unless otherwise specified in these Regulations, the Faculty Council of the respective faculty shall be responsible for the procedure for the doctoral examination. <sup>2</sup>To relieve its burden, the Faculty Council may assign competences other than specified in these Regulations to a board it has appointed, or to the Dean, on a temporary or permanent basis.

**Section 21 Joint Procedures for Doctoral Examinations with other Universities**

(1) Joint procedures for doctoral examinations with one or, if applicable, with more than one German or foreign university or universities entitled to confer doctoral degrees shall be implemented on the basis of an agreement concluded between Leibniz Universität Hannover with the participation of the competent faculty and the university or universities concerned.

(2) Agreements made by Leibniz Universität Hannover with other universities entitled to confer doctoral degrees in respect of joint doctorate procedures may deviate from Secs. 1 to 17.

(3) Where an individual joint doctorate procedure is carried out by a faculty listed in the Appendix in conjunction with a foreign university, the Faculty Council in question shall be authorised to make decisions on a case-by-case basis. <sup>2</sup> The requirements of such decisions must not be lower than those of these Doctoral Degree Regulations.

**Section 22 Effective Date and Transitional Provisions**

(1) <sup>1</sup>These Doctoral Degree Regulations shall come into effect on the day of their publication in the Announcement Bulletin of Leibniz Universität Hannover. <sup>2</sup>Any previous Doctoral Degree Regulations for the degree of Dr. rer. nat. shall cease to apply.

(2) Doctoral candidates who applied for admission to the doctoral examination prior to these Regulations coming into effect, shall continue the procedure for the doctoral examination according to the stipulations which applied before.

**Appendix**

(1) <sup>1</sup>These Doctoral Degree Regulations apply to the following faculties of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover:

Faculty of Natural Sciences

Faculty for Mathematics and Physics

Faculty for Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

QUEST Leibniz Research School

<sup>2</sup>This list may only be amended if all faculties listed agree.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The field of a doctorate as per Section 2 Para. 3 can be one of the following fields:

Biology

Chemistry

Food science

Geosciences

Geography

Computer science

Mathematics

Physics

<sup>2</sup>This list may only be amended if all faculties listed in Para. 1 agree.

<sup>3</sup>The subjects for assessment tests as per Section 3 Para. 4 and the major and minor subjects for the oral examination as per Section 9 Para. 2 must be able to be categorised into these fields.

**Appendix as per Section 13 Para. 2**

The supervisor of the doctoral thesis declares:

The resources temporarily made available, including associated documents, have been returned in their entirety and in due form.

Date Signature.