

Manual for acceptance for Doctoral Studies at HCU Hamburg

From submitting your exposé till starting your doctorate

If you are interested in obtaining a doctoral degree at HCU it is helpful to consider the following processes and requirements. In general, the applicable regulations can be found in the Doctoral Regulations from May 11th 2022 as well as in the related Implementation Directive.

1. Search for a suiting supervisor

First of all, you may need a suiting supervisor for your dissertation project, see also § 4 (2) of the Doctoral Regulations. In this case, the proximity of the professorship to the intended dissertation topic is decisive, and the person must also have the capacity for additional supervision. The [HCU website](#) provides you with an overview of the professorships in each department and you can use the contact information given to send requests for supervision. Before contacting a professorship, you should have a good idea of your dissertation topic or already have a draft version of your exposé.

2. Admission request

If you have received a supervision commitment, you may prepare your admission request for the Doctoral Examination Board. Please pay attention to the submission deadlines for the respective Board meetings.

The central piece of your admission request is your exposé, which displays your scientific research topic in a predefined pattern. The exposé will be evaluated by the members of the Doctoral Examination Board. A detailed guideline for preparation of the exposé can be found on the [HCU website](#). The requirements for the exposé are also stated within the Doctoral Regulations, § 3 (1) Nr. 2. Please discuss your exposé extensively with your supervisor, who will need to sign the final version.

Please hand in the following documents together with your exposé:

- the [application for admission](#) to doctoral studies,
- the confirmation of supervision and a 1-page statement from the supervisor stating that he or she is in favour of the project and is prepared to supervise the thesis (see § 3 (1) Nr.2 of the Doctoral Regulations),
- Notarised copies of Bachelor's and Master's diploma,
- Notarised copies of Bachelor's and Master's certificates,
- Curriculum vitae with a detailed description of your education,
- In case you are working in a third-party-funded research project, please explain how the doctoral project is thematically differentiated from the research project. You may use the respective form from the [website](#).

The application documents must be sent by post to the office of the Doctoral Committee by the deadline and digitally as pdf documents to hcu-promotionsausschuss@vw.hcu-hamburg.de.

In the case of postal items, the postmark is the date of receipt for compliance with the deadline.

Note: The office of the Doctoral Committee is authorized to make certifications for internal use.

Special case: Non-European university degrees

If you obtained your Master's or Diploma degree at a university outside the European Union, the equivalence of the foreign degree must be established before admission to doctoral studies.

The equivalence check is carried out by the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) in Bonn. The following documents must be submitted to the Office of the Doctoral Examination Board at least 10 weeks before the submission deadline in order to arrange for an equivalence assessment:

- Bachelor's and Master's degree certificates (with overview of subjects and grades) in the original language
- Certified translations of all enclosed educational certificates
- Diploma Supplement in the standardised European form, if issued.

The Office of the Doctoral Examination Board will then arrange for the examination to be carried out by the ZAB. After feedback from the ZAB, the office of the Doctoral Examination Board will inform you of the examination result. Any necessary additional examinations will be decided by the Doctoral Examination Board.

The Doctoral Examination Board can only decide on admission once a positive decision has been received from the ZAB. Therefore, please contact the office of the Doctoral Examination Board in good time.

Language requirements

In case you have obtained your Master's or Diploma degree at a university outside of Germany, you have to prove your language skills according to § 2 (7) of the Doctoral Regulations:

- Doctoral candidates with a degree from a foreign university, whose mother language is not German, but who want to write their thesis in German, have to provide evidence of the passing of the German language test for university admission (DSH-2).
- Doctoral candidates with a degree from a foreign university, who plan to write their thesis in English, have to prove their language skills by providing evidence of a C1-level (GER) or equivalent expertise.

3. Decision of the Doctoral Examination Board

After you have submitted your application for admission on time, the Doctoral Examination Board will decide on your application or evaluate your exposé at its next meeting. You will receive feedback on your application from the office of the Doctoral Examination Board approx. 5-10 days after the date of the meeting.

If you have been accepted, you will be sent a declaration of acceptance for the doctorate together with the letter of admission. Please complete this within four weeks and return it to the office together with the other required documents.

According to § 6 (6) of the Doctoral Regulations, you only have to be enrolled in the semester in which you submit your dissertation, but you can voluntarily remain enrolled for the entire duration of your

doctorate. If you would like to enrol right at the beginning, please send the enrolment application to the Student Service Centre.

In addition, it is mandatory according to § 4 (12) of the Doctoral Regulations to conclude a supervision agreement with your supervisor. You can find a template for this on the [HCU website](#).

If you are not accepted, you can resubmit your revised exposé once at one of the following meetings. You will receive appropriate suggestions for improvement and advice from the members of the Doctoral Examination Board, who will also be available to answer any questions you may have.

It is advisable to revise the exposé thoroughly and discuss it intensively with the supervisor before submitting it again. You do not need to resubmit your CV and copies of certificates for the second submission, but the application form and the confirmation of supervision must be updated.

4. Starting your doctorate at HCU

When you have submitted your declaration of acceptance you are officially registered as doctoral candidate at HCU. Your email address will be added to the “alle-doktoranden” mailing list, so you will receive all important information concerning doctoral candidates.

You may use the following offers that HCU provides for doctoral candidates:

- **Promotionskolleg:**
 - The HCU offers various workshop formats within the “Promotionskolleg”, such as writing workshops and individual coaching sessions for doctoral candidates. Participation is free of charge for HCU doctoral candidates. You will be informed about current dates by email and on the [HCU website](#).

- **Hamburg Research Academy:**
 - The Hamburg Research Academy (HRA) is the cross-university institution for doctoral candidates, doctoral students, postdocs, W1 professors and academic supervisors in Hamburg. Doctoral candidates from all Hamburg universities can take advantage of the HRA's extensive range of courses free of charge. All courses can be booked via the [course portal](#).

- **Specialised colloquia:**
 - In accordance with the Doctoral Regulations, at least one presentation must be given at an HCU research or doctoral colloquium during the doctoral period. The dates for the respective colloquia and lecture series are communicated via the email distribution list and published on the HCU website.

- **Doctoral student representation:**
 - Contact details for the current doctoral student representatives are available on the HCU website. The representatives are available for informal exchanges, clarification of questions and uncertainties in the doctorate and organise other

internal networking formats. Current dates and events are communicated by email and on the HCU website.

- **Doctoral scholarships and grants**

- The HCU regularly announces scholarships for doctoral students, which are funded by external donors. Current calls for applications are sent out by email and published on the [HCU website](#).
- Furthermore, the office of the Doctoral Examination Board regularly offers workshops on doing a doctorate at the HCU, which include information on further funding opportunities in Germany and abroad. Individual counselling appointments can also be arranged outside of the workshop dates.

In case of questions please contact the

Office of the Doctoral Examination Board

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