

This is translation from the original German version. It is merely intended for guidance purposes and as an aid to understanding. The original German version of these regulations is legally binding.

**Doctoral Regulations of the
Faculty¹ of Protestant Theology of the
Ruhr University Bochum
29 October 2020**

Based on Section 2 Para. 4 in conjunction with Section 67 Para. 3 and 4 of the Universities Act of the Federal State of North-Rhine Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz - HG) of 16 September 2014 (Legislative Decree NRW. p. 547), last amended by the statute of 1 September 2020 (Legislative Decree NRW. p. 890), the Ruhr University Bochum has issued the following Doctoral Regulations for the Faculty of Protestant Theology based on the General Doctoral Regulations of 4 November 2014:

¹ Translator's note: In line with other English-language texts already officially issued by the Ruhr University, the German term *Fakultät* is translated here as *Faculty*. In many German universities, however, *Fakultät* can equally well be the equivalent of a *Department* in English. The Ruhr University Bochum currently has 21 such *Fakultäten*.

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Preamble

It is possible to study for a doctoral degree at the Ruhr University Bochum in all subjects and all the main research focuses represented at the university.

In its General Doctoral Regulations, the Ruhr University Bochum gives expression to its responsibility for all doctoral studies by

- guaranteeing a high level of transparency and quality of the procedure and thus contributing to quality assurance;
- setting university-wide standards as well as taking into account the requisite regulations for specific disciplines;
- facilitating interdisciplinary and cross-university conferral of doctoral degrees.

It is part of the regulations of the General Doctoral Regulations of the Ruhr University Bochum that responsibility for the structure of the doctoral studies and the completion of the doctoral procedure lies with the faculties and/or doctoral procedure institutions involved. The Faculty of Protestant Theology has adopted these regulations in these specific Doctoral Regulations, refining and supplementing them with provisions that are specific to the discipline.

The Research School supported by all faculties submits an interdisciplinary and extracurricular qualification offer to all doctoral candidates and enables each doctoral candidate to structure their doctoral studies accordingly in line with the specific provisions

of their discipline and their own preferences.

Doctoral candidates shall be regarded as junior researchers.

The Ruhr University Bochum considers itself committed to a high supervision culture, and this is manifested in a supervision agreement signed by the doctoral candidates and their supervisors.

All doctoral candidates are obliged to enrol at the university according to Section 67 Para. 5 HG. The enrolment presupposes the acceptance as a doctoral candidate by the Faculty of Protestant Theology.

Section 1 Doctoral degree

- (1) The Ruhr University Bochum confers doctoral degrees through its faculties or doctoral procedure institutions.
- (2) The Faculty of Protestant Theology confers doctoral degrees as a “Doctor theologiae” (Dr theol.) or, in cases of interdisciplinary studies, as a “Philosophiae Doctor” (Ph.D.).
- (3) The Faculty of Protestant Theology confers the degree Dr theol. in a regular doctoral procedure on the basis of independent academic work in the field of Protestant Theology.
- (4) At the Faculty of Protestant Theology of the Ruhr University Bochum, a doctoral degree can also be conferred as an honorary degree (Dr h. c. theol.) for outstanding academic work or for services to theology or church.
- (5) A doctoral degree already conferred cannot be acquired once again.

Section 2 Purpose of the doctoral studies

Doctoral studies demonstrate the ability to pursue independent academic work extending beyond the general study objectives as outlined in Section 58 Para. 1 HG. This ability is determined by means of a written assignment (dissertation) which extends the status of knowledge in its specialist subject area and an oral examination.

Section 3 Doctoral committee

- (1) The doctoral committee of the Faculty of Protestant Theology shall decide on the performance of the doctoral procedure as well as on all questions concerning compliance with the doctoral degree regulations. The doctoral committee can assign the settlement of the regular business to its chairperson. The doctoral committee is the instance for objections in terms of the Administrative Court regulations.
- (2) The doctorate committee consists of the following members of the Faculty of Protestant Theology:
 1. Five full-time professors representing the five Protestant Theology disciplines (Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, Systematic Theology, Practical Theology)

2. Two members from the body of research assistants, one of whom should have a doctorate,
3. Two students from the faculty.

Members of the groups indicated in Subclauses 2 and 3 who do not have a doctoral degree in Protestant Theology have no voting rights for any decision-making, the subject of which is the assessment of academic contents. Election to the doctoral committee is normally for a term of two years or, in the case of student members, one year.

- (3) Members of the doctoral committee in terms of Para. 2 Subclauses 1 to 3 shall be elected by majority vote of their respective groups and endorsed by the faculty council. Re-election is permissible.
- (4) The chairperson and deputy chairperson of the doctoral committee must be professors appointed for life and shall be elected by the faculty council.
- (5) The meetings of the doctoral committee are not public. They shall be convened by the chairperson. The doctoral committee shall be quorate whenever two-thirds of its members are present. It shall make its decisions by majority vote of the members present with voting rights in all matters. In the event of a tied vote, the chairperson's vote shall be conclusive. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to ensure that summary minutes (of resolutions) are drawn up for all meetings.
- (6) The doctoral committee has the following tasks in particular:
 1. Decision on acceptance of the doctoral candidate,
 2. Decision on admission to the doctoral procedure,
 3. Stipulation of preparatory studies for the doctoral procedure in terms of Section 5 Para. 1 Letter b,
 4. Stipulation of further academic achievements and other such performance in terms of Section 5 Para. 2,
 5. Opening the doctoral procedure with the appointment of the doctoral board according to Section 10,
 6. Stipulation of dates and deadlines for the doctoral procedure, initiated twice a year,
 7. Ascertaining the unsuccessful termination of the doctoral procedure.
 8. Mediation in questions concerning the course of the procedure or conflicts arising during the procedure,
 9. Deciding on exceptions in consultation with the reviewers according to Section 11 Para. 7,
 10. Election of further members for interdisciplinary doctoral committees according to Section 4.
- (7) The decisions of the doctoral committee concerning the unsuccessful termination of the doctoral procedure are to be communicated to the candidate in writing and stating the reasons. The notification shall include instructions on rights to appeal.
- (8) The doctoral committee can delegate individual tasks listed in Para. 6 to the chairperson for implementation.

Section 4 Interdisciplinary doctoral committee

- (1) In interdisciplinary doctoral procedures, a joint doctoral committee can be proposed by

the first reviewer or the first supervisor and installed by the doctoral committees of the faculties and/or doctoral procedure institutions involved. It shall comprise the chairpersons of the doctoral committees of the faculties and/or doctoral procedure institutions of the Ruhr University Bochum involved and at least four further members from the respective faculties or the said institutions. This interdisciplinary doctoral committee shall exist only for the duration of the doctoral procedure.

- (2) The further members of the interdisciplinary doctoral committee shall be elected for the duration of the doctoral procedure by the doctoral committees of the faculties and/or doctoral procedure institutions involved and shall be recruited from the status groups listed under Section 3 Para. 2.
- (3) As a rule, the degree of “Philosophiae doctor” (Ph.D.) shall be awarded in interdisciplinary doctoral procedures. Upon application, another degree as listed in Section 1 Para. 3 may also be awarded by the faculties involved.
- (4) In the case of an interdisciplinary doctoral procedure, the deans’ offices of the faculties or doctoral procedure institutions concerned shall regulate the administrative responsibilities for the procedure independently and by mutual agreement.
- (5) Section 3 Para. 6, 7 and 8, and Section 21 shall apply accordingly.

Section 5 Pre-requisites for doctoral studies

- (1) Admission to doctoral studies is open to anyone who
 - a) has successfully passed their first theological examination in a regional church (Landeskirche), or
 - b) has been awarded a degree other than a “Bachelor” after relevant university studies in Protestant Theology with a standard study period of at least eight semesters, whereby at least four semesters shall have been spent in a German-speaking department of a university, or
 - c) a degree qualification after studies in Protestant Theology at a relevant institute of higher education with a standard study period of at least eight semesters and subsequent appropriate studies in the doctoral subjects in preparation for the doctoral procedure, or
 - d) has completed a Masters study course in the sense of Section 61 Para. 2 Sentence 2 HG, whereby the subject Protestant Theology and/or a subject comparable in content must have been studied as a compulsory or elective subject, normally with a share of at least 40 percent, or
 - e) certifies a final academic examination equivalent to the above-mentioned examinations at a university or an institution of higher education recognised as equivalent outside the territory of the EU, for which the overall grade was at least “satisfactory” (3.5 or better), and
 - f) presents a declaration by a member of the faculty who is entitled to award a doctorate that he or she will supervise the doctorate and the structured doctoral studies.
- (2) Admission to the doctoral programme is contingent upon proof of a qualifying degree. All applicants must have completed their studies with an above-average grade. Proficiency certificates in Latin, Greek and Hebrew are prerequisites for admission to the doctoral programme. Under exceptional circumstances, proof of corresponding knowledge in another classical religious source language may be substituted for a

certificate of proficiency in one of these three languages. The decision on this shall lie with the doctoral committee. Equal treatment shall be given to applicants with a degree from a university of applied sciences and applicants with a degree from a university applying for admission to doctoral studies.

- (3) If preparatory studies are to be stipulated for the doctoral studies, these shall be proposed after individual assessment of the level of knowledge in consultation with the candidate and/or the supervisor. The same pre-requisites shall apply to candidates who have acquired their degree in countries outside of the European Union, insofar as the equivalence of the degree qualification has been determined. The doctoral committee shall decide on the equivalence of the qualifications based on intrastate agreements, the classification of the institute of higher education at which the degree was obtained, and on the basis of agreements with partner institutes of higher education. In cases of doubt as to the equivalence, the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) should be consulted.
- (4) For a candidate to be admitted to doctoral studies at the Ruhr University Bochum, the doctoral committee must have established that they are sufficiently proficient in a widespread academic language – usually German or English.

Section 6 Acceptance of the doctoral candidate

- (1) Applications for acceptance as a doctoral candidate are to be addressed in writing to the chairperson of the appropriate doctoral committee stating the working title of the planned dissertation. Acceptance entails matriculation as a doctoral candidate at the Ruhr University Bochum as well as admission to the RUB Research School.
- (2) The following at least are to be enclosed with the application:
 1. a curriculum vitae with details of the candidate's education,
 2. a final grade certificate in terms of Section 5 Para. 1,
 3. a certificate entitling the candidate to study at a German institute of higher education or some other authorisation for admission to an institute of higher education,
 4. a supervision agreement in terms of Section 7 Para. 5,
 5. signed acknowledgement of the "guidelines of good scientific practice" in the respective current version,
 6. proof of membership of a church with Protestant confessional status (as an exception, the doctoral committee may also admit applicants who belong to another church or denomination within the WCC).
 7. Language examination certificates in Latin (Latinum), Greek (Graecum) and Hebrew (Hebraicum). A certificate issued in accordance with the regulations of the Faculty of Protestant Theology of the Ruhr University Bochum of 5 October 1987 for the language examination in Greek (GABI. NW. p. 625) shall also be considered as a Graecum certificate. Likewise, a certificate issued in accordance with the regulations of the Faculty of Protestant Theology of the Ruhr University Bochum of 5 October 1987 for the language examination in Hebrew (Hebraicum) (GABI. NW. p. 627) shall also be considered as a Hebraicum certificate. Doctoral candidates from other courses of study or from abroad who do not fulfil this requirement or only partially fulfil it and who wish to obtain the title of "Dr theol." missing language certificates up to the time of registration for the doctorate. An exception to this is regulated by Section 5 Para. 2.

- (3) The doctoral committee decides on the acceptance of doctoral candidates. Acceptance must be refused if
- a) the formal pre-requisites for doctoral studies are not met,
 - b) no competent member is available at the Ruhr University Bochum to act as one of the two supervisors,
 - c) no professionally competent professor or private lecturer in the faculty agrees to act as supervisor (the rejection must be justified in writing to the doctoral committee by the professor or lecturer concerned).
- (4) The doctoral committee can neither induce a member of the Ruhr University Bochum to accept or refuse a candidate as a doctoral candidate, nor can doctoral candidates be allocated for supervision to a member of the Ruhr University Bochum against their will.
- (5) Candidates will be notified of the decision in writing. If applicable, conditions will be formulated therein in accordance with Section 5 Para. 2 and 3. Any rejection must be substantiated. On being accepted, the candidate will be included in the directory of doctoral candidates. Acceptance as a doctoral candidate does not entail a decision on admission to the doctoral procedure.

Section 7 Supervision and supervision agreement

- (1) Acceptance of the doctoral candidate establishes their entitlement to the attention of the doctorate committee and supervision by at least two supervisors as well as registration for assessment of the dissertation in terms of Section 9. The first supervisor must be qualified in the relevant discipline for the doctoral project. The other supervisor may represent a different discipline than the first supervisor.
- (2) The supervision can be assumed by the professors and private lecturers of the Faculty of Protestant Theology and by professors and private lecturers of another faculty. Particularly in the case of interdisciplinary research projects, this can offer supplementary specialist supervision.
- (3) Where good cause exists, the doctoral committee can appoint other suitable academics as supervisors in the course of the doctoral studies if so requested by the supervisor or the doctoral candidate. Good cause exists especially in the event of an irretrievable breakdown of the relationship of trust between the parties involved.
- (4) In cases of conflict, the contacts available are the relevant doctoral committee and, for doctoral candidates, the ombudsperson of the RUB Research School or, for the supervisors, the ombudsperson of the RUB.
- (5) The rights and duties of doctoral candidates and of supervisors are regulated in a supervision agreement, which must comprise at least the following elements:
 1. Name of the doctoral candidate, name of the first supervisor and the start of the planned doctoral procedure,
 2. working title of the intended dissertation,
 3. the setting of a deadline for the submission after or at the start of the planned doctoral procedure of an expose describing the research questions of the intended dissertation, the status of the literature and the research methods,
 4. frequency and intensity of the supervision,
 5. signatures of the doctoral candidate and the first supervisor. The name and the signature of the second supervisor can be submitted subsequently no later than

- twelve months after the application has been filed,
6. details of the intended doctoral title according to Section 1.

Section 8 Structuring of the doctoral studies

- (1) In principle and as a rule, doctoral students are supervised by the respective professor in the subject. They attend the regular graduate events in the subjects of the Faculty of Protestant Theology and may participate in the interdisciplinary doctoral colloquium of the faculty.
- (2) Furthermore, the Ruhr University Bochum and the Faculty of Protestant Theology offer doctoral candidates the additional opportunity to further structure their doctorate. Depending on their needs, doctoral candidates can acquire a qualification profile tailored to their individual research project by using the qualification offers of the faculty and the RUB Research School. Events from graduate schools, doctoral study programmes or other subject-specific formats of structured doctoral studies can be recognised for this certificate.

Section 9 Admission to the doctoral procedure

- (1) After completion of the dissertation, the doctoral candidate will file a written application for the opening of the doctoral procedure to the chairperson of the relevant doctoral committee. The following are to be enclosed with the application:
 1. at least five printed, bound copies of the dissertation,
 2. the dissertation in electronic form as a full-text searchable document,
 3. supplementary documents, insofar as necessary according to Section 5,
 4. a signed declaration enclosed with the dissertation with the following or corresponding wording: "I assure in lieu of oath that I have written the submitted dissertation independently and without any inadmissible external help, not used any other literature than that stated in the dissertation and that I have marked all fully or approximately adopted text passages as well as all graphics, tables and evaluation programmes used. I further assure that the submitted electronic version of the dissertation corresponds with the written version and that the treatment in this or a similar form has not until now been submitted and assessed elsewhere as a doctorate dissertation.",
 5. a declaration that digital diagrams only contain the original data or a clear documentation of the type and scope of the content-modifying image processing,
 6. written assurance that no commercial mediation or advice was used,
 7. proposal of the academic title which is to be conferred according to Section 1, as well as, if applicable, proposals for the desired reviewer and the second reviewer; furthermore, specialist faculty representatives may be proposed as examiners in the oral examination,
 8. an official certificate of good conduct if the applicant has been exmatriculated for longer than three months and is not in public or ecclesiastical service,
 9. if applicable, a declaration by the candidate concerning the exclusion of the university public from the oral examination in the sense of Section 63 Para. 4 HG. This may be filed later up to the end of the display period in terms Section 12 Para. 6.
- (2) The doctoral committee will reach a decision on the basis of the submitted documents

concerning the initiation of the doctoral procedure and will appoint the doctoral commission. The initiation can be refused if the candidate

- a) has not or not fully submitted the documents by the fixed deadlines,
- b) he or she has applied concurrently for admission at another university,
- c) did not write parts of the dissertation himself/herself or has not clearly marked ideas adopted from third parties.

The initiation can also be refused if one of the reasons for withdrawal of the doctoral degree as listed in Section 17 Para. 4 applies to the candidate.

- (3) The candidate will be notified in writing of the decision. A rejection must be substantiated and issued with instructions for rights of appeal.

Section 10 Doctoral commission

- (1) The doctoral commission is the body responsible for supervising the doctoral accomplishment and for conducting the oral examination. It appoints the reviewers. The doctoral commission shall be made up of the professors of the faculty, including the habilitated academic staff of the faculty, as well as a representative to be appointed by the faculty council from the group of non-professorial academic staff, who, in their entirety, shall perform the functions of the doctoral commission. The Dean shall chair the commission.
- (2) Reviewers who are not members of the faculty as well as private lecturers of the faculty who have undertaken a first or second review shall also be members of the doctoral commission.
- (3) Professors who are called in for the oral examinations in accordance with Section 14, Para. 6, shall participate with voting rights in the negotiations of the doctoral commission.
- (4) Each dissertation shall be evaluated by at least two reviewers, one of whom may be a reviewer who is not a member of the Ruhr University Bochum. The reviewers are obliged to submit independent written reviews.
- (5) If the dissertation involves areas and methods of non-theological disciplines, the doctoral commission may request additional expert opinions from representatives of the disciplines concerned.
- (6) All members of the doctoral commission have voting rights. The doctoral commission shall be quorate if two thirds of its members are present. It shall decide by a majority of the members present. Abstentions are not permitted; in the event of a tie, the vote of the chairperson shall be decisive.

Section 11 Dissertation

- (1) With the dissertation the doctoral candidate must prove his/her ability to pursue independent research work in his/her research field. The dissertation must contain the candidate's own new academic findings, the presentation of which fulfils academic standards.
- (2) The dissertation may not have been used or be used in any other doctoral procedure or a comparable procedure at a university at home or abroad.

- (3) An advance publication of dissertation findings is possible upon request. Findings published in advance are to be marked in the dissertation.
- (4) The dissertation must contain a complete list of the literature used as well as other sources used. It must be submitted in a form that is ready for printing/publication.
- (5) The dissertation shall not exceed 300 pages.
- (6) The dissertation can be withdrawn by the doctoral candidate as long as no expert's review is available. In this case, the dissertation will be deemed as not submitted and the doctoral procedure as not initiated. If the doctoral candidate withdraws the dissertation at a later time, then the doctorate procedure will be ended unsuccessfully.
- (7) The dissertation shall be written in German or English. The doctoral commission shall decide on possible exceptions in consultation with the reviewers.
- (8) One copy of the dissertation will be stored according to the "guidelines concerning the storage, separate selection, archiving and destruction of files" of the Ruhr University Bochum, even if the procedure is ended unsuccessfully.

Section 12 Assessment of the dissertation

- (1) The dissertation will be forwarded to the reviewers by the doctoral committee. The reviewers will recommend to the doctoral committee the acceptance, supplementation, revision or rejection of the dissertation, as a rule within three months after the forwarding of the dissertation and in the form of independent written reviews by the respective experts. In the event of acceptance, they will at the same time propose a grade. The dissertation, as well as all other individual achievements and the overall performance in the doctoral procedure, shall be assessed with the grades 'summa cum laude' (with distinction), 'magna cum laude' (very good), 'cum laude' (good), 'rite' (sufficient) or 'insufficient'. The criteria for the assessment shall be stated.
- (2) If the reviews differ by more than one grade, the doctoral commission shall immediately obtain a further, external review.
- (3) The doctoral committee shall determine the doctoral degree to be awarded on the basis of a proposal by the doctoral candidate, the submitted dissertation and the dissertation subject.
- (4) The return of the dissertation and its resubmission according to Section 11 Para. 6 are only possible once. When the dissertation is resubmitted, it shall, as a rule, be submitted to the same examiners as before the resubmission.
- (5) The examiners may combine their assessment with conditions for supplementing and reworking the dissertation for publication.
- (6) The dissertation and the reviews shall be circulated to the members of the doctoral commission of the departments involved. The circulation shall be signed off. The members of the doctoral commission are entitled to submit expert opinions on the dissertation. These may comment on the acceptance or rejection of the dissertation. They may also contain their own grade proposals. These shall be forwarded to the other members by the chairperson of the doctoral commission without delay. If both reviews have recommended acceptance, but at least three expert opinions in the circulation procedure speak out against acceptance, the doctoral commission shall immediately

appoint a further, external review. The period for circulation should not exceed eight weeks. After completion of the circulation and, if applicable, after receipt of the further expert opinion, the dissertation and expert opinion as well as any expert opinions shall be available for inspection in the Dean's Office of the Faculty for 14 days.

- (7) All doctoral members of the Faculty who are active in research and teaching in the subject of Protestant Theology have the right to comment on the dissertation and the expert opinions, whereby the comments must be registered during the display period and submitted to the Dean at the latest one week after the end of the display period.
- (8) The final acceptance or rejection of the dissertation is decided by the doctoral commission on the basis of the expert opinions and any comments. The meeting is convened by the chairperson after the end of the circulation and display period. If the dissertation is accepted, the doctoral commission shall determine the grade.
- (9) If the dissertation is rejected, the doctoral procedure is terminated. Another thesis or a fundamentally revised version of the previous thesis with the same topic may be submitted at the earliest after six months, at the longest after three years. If the application is rejected again, further applications for a doctorate at the Ruhr University Bochum are not admissible.
- (10) The rejected thesis shall remain in the files of the doctoral commission together with the expert opinions and other documents.

Section 13 Oral examination

- (1) If the dissertation is accepted, the doctoral committee shall determine the date of the oral examination. As a rule, the examination shall take the form of a "Rigorosum" or viva voce; under the conditions specified in Section 13b Para. 1, candidates may, on request, take the oral examination as a disputation.
- (2) The keeper of the minutes shall be appointed from among the members of the doctoral commission.
- (3) The Dean shall invite the candidate to the examination; the candidate shall confirm receipt of the invitation to take the examination in writing. If the candidate fails to attend without sufficient justification, the examination shall be deemed to have been failed.

Section 13a Rigorosum

- (1) The Rigorosum or viva voce is generally taken in German. The doctoral committee shall decide on exceptions on application.
- (2) If the applicant has passed his/her degree with a grade of at least "good" (2.49) pursuant to Section 5, Para. 1, which is considered an admission requirement for graduation, the doctoral committee may, on application, limit the Rigorosum to the major subject and two of the minor subjects mentioned in Para. 3. The applicant may submit proposals regarding the subjects to be waived. Among the remaining examination subjects, at least one must be exegetical. The suggestions are not binding.
- (3) The Rigorosum covers the subjects: Old Testament, New Testament, Church and

Dogmatic History, Systematic Theology, Practical Theology.

- (4) The Rigorosum lasts 45 minutes in the subject from which the topic of the dissertation is taken (major subject), and 25 minutes in each of the other subjects (minor subjects). Information provided by the candidate on the main areas of his/her studies may be taken into account for the examination.
- (5) In the case of interdisciplinary dissertation projects, the doctoral candidate may, on application, replace one of the theological disciplines that is not his/her major subject with an examination in a non-theological subject represented at the Ruhr University Bochum if he/she has properly studied this subject. This partial examination shall be conducted by a professor of the relevant non-theological subject.
- (6) The first reviewer shall take the examination in the main subject.
- (7) The candidate may propose the examiners of the minor subjects. The proposals are not binding.
- (8) The Rigorosum shall be considered a pass if at least the grade "rite" was achieved in each examined subject. The doctoral commission shall mark the overall oral performance with a grade.
- (9) If the candidate does not pass the examination in the major subject, the entire Rigorosum or viva voce examination shall be deemed failed. If the oral examination in a minor subject is not passed, the examination in this minor subject may be repeated once.
- (10) On application, the candidate may repeat the Rigorosum after six months at the earliest and after one year at the latest. It is not possible to repeat the Rigorosum twice.
- (11) Students who have themselves applied for admission to doctoral studies at the Faculty of Protestant Theology of the University of Bochum may be admitted to participate in the Rigorosum as audience members. Participation does not extend to the deliberation and announcement of the examination result. For important reasons or at the request of the applicant, listeners are to be excluded.

Section 13b Disputation

- (1) Candidates who have already passed a theological examination in accordance with Section 5 Para. 1 Items a) - d) and whose dissertation is classified as outstanding by the doctoral commission may, upon application to the doctoral committee, take the oral examination as a disputation. In the case of applicants whose admission to doctoral studies is based on Section 5 Para. 1 Item e), the doctoral committee shall decide on application in individual cases whether the oral examination may be taken as a disputation.
- (2) The subject of the disputation is a series of theses to be discussed publicly at the university. The applicant shall formulate theses, the first part of which shall summarise the results of the dissertation, and the second part of which shall link areas of the theological disciplines according to Section 13a, Para. 3 to the topic of the dissertation. The theses must be submitted to the doctoral commission at least two weeks before the date of the disputation.
- (3) The candidate shall have up to 20 minutes to explain and justify the theses. The time for the entire disputation shall be at least 90 minutes and shall not exceed two hours. The chairperson of the doctoral commission shall decide on the duration.

- (4) The chairperson of the doctoral commission shall chair the disputation. Only the members of the doctoral commission are permitted to ask questions of the candidate. The evaluation is carried out by the doctoral commission. The discussion on the evaluation and the announcement of the evaluation are not public.
- (5) If the disputation is assessed as failed, the oral examination may be repeated once as a *Rigorosum* (*viva voce*) in accordance with Section 13a.
- (6) The disputation is a public university event. If a declaration according to Section 9 Para. 1 Item 9, the public shall be excluded. Guests may be invited. The doctoral committee does not count as public.

Section 14 Assessment of the doctoral degree

- (1) Directly after the termination of the oral examination, the doctoral commission shall decide in a non-public meeting whether the performance of the doctoral candidate in the oral examination also satisfies the requirements stated in Section 2.
- (2) In the case of a positive decision, the doctoral commission shall award the oral examination a mark. If the grade "rite" was not achieved in a partial examination in a discipline which is not the main subject, the overall grade of the remaining partial examinations must result in at least the grade "cum laude" if the oral examination is to be passed.
- (3) The doctoral commission shall then determine an overall grade for the doctorate, taking into account the grades of the dissertation and the oral examination. When determining the overall grade for the doctorate, the grade for the dissertation shall be given double weighting compared to the grade for the oral examination.
- (4) Minutes shall be kept of the subsequent deliberations of the doctoral commission and of the overall result of the doctorate, and these shall be signed by all members of the doctoral commission.
- (5) The chairperson of the doctoral commission shall inform the doctoral candidate under the exclusion of the public of the results of the deliberations directly after the decision of the doctoral commission.
- (6) In the case of a passed examination the doctoral procedure is completed and the chairperson of the doctorate committee shall issue a provisional certificate in this respect at the request of the doctoral candidate. This certificate does not yet constitute entitlement to use the doctor title.

Section 15 Legal remedies

- (1) Negative decisions made in accordance with these regulations are to be substantiated in writing, issued with information on legal remedies and/or rights to appeal and communicated to the doctoral candidate.
- (2) Pursuant to the provisions of the Administrative Court Procedures Code, objections against decisions of the doctoral committee can be filed with the chairperson of the

doctoral committee or of the Faculty Council either in writing or for the record within one month of the announcement insofar as the notification relates to the assessment of an examination performance.

- (3) The doctoral committee can change decisions against which an objection is filed. If the objection is directed against the assessment of a doctorate performance by the doctoral commission, then an amending decision can only be made with the consent of that doctoral commission which decided on the contested assessment. If the objection is not remedied, then a notice of objection will be issued by the chairperson of the doctoral committee or of the Faculty Council. The notice of objection must be substantiated and issued and served with information on legal remedies and/or rights to appeal.
- (4) After the completion of the doctoral procedure, the candidate or an agent authorised by him or her is entitled to inspect all written doctoral procedure documents. The doctoral procedure files are not accessible to third parties.

Section 16 Deposit copies and publication

- (1) After a passed oral examination, the chairperson of the doctoral commission or of the doctoral committee shall notify the doctoral candidate whether and, if applicable, which change conditions according to Section 12 Para. 1 and 5 are to be carried out prior to the publication of the dissertation. The correspondingly revised manuscript is to be submitted to at least one reviewer for approval before the production of the deposit copies.
- (2) The doctoral candidate is obliged to make her or his dissertation accessible in appropriate form to the academic public. This obligation shall be met by delivering three deposit copies to the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Protestant Theology, in which the curriculum vitae of the doctoral candidate is printed in abbreviated form at the end of the dissertation, and
 - a) publication of the dissertation in an academic publishing house, as evidenced by submission of a publishing contract, or
 - b) delivery of three copies of an electronic version, the data format and data carrier of which are to be agreed with the university library, and at least two printed copies for the university library, or
 - c) printing or reproduction of the entire dissertation with at least 80 deposit copies.
- (3) If the dissertation is published, the preface must state that the work has been accepted as a dissertation by the Faculty of Protestant Theology of the Ruhr University Bochum. In addition, the first examiner, the second examiner and the date of the oral examination must be mentioned.
- (4) The deposit copies must be delivered no later than two years after the oral examination. In particularly justified cases, the doctoral committee may extend the deadline once by one year upon application.

Section 17 Doctoral deed and doctoral certificate; use and withdrawal of the doctoral degree

- (1) The doctoral deed will be handed over as soon as the doctoral candidate has satisfied the obligations according to Section 16 and/or provides evidence of publication. In addition

to the graduate's name and place of birth, the doctoral grade and the title of the dissertation, the doctoral deed shall contain only the overall grade. It is to be signed by the Dean of the Faculty of Protestant Theology. In the case of interdisciplinary doctoral procedures, Section 4 Para. 4 shall apply accordingly. The doctoral candidate shall receive a doctoral certificate in which the results of the dissertation and of the oral examination are listed separately.

- (2) As of the point when the doctoral deed is handed over, the candidate is officially a doctoral graduate and is entitled to use the acquired doctor title according to Section 1 Para. 2 and 3.
- (3) If it is determined before the doctoral deed is handed over that the doctoral candidate was guilty of deceit in the doctoral procedure, then the doctoral committee can refuse the conferral of the doctorate and declared the procedure to be invalid.
- (4) The withdrawal of the doctoral degree and the withdrawal of the doctorate deed and, if applicable, of the doctorate certificate can be carried out if the doctoral graduate
 - a) obtained the doctoral degree by academic misconduct, deceit or essentially incorrect information or if the pre-requisites for admission to the doctoral procedure were erroneously assumed to have existed,
 - b) has been sentenced to imprisonment for at least one year for a wilful criminal offence,
 - c) has been sentenced for a wilful criminal offence, by the planning or committal of which he or she abused the doctoral title,
 - d) if, by subsequent academic misconduct, the holder of the doctoral degree proves unworthy to bear the doctoral title.
- (5) The decision on the withdrawal of a doctoral degree shall be made by the Faculty Council by majority vote of its members who have doctorates. Notification shall be given by the Dean of the Faculty of Protestant Theology.
- (6) The Rector of the Ruhr University Bochum shall inform the relevant Ministry of the withdrawal of the doctoral degree.

Section 18 Cross-university doctoral proceedings

The doctorate committee can agree with other institutions of higher education, especially foreign universities, on the implementation of joint doctoral procedures or on the joint conferral of a doctoral degree. Corresponding contracts must be approved by the faculties or doctoral procedure institutions involved; it is possible to deviate from these regulations in such contracts.

Section 19 Honorary doctorate

- (1) The Faculty of Protestant Theology may confer the title of an honorary Doctor of Theology (Dr theol. h.c.) on persons who have rendered outstanding academic services to theology and the church in their various fields of work. The title of honorary Doctor of Theology may only be conferred on persons who do not yet hold a domestic doctoral degree in theology.
- (2) The application must be submitted by at least three professors of the faculty.

- (3) The doctoral commission responsible for the doctoral procedure (Section 10 Para. 1) shall deliberate on the submitted application.
- (4) The decision on the acceptance of the application requires a majority of at least four fifths of the members of the doctoral commission. Members who cannot be present at the vote may cast their vote in writing.
- (5) The doctoral certificate shall be issued by the faculty. It shall emphasise the merits of the person honoured.
- (6) In the case of a publicly conferred honorary doctorate, the person honoured shall as a rule give a doctoral lecture on a topic of his/her choice, of which he/she shall notify the Dean in good time.
- (7) The provisions of Section 17 shall apply to the withdrawal of an honorary doctorate in theology.

Section 20 Renewal of the doctorate deed

- (1) At the suggestion of the relevant faculty or doctoral procedure institution, the doctorate deed can be ceremoniously renewed on the 50th anniversary of its having been acquired (“Golden conferral of a doctorate”).
- (2) Paragraph 1 will apply accordingly to the 25th anniversary year (“Silver conferral of a doctorate”).
- (3) As far as possible, the conferral shall take place in a central venue at the university as part of a festive event.

Section 21 Entry into force, transitional provisions, changes

- (1) These Doctoral Regulations shall enter into force on the day following their publication in the official announcements of the Ruhr University Bochum. On the same date, the Doctoral Regulations of 21 January 2011 (Official Announcement No. 864 of the Ruhr University Bochum) shall cease to apply, notwithstanding the provision in Paragraph 2.
- (2) On entering into force, the Regulations shall apply to all newly commencing doctoral projects. Candidates who have already obtained recognition as doctoral candidates at the time of the entry into force of these Regulations may choose, within a period of five years, to avail themselves of the doctoral regulations previously in force in the faculty.

Drawn up on the basis of the resolution of the Faculty of Protestant Theology of 5 June 2019 and the agreement reached with the Protestant Church of Westphalia pursuant to Section 80 Para. 4 HG of 5 September 2020.

Bochum, 29 October 2020

Professor Dr Axel Schölmerich
Rector of the Ruhr University Bochum