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## **DOCTORAL DEGREE REGULATIONS UTRECHT**

(The texts printed in grey are articles from the Higher Education and Research Act (*Dutch abbreviation: WHW.*)

Section 7.19 WHW. Doctoral Degree Regulations; the honorary doctorate

1. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall draw up the Doctoral Degree Regulations with due observance of the provisions laid down in this Act. These Regulations shall provide for:
  - a. the procedures for obtaining a doctorate and for conducting a defence ceremony, including the responsibilities and powers of all those who are or may become involved in either the doctoral studies or the defence ceremony, and
  - b. the provisions for settling any disputes arising from either the doctoral studies or the defence ceremony.
  - c. the procedures relating to Section 7.18, Subsection 6, if applicable.
2. On the recommendation of the Executive Board of the Institution, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees is authorised to award honorary doctorates to natural persons in recognition of their outstanding merits.

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## **CHAPTER 1 DOCTORAL DEGREE**

### **§ 1 GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

#### **Article 1 Doctoral Degree**

1. Utrecht University offers Doctoral Degree programmes.
2. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees is authorised to award Doctoral degrees.
3. The chairperson of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees is the representative of the Board in and out of court.

#### **Article 2 Joint Doctorate**

1. Utrecht University offers joint doctorates as referred to in Section 7.18, Subsection 6, WHW. The joint doctorate can be obtained by defending the doctoral thesis in the presence of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees or a separate committee appointed by this body.
2. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees is authorised to award the joint doctorate, together with a similar body of the partner institute or institutes.
3. A joint doctorate can only be pursued at Utrecht University if prior written permission has been obtained from the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees in conformity with the Regulations for Obtaining a Joint Doctorate. These regulations are appended to and an integral part of the Doctoral Degree Regulations.
4. The stipulations in the Doctoral Degree Regulations shall apply to the joint doctorates by analogy unless the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees gives permission to deviate from these stipulations on proper grounds.

#### **Article 3 Instructions to the PhD candidates/Minimum requirements for the quality assurance system for doctoral programmes**

1. PhD candidates, when carrying out their duties under these regulations, shall comply with the document "Instructions to the PhD candidates" as adopted by the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees, and shall make use of the forms adopted by the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees as set out in the PhD candidate tracking system of the university.
2. PhD candidates, supervisors and co-supervisors, when carrying out their duties under these regulations, shall comply with the document "Minimum requirements for the quality assurance system for doctoral programmes", as adopted by the Executive Board, and make use of the forms adopted by the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees, as set out in the PhD candidate tracking system of the university.

### **§ 2 ADMISSION TO DOCTORAL STUDIES; PHD CANDIDATES – SUPERVISORS – CO-SUPERVISORS**

#### **Section 7.18 WHW. Conferral of the degrees of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy; admission to the pursuit of a doctorate and structure of the process**

1. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees of a research university, the Open University or a university set up on an ideological basis shall be authorised to confer the degrees of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy upon completion of the doctoral degree process. The degrees of Doctor and Doctor of Philosophy are equivalent.
2. The pursuit of a doctoral degree shall be open to anyone who:
  - a. has earned the degree of Master pursuant to Section 7.10a, Subsections 1 or 2.
  - b. has written a doctoral thesis to prove their competence for the independent pursuit of science, or, as the case may be, has manufactured a doctoral design, and
  - c. has satisfied the requirements set out in the regulations pertaining to the conferral of doctorates as referred to in Section 7.19.

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3. In exceptional cases, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may grant admission to the doctoral degree process to persons who meet the second paragraph under *b* and *c* but do not meet that paragraph under *a*.
4. For each doctorate to be conferred, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall appoint a doctoral thesis supervisor. A professor or, provided it is someone on whom the degree of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy has been conferred, another member of staff of a research university, a university set up on an ideological basis or the Open University who, in the opinion of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees has sufficient competence to act as doctoral thesis supervisor, may be appointed as a doctoral thesis supervisor. The defence ceremony shall take place before this board or before a committee to be composed by the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees out of professors and other persons whom it deems to be sufficiently competent to sit on the committee, in compliance with the regulations pertaining to the conferral of doctorates referred to in Section 7.19.
5. For the purpose of the fourth paragraph, the professors occupying endowed chairs at a public university shall be counted as professors of that university.
6. An institution may confer the degrees of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy jointly with one or more Dutch or foreign institutions upon completion of the doctoral degree process. The first up to and including the fifth paragraphs shall apply *mutatis mutandis*. The institutions may set down further arrangements with respect to the process within the stipulations set down in these Doctoral Degree Regulations.

**Section 18.37 WHW. Admission to doctoral studies for candidates possessing a diploma 'oude stijl'** (*i.e.: a diploma gained before the introduction of the Bachelor-Master structure*)

Any person who, on 31 August 2002 or before, fulfilled the condition as referred to in Section 7.18, Subsection 2 under *a*, as this provision read on 31 August 2002, shall be considered equivalent to anyone who fulfils the condition as referred to in Section 7.18, Subsection 2 under *a*.

**Section 7.18 WHW. Doctoral degrees; admission and graduation (as valid on 31 August 2002)**

1. [...]
2. Admission to doctoral studies shall be granted to any person who:
  - a. has successfully completed a degree programme totalling at least 168 credit points or who, with regard to the programmes described in Section 7.4, Subsection 3, has successfully passed part of a programme totalling at least 168 credits.[...]

**Article 4 Request for admission / Exemption**

1. At the start of the research that will serve as the basis for the doctoral programme and after the approval of the dean, PhD candidates shall submit to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees a request for admission to the doctoral programme using the the PhD candidate tracking system of the university.
2. At the applicant's request, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may grant admission to the doctoral programme to anyone who does not possess the required degree in order to be admitted, but who does fulfil the provisions of Section 7.18, Subsection 2 under *b* and *c* of the WHW, provided the applicant can clearly prove to have sufficient knowledge. This request shall be accompanied by a recommendation from a professor at Utrecht University.
3. A person who has been awarded a doctorate (or a foreign equivalent of this) shall not be re-admitted to the doctoral programme at Utrecht University. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may grant dispensation from this provision. The intended supervisor must submit a written and reasoned request for this to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees, via the dean.

**Article 5 Supervision of PhD candidates**

1. PhD candidates are always supervised by at least two persons: the supervisor, the second supervisor and/or co-supervisor. Wherever these regulations refer to supervisor or co-supervisor, in cases where more than one supervisor and/or co-supervisor has been appointed, this shall be understood to mean supervisors and/or co-supervisors.
2. The following persons cannot supervise PhD candidates:

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- a) a partner of (one of) the (co)supervisor(s) or the PhD candidate,
- b) relations by blood or affinity of (one of) the (co-)supervisor(s) or the PhD candidate up to and including the fourth degree,
- c) persons who are related to one of the (co-)supervisor(s) or the PhD candidate in such a way that (i) they cannot give an impartial assessment or (ii) there is the appearance that they cannot give an impartial assessment.

#### **Article 6 Appointment of supervisor**

1. PhD candidates shall submit to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees

- (i) together with the application for admission PhD Programme, and
- (ii) after the approval of the dean

a request for the appointment of a supervisor of the professor of a university, a philosophical university or the Open University who, in their opinion is the most suitable and who in the opinion of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees, possesses sufficient competence to act as supervisor. This may also be an associate professor whom the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees has authorised to act as supervisor of a PhD candidate (*promotierecht* or *ius promovendi*) at Utrecht University (hereinafter "UHD with Ius Promovendi").

2. Upon receipt of the request for admission and any exemptions of the PhD candidate, as referred to in article 4, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall determine the scientific field in which the subject of the doctoral degree lies, and shall appoint at least one and no more than two professors or UHDs with Ius Promovendi as supervisor, without prejudice to the provisions of article 7, section 2 of these regulations.
3. A professor at Utrecht University or another Dutch university, or an equivalent foreign institution of higher education, or a UHD with Ius Promovendi whom the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees has authorised to act as supervisor of a PhD candidate (*promotierecht* or *ius promovendi*) at Utrecht University, may be appointed as supervisor.
4. If the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees appoints a professor or an associate professor to whom an institution other than Utrecht University has granted the right to act as supervisor of a PhD candidate (*promotierecht* or *ius promovendi*), it shall also appoint a professor or a UHD with Ius Promovendi from Utrecht University as supervisor.

#### **Article 7 Co-supervisor**

1. At the request of the supervisor, and after approval by the dean, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may appoint one or a maximum of two co-supervisors. In order to arrange this, the supervisor should first submit a written request to the dean including the proposal to appoint a co-supervisor. After approval by the dean the supervisor then submits the request to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees.  
Anyone who holds a doctorate, who is an expert in the relevant academic area and is not a professor, may be appointed co-supervisor. Co-supervisors should be involved in the daily supervision of the PhD candidate.
2. If co-supervisors are appointed as professors during the doctoral programme which they have been appointed to give daily supervision, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may appoint them as supervisor. If two supervisors have already been appointed, in very exceptional cases the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may appoint the professor as third supervisor.

#### **Article 8 End of authorisation to act as supervisor(promotierecht or ius Promovendi)**

Honourably discharged professors and honourably discharged UHDs with Ius Promovendi retain the right to act as supervisor for the PhD candidates for whom they were appointed by the Board for Conferral of Doctoral Degrees prior to their discharge, for a maximum period of five years after their discharge. Leading in this respect is:

- i. in the case of emeritus professors: the date of termination of employment as a professor;
- ii. in the event of termination of professorship: the date of termination of professorship;
- iii. in other cases: the date of discharge.

*By way of explanation:*

*Article 9.19. HRA Responsibilities and rights of professors*

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(...)

*Section 3 Honourably discharged professors shall retain the right to act as supervisors for five years after their discharge.*

(...)

### **§ 3 DOCTORAL RESEARCH AND THESIS MANUSCRIPT**

#### **Article 9 Research requirements**

1. The PhD candidate is responsible for ensuring that the research that will serve as the basis for the doctoral thesis shall fulfil the following requirements:
  - a. The PhD candidate makes an original contribution to academic research of a quality which stands up to peer review at the level usual in the Netherlands;
  - b. The PhD candidate has demonstrated their ability to independently apply the academic methods used in the discipline concerned for developing, interpreting and putting into practice new knowledge;
  - c. The PhD candidate has acquired and worked with a substantial body of knowledge which, at the very least, embraces the principles and methods of international academic practice and of theorisation, methodology and study in the discipline concerned;
  - d. The PhD candidate possesses the ability to design and implement a substantial project for the purpose of developing new knowledge;
  - e. The PhD candidate is able to pass on knowledge and methods pertaining to their discipline or specialism in an effective way;
  - f. The PhD candidate is able to exercise social responsibility in the conducting, applying and making use of their own research.
2. The research is conducted in compliance with legal and university regulations and codes of conduct.

#### **Article 10 Joint research**

Joint research may serve as the basis for a doctoral thesis written by a maximum of three PhD candidates, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:

- a. Each of the PhD candidates contributes to the research independently and sufficiently, to the satisfaction of the supervisor, and
- b. Each of the PhD candidates is author of a separate part of the thesis, while at the same time they are jointly responsible for the overall coherence of the thesis.

#### **Article 11 Division of tasks between supervisors and co-supervisors**

1. The supervisor and co-supervisor shall coach the PhD candidate when writing their thesis, and shall arrange meetings on a regular basis.
2. The supervisors shall ensure that:
  - a. The doctoral research is conducted according to the rules of conduct for academic practice within Utrecht University and according to the rules of conduct and/or the professional code which applies to professional conduct for the relevant academic field;
  - b. If the doctoral research should necessitate research on or with human subjects, the doctoral research will be conducted with the consent of the parties involved or with the consent of a representative appointed by these parties;
  - c. In so far as the doctoral research involves laboratory animals, the appropriate rules will be observed, and  
That, in so far as the doctoral research or part of the research is funded by third parties, as few restrictions as possible are imposed on the research, and, if limitations are imposed on freedom of publication of data and results of the research, these limitations do not contravene academic freedom.
3. Where two or more supervisors have been appointed, they shall divide the various tasks between them after consultation with the PhD candidate. They shall document this division of tasks if either of them or the candidate so requires.
4. Co-supervisors shall coach PhD candidates when writing their thesis, following instructions of the supervisor.

#### **Article 12 Thesis manuscript assessment**

1. PhD candidates may ask the supervisor to assess their manuscript in order to decide whether it meets the requirements of a thesis.

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2. Supervisors shall assess all manuscripts submitted to them on the basis of at least the following criteria:
  - a. relevance of the subject;
  - b. formulation and distinctiveness of research subject;
  - c. originality of the academic discussion;
  - d. academic level of the structuring, analysis and processing of the research data;
  - e. methodological soundness of this analysis;
  - f. derivation of new insights and concepts;
  - g. critical confrontation between the candidate's conclusions and existing theories or concepts;
  - h. creativity of the candidate's approach to the academic area covered by the thesis;
  - i. level of restraint exercised in the production of the text;
  - j. well-balanced structure and clarity of style.The supervisor shall also assess whether the manuscript meets all other requirements laid down in the Doctoral Degree Regulations.
3. Supervisors may instruct PhD candidates, after consultation with them and in agreement with any co-supervisors, to make certain changes to the manuscript.

#### **Article 13 Approval of manuscript**

1. Following the PhD candidate's request, the supervisor shall decide if the manuscript merits approval on the basis of the criteria described in the Doctoral Degree Regulations.
2. supervisors shall allow co-supervisors sufficient time to assess the manuscript. Co-supervisors shall supply their opinion in writing. Supervisors shall attach this assessment to their own assessment.
3. The supervisor shall decide on the request for approval within three months of receipt of the manuscript, unless the PhD candidate consents to a longer assessment term. If the assessment term stated in the first sentence is exceeded, PhD candidates may request the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees to instruct supervisors to make their decision before a specific date. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall decide within 30 days of receipt of this request.

### **§ 4 ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

#### **Article 14 Establishment**

1. Within two weeks of being notified of the decision to approve the manuscript as a doctoral thesis, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall establish an assessment committee.
2. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall establish the assessment committee at the proposal of the supervisor with the approval of the dean.
3. The members of the assessment committee may not be:
  - a) a partner of (one of) the (co)supervisor(s) or the PhD candidate,
  - b) a relative by blood or affinity of (one of) the (co-)supervisor(s) or the PhD candidate up to and including the fourth degree,
  - c) persons who are in related to the (co-)supervisor(s) or the PhD candidate in such a way that (i) they cannot give an impartial assessment or (ii) there is the appearance that they cannot give an impartial assessment.
4. In principle, the members of the assessment committee shall also not be co-authors of any article forming part of the thesis.
5. The supervisor shall ensure that the chairman and the members of the assessment committee each receive a copy of the approved manuscript.

#### **Article 15 Committee members**

1. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall appoint the members of the assessment committee in accordance with the provisions of this article.
2. The assessment committee shall consist of five voting members as detailed in article 15 section 3 and, in addition, a number of advisory members as detailed in article 15 section 4
3. With regard to the voting members, the following shall apply:
  - (a) at least four members shall meet one of the following two requirements:

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- i. authorized to act as supervisor of a PhD candidate at Utrecht University (either as professor affiliated to Utrecht University, or as emeritus professor affiliated to Utrecht University with still valid authorisation, or as UHD with Ius Promovendi ); or
  - ii. affiliation as a professor at another Dutch or equivalent foreign university.
- (b) at least one member is affiliated as a professor at Utrecht University; and
  - (c) at least one member is a professor not affiliated to Utrecht University.
  - (d) all members have a doctoral degree;
  - (e) all members are experts on elements of either (i) the thesis or (ii) the methodology used.
  - (f) each member has one vote.
- The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall ensure a diverse composition of the assessment Committee.
4. The supervisor(s) and any co-supervisor(s) shall be members of the assessment committee in an advisory capacity. The supervisor shall be secretary of the assessment committee. If there are two supervisors, they shall decide among themselves who will act as secretary.
  5. The rector magnificus chairs the assessment committee. The rector may be substituted by a professor who (i) can fulfil an impartial and independent role and (ii) is not the supervisor. The chairperson represents the assessment committee in and out of court. If the rector magnificus has been appointed as supervisor or cannot fulfil an impartial or independent role for any other reason, the deputy chairman of the Board for Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall exercise the powers of the rector magnificus as described in these regulations and as chairman of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees.

#### **Article 16 Admission to the doctoral thesis defence**

1. Within one month of receipt of the manuscript, the assessment committee shall decide whether the manuscript demonstrates the PhD candidate's capacity for the independent pursuit of research to such an extent that the PhD candidate shall be admitted to defend their thesis. In exceptional cases, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may extend this term by a specific number of days.
2. The decision whether to admit the candidate to defend their thesis is in principle unanimous. If during the voting procedure it turns out that one or more members intend to cast a negative vote regarding the proposed admission to the doctoral thesis defence, the assessment committee will consult the dean prior to proceeding with the definitive vote. The dean decides whether to grant admission to the doctoral thesis defence, to request that the manuscript be revised, or to refuse admission.
3. If one of the members of the assessment committee casts a negative vote, such members cannot for that reason be relieved of their membership of the assessment committee.
4. In the event of a revision of the manuscript, the PhD candidate must submit the revised manuscript to the supervisor within one year of the instruction of the assessment committee. At the request of the supervisor, the chair calls the assessment committee to meet one more time to assess the revised manuscript. The previous sections above apply to this second assessment. If more than a year elapses before the revised manuscript is submitted for assessment, the appointment of the assessment committee expires automatically. The appointment of a new assessment committee may be requested as and when required.

#### **Article 17 'Cum laude' doctorates (i.e. 'with distinction')**

1. An excellent assessment of the doctoral thesis based on several of the criteria mentioned in article 12 section 2 can allow for a 'cum laude' designation, if the quality of the thesis is among the top 3 to 5 percent in the relevant field of research worldwide. If this is the case, the assessment committee, after approval by the dean, may recommend the doctoral examination committee to confer upon the PhD candidate a degree with a 'cum laude' designation.
2. Before deciding on the recommendation, as referred to in article 17 section 1, the dean shall seek the advice of at least two external experts in the relevant academic area who were not involved in the research that serves as the basis for the thesis. Such external experts may not have co-published with the supervisor or PhD candidate within five years of receiving the request for advice from the dean. The dean shall check the expertise and impartiality of the external experts. The dean informs the rector only of the identity of the referees (no later than four weeks before the date of the doctoral thesis defence ceremony. For other parties involved, the identity of the referees remains anonymous, nor are the other parties involved informed of the content of the referees' assessment.
3. The assessment committee shall make a proposal to award the predicate "cum laude"



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unanimously and with the consent of the supervisor. The supervisor shall consult the co-supervisor in advance about giving this consent.

4. The dean shall inform the doctoral examination committee of the proposal to award the predicate cum laude no later than five working days before the date of the doctoral thesis defence ceremony.

## **§ 5 DOCTORAL THESIS**

### **Article 18 Academic content**

1. The doctoral thesis shall either be an academic treatise on a particular subject, or a number of separate, sufficiently coherent academic treatises, all or some of which have already been published as articles.
2. An article written by more than one person may be accepted as part of the thesis if the candidate made a vital contribution to the article, as confirmed in writing by the supervisor.
3. A separate academic treatise, as referred to in Article 9, which has been written by the PhD candidate in cooperation with others, can be part of the thesis only if they have provided a significant contribution to the treatise and if the portion for which they are primarily responsible is clearly indicated in the thesis.
4. If a doctoral thesis consists of a number of separate academic treatises, the candidates shall add either an introduction or a conclusion in which they explain the coherence between the various treatises.

### **Article 19 Technical requirements**

1. The thesis shall be written in Dutch, German, English or French or, subject to the approval of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees, in another language. If the thesis is written in Dutch, an English translation of the title and an English summary shall be appended. If the thesis is written in German, English or French, a Dutch translation of the title and a Dutch summary shall be appended. If the dissertation is written in a language other than Dutch, German, English or French, both Dutch and English translations of the title and Dutch and English summaries shall be appended.
2. The thesis shall contain a concise curriculum vitae of the PhD candidate.
3. The thesis shall contain a description of the composition of the assessment committee
4. The thesis shall be available both in print and in digital form for the purpose of the doctoral thesis defence ceremony and for public distribution according to the Instructions to the PhD candidates.
5. The thesis shall be made up and printed in compliance with the regulations in the Instructions to the PhD candidates as laid down by the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees.
6. Subject to the approval of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees, the thesis may include additions that strictly speaking fall outside the scope of an academic treatise.
7. In the case of a joint thesis, this article shall equally apply to each of the PhD candidates.
8. The thesis may not contain any advertising material.

### **Article 20 Postponement of the doctoral thesis defence ceremony**

If the PhD candidate fails to submit their thesis in compliance with article 19 and the Instructions to the PhD candidates, the chairperson of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may decide to postpone the doctoral thesis defence ceremony.

## **§ 6 DOCTORAL THESIS DEFENCE CEREMONY**

### **Article 21 Ceremony date**

At the recommendation of the supervisor, the rector magnificus shall set the place, date and time of the doctoral thesis defence ceremony.

### **Article 22 Doctoral examination committee**

1. The doctoral thesis defence ceremony shall take place before a doctoral examination committee, which shall be appointed by the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees with due regard to the provisions of this article.
2. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall appoint the doctoral examination committee on the recommendation of the supervisor with the approval of the dean.
3. The doctoral examination committee shall consist of voting members and advisory members.

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4. With regard to the voting members, the following shall apply:
  - a. at least three members shall also be voting members of the assessment committee;
  - b. other members are affiliated to Utrecht University as professors or senior lecturers;
  - c. at least three members have the right to award degrees at Utrecht University (either as professor attached to Utrecht University, as emeritus professor attached to Utrecht University or as UHD with Promotierecht).

If the assessment committee has made a proposal to award the predicate "cum laude", at least five members have the right to award degrees at Utrecht University, of which at least two are professors.
  - d. Each member has one vote.
5. The following members are members of the doctoral examination committee with an advisory vote:
  - a. the rector magnificus chairs the doctoral examination committee. The rector may be replaced by a former rector, dean, former dean, or professor. The chairman represents the doctoral examination committee in and out of court.

If the rector is appointed as supervisor or wishes to be a voting member of the doctoral examination committee, the deputy chairman of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall exercise the powers of the rector as described in these regulations and as chairman of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees.
  - b. the supervisor(s) and any co-supervisor(s). The supervisor is secretary of the doctoral examination committee. If there are two supervisors, they shall decide among themselves who will act as secretary.
  - c. any emeriti and invitees.

#### **Article 23      Objections**

1. All members of the doctoral examination committee have the right to raise objections. The supervisor shall ensure that a sufficient number of committee members have expressed their willingness to voice their objections.
2. Subject to the dean's consent, anyone who holds a doctorate and is an expert in the subject area of the thesis is permitted to voice objections.
3. Subject to dean's consent, recognised experts in the subject area of the thesis who do not hold doctoral degrees are permitted to voice objections.
4. Joint theses shall be separately defended by each candidate, if possible, successively on the very same day.

#### **Article 24      Graduation session**

1. The chairperson of the doctoral examination committee shall structure the discussion in such a way that the candidate is given the opportunity to respond each time an opponent has voiced their objections.
2. The session shall be adjourned 45 minutes after its commencement, unless the chairperson decides otherwise. The Beadle shall announce that the 45 minutes have expired by proclaiming 'Hora est' (*Latin: 'it is time'*). The chairperson thereupon adjourns the session, after which the doctoral examination committee retires for closed-door deliberations.

#### **Article 25      Deliberations**

1. During the deliberations referred to in article 24 section 2, the secretary and the chairperson of the doctoral examination committee shall present their findings, taking into account any minority opinions.
2. The doctoral examination committee shall decide on the award of the doctorate, also taking into account the PhD candidate's defence of the thesis. If one of the members of the doctoral examination committee so requires, a roll-call vote shall be taken on the decision by the voting members. Votes are cast anonymously. If the votes are tied, the doctorate shall not be awarded.
3. Subsequently, if the assessment committee has made a proposal to award the predicate "cum laude", a roll-call vote shall take place on this proposal by the voting members. Votes shall be cast anonymously. If the votes are tied, the predicate shall not be awarded.
4. If the doctorate is awarded, both the chairperson of the doctoral examination committee and the supervisor shall sign the doctoral degree certificate. The co-supervisor also signs the certificate. The 'cum laude' designation, if awarded, shall be added to the certificate.

#### **Article 26      Announcement of the decision of the doctorate**

1. After the deliberations referred to in Article 24 section 2 have been concluded, the chair of

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- the doctoral examination committee shall reopen the session and announce the committee's decision.
2. If the doctorate is awarded, the supervisor, at the behest of the chair of the doctoral examination committee, shall confer the PhD candidate with the doctoral degree, and the PhD candidate shall make a promise of scientific integrity. The supervisor then presents the PhD candidate with the certificate, as referred to in article 24, section 4. If the designation "cum laude" is attached to the doctorate, the supervisor shall announce this.
  3. The supervisor or, subject to permission of the chairperson of the doctoral examination committee, the co-supervisor, shall express their opinion about the thesis and, if desired, the academic qualities of the PhD candidate. The supervisor may add some words of appreciation.

## **§ 7 SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES**

### **Article 27 Arbitration by the dean**

1. At the request of any of the parties involved in a dispute, the dean shall offer to arbitrate if:
  - a. potential supervisors refuse to accept their appointment as supervisor or withdraws their acceptance;
  - b. a dispute arises between the supervisors/co-supervisors or between the supervisor/co-supervisor and the PhD candidate while the PhD candidate is writing their thesis;
  - c. a dispute arises between the supervisors/co-supervisors or between the supervisor/co-supervisor and the PhD candidate about the approval of the manuscript;
  - d. the assessment committee does not admit the candidate to defend their thesis.
2. If the dean personally is the supervisor or a voting member of the assessment committee, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall appoint a professor to be arbitrator.
3. The arbitrator shall hear the parties involved, in order to reach an amicable solution. The arbitrator shall present the findings and reasoned conclusions in a written report, which the arbitrator shall discuss with all parties involved. The arbitrator shall send a report and a written summary of this discussion to the parties involved and to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees.

### **Article 28 Ruling by the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees**

1. If arbitration, as referred to in article 27, fails to settle the dispute within one month, either or both parties may submit a written request to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees to settle the dispute.
2. Within one month of receipt of the request, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall establish an Advisory Committee to advise the Board on the presented dispute. The committee shall be composed of three professors who have not been involved in the preparation of the thesis.
3. The Advisory Committee referred to under 2 shall hear all parties involved and is authorised to consult any experts. The committee shall present its findings in a written report.
4. Within two months of its establishment, the Advisory Committee referred to under 2 shall submit its recommendations to the Board of the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees in the form of a well-reasoned draft decision, accompanied by the report referred to under 3.
5. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall settle the dispute within one month of receipt of the recommendations referred to under 4.

## **CHAPTER 2 HONORARY DOCTORATE**

### **Section 7.19 WHW. Doctoral Degree Regulations; honorary doctorate**

1. [...]
2. On the recommendation of the Executive Board of the Institution, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees is authorised to award honorary doctorates to natural persons in recognition of their outstanding merits.

### **Article 29 Honorary doctorate**

An honorary doctorate can be awarded to anyone:

- a. who has conducted research which proved to be of exceptional significance to the academic practice at the university or to science in general;

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- b. who has made, either academically, culturally, or socially, an outstanding contribution, directly or indirectly, to academic education and research.

#### **Article 30 Consultation with the Board of the University**

1. If the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees intends to accept a recommendation to award an honorary doctorate as submitted by a dean, it shall consult confidentially with the Executive Board.
2. Following notification by the Executive Board, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees decides whether the honorary doctorate shall be awarded.

#### **Article 31 Decision on honorary doctorate**

1. If the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees has decided to award an honorary doctorate, it shall also appoint one or more university professors to be supervisor/supervisors.
2. The candidate, the supervisor, and the dean of the faculty concerned shall be informed of the Board's decision. This information is confidential.
3. The decision shall only be made public after the candidate has declared their willingness to accept the honorary doctorate.

#### **Article 32 Public session**

1. The honorary doctorate shall be awarded in a special public session of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees.
2. By order of the rector magnificus, the supervisor shall award the honorary degree, while expressing words of praise and appreciation.
3. In evidence of the honours awarded, the honorary doctor shall receive a 'cappa' (*i.e. a small honorary gown*) and a degree certificate signed by the rector magnificus, the dean of the faculty concerned, and the supervisor.

### **CHAPTER 3 OTHER PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 33**

1. In all cases not covered by the Doctoral Degree Regulations, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees shall decide.
2. In exceptional cases, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may deviate from the Doctoral Degree Regulations.

#### **Article 34**

If, after awarding the doctorate, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees finds that the thesis contains a serious violation of scientific integrity, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may decide to revoke the doctorate.

#### **Article 35**

These regulations shall take effect on the date of adoption.

#### **Article 36 Confidentiality**

With regard to the deliberations referred to in articles 16, 17 and 25 and the procedures described in paragraph 7 of Chapter 1 and article 30, those present are bound to confidentiality.

The Doctoral Degree Regulations take effect on 1 July 2023 as laid down by order of the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees on 8 June 2023.