

Ordinance

on Obtaining a Doctoral Degree at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Zurich (PromVO PhF)

(dated 1 October 2018)^{1, 2}

The Board of the University has resolved:

Part 1: General Provisions

A. Scope

§ 1. ¹ This Ordinance on Obtaining a Doctoral Degree governs doctorates and honorary doctorates at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Zurich (“the Faculty”). Object

² Special regulations from agreements with other faculties or higher education institutions (especially as part of a cotutelle) remain reserved.

§ 2. ¹ The doctoral program regulation implements the provisions of this Ordinance on Obtaining a Doctoral Degree.

² The completion of curricular coursework is subject to the provisions of the framework ordinance on Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programs at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Zurich (RVO)⁶, provided that this Ordinance does not contain any provisions to the contrary. Implementing and supplementary provisions

³ The provisions of RVO⁶ apply *mutatis mutandis* to the completion of the PhD defense, provided that this Ordinance does not contain any provisions to the contrary.

⁴ Questions that are not regulated in this Ordinance on Obtaining a Doctoral Degree or in the implementing or supplementary provisions shall be resolved by the Faculty Assembly.

§ 3. Upon completion of the doctorate, the Faculty awards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), which corresponds to the degree of Dr. phil. in German. Degree awarded

B. Graduate School

Purpose and
supplementary
provisions

§ 4. ¹ The Faculty runs a graduate school to promote the development of junior researchers.

² The graduate school supports and advises doctoral candidates and the Faculty throughout the doctorate and takes care of tasks that are related to the doctorate.

³ Details are governed by the Organization Regulations of the graduate school.

Tasks of the
graduate
school

§ 5. ¹ The graduate school acts as an intermediary and makes decisions in the event of questions, uncertainties and conflicts between the doctoral candidate and individual supervisors or the supervisory or doctoral committee.

² It is responsible for all matters related to the doctorate and issues rulings in connection with the doctorate, provided that no other body is deemed responsible.

C. Admission

General
admission
require-
ments

§ 6. ¹ The general admission requirements are set out in the ordinance on admission to studies at the University of Zurich (VZS)⁴.

² In addition to the degrees listed in § 33 para. 1 VZS⁴, holders of the following degrees are eligible for admission to doctoral studies:

- a. Master's degree diploma from a Swiss university of applied sciences or university of teacher education, as defined in the Swiss Federal Act on the Funding and Coordination of the Higher Education Sector⁷,
- b. Master's degree diploma from a foreign university of applied sciences or university of teacher education which is recognized by a state which has ratified the Convention of 11 April 1997 on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Recognition Convention)⁸.

Further
admission
require-
ments

§ 7. ¹ A further prerequisite for admission is a binding commitment to supervise the doctorate from two members of the teaching staff who meet the requirements for the composition of the supervisory committee.

² The decision on admission shall be made upon review of the application documents.

³ There is no general entitlement to be admitted to the program.

Part 2: Right to Confer a Doctorate and Right of Supervision

§ 8. ¹ The right to confer a doctorate is the right to supervise a doctorate up until the point at which the doctoral degree is awarded. It includes supervision, examination and grading of the PhD thesis, and approval of PhD defenses.

Right to confer a doctorate of professors and privatdozents

² Professors at universities with the right to confer a doctorate and privatdozents are entitled to receive the right to confer a doctorate.

³ Professors comprise full and associate professors, assistant professors with or without tenure track, and externally funded assistant professors.

⁴ Adjunct professors have the same status as privatdozents.

⁵ The doctoral program regulation may impose restrictions, in particular on the nature, scope and duration of the right to confer a doctorate.

§ 9. ¹ Professors who are employed by or associated with the Faculty and privatdozents who have been awarded *venia legendi* by the Faculty are regarded as teaching staff with a faculty-internal right to confer a doctorate.

Faculty-internal and external right to confer a doctorate of professors and privatdozents

² All other teaching staff in accordance with § 8 para. 2 are regarded as teaching staff with an external right to confer a doctorate.

§ 10. ¹ Visiting professors may become co-supervisors for doctorates, subject to authorization from the graduate school.

Right to supervise of visiting professors and teaching staff from universities of applied sciences or teacher education

² Teaching staff from universities of applied sciences or teacher education with a PhD can be deployed by the graduate school to supervise a doctorate for a maximum of six years.

³ Such teaching staff are excluded from becoming principal supervisors or sitting on the doctoral committee.

⁴ The doctoral program regulation can provide for exceptions.

Part 3: Supervision of Doctoral Candidates

A. Supervisory Committee

Composition	<p>§ 11. ¹ The supervisory committee is made up of at least two members of the teaching staff with a right to confer a doctorate; at least one member must be a professor with a faculty-internal right to confer a doctorate.</p> <p>² One of these members must be the principal supervisor. The second member will be the co-supervisor.</p> <p>³ Further members of the teaching staff with the right to confer a doctorate or the right to supervise may be appointed as co-supervisors.</p> <p>⁴ Provided that all requirements have been met, the graduate school appoints the supervisory committee to its function upon request by the doctoral candidate and confirms the identity of the principal supervisor.</p>
Function	<p>§ 12. The supervisory committee supervises the doctoral candidate from the date of his or her admission to the doctorate until submission of the request to initiate the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree. It also provides the doctoral candidates with specialist support and advice.</p>
Principal supervision	<p>§ 13. ¹ In addition to supervising the doctoral candidates, the principal supervisor is responsible in particular for drawing up and updating the doctoral agreement and presiding over or organizing meetings between those involved (the doctoral candidates and the supervisors) at regular intervals to discuss the progress of the doctorate.</p> <p>² Teaching staff with a faculty-internal right to confer a doctorate are entitled to take on the role of principal supervisor within the supervisory committee.</p> <p>³ Teaching staff with an external right to confer a doctorate or a right to supervise are not entitled to take on the role of principal supervisor.</p>
Co-supervision	<p>§ 14. ¹ The co-supervisor is responsible for all supervision duties that are necessary during the course of a doctorate except drawing up and updating the doctoral agreement and submitting the application to constitute the doctoral committee and initiating the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree.</p> <p>² Teaching staff with a faculty-internal or an external right to confer a doctorate or a right to supervise can take on the role of co-supervisor for a doctorate.</p>

B. Doctoral Agreement

§ 15. ¹ The doctoral agreement governs the supervisory relationship.

Content
and
duration

² In particular, it shall include the following information:

- a. The composition of the supervisory committee
- b. Deadlines or timeline for completing the PhD thesis
- c. Type and scope of supervision
- d. Subject of the PhD thesis
- e. Language in which the PhD thesis is written
- f. Form of the PhD thesis (monograph or cumulative PhD thesis) and co-authorship
- g. Details of the curricular coursework, including module type
- h. Copyright and rights to data or research results. ³ The doctoral agreement expires upon the constitution of the doctoral committee or when it is terminated in accordance with § 18. The provisions on the rights to data and research results defined in para. 2 lit. h. are excluded from this.

§ 16. ¹ The doctoral agreement is drawn up by the principal supervisor in consultation with the doctoral candidate.

Responsibility

² The supervisory committee must be involved in the preparation, all changes and additions to, and the termination of the doctoral agreement.

³ The newly drawn up, amended, or supplemented doctoral agreement must be submitted to the graduate school.

⁴ In the event of differences of opinion or disagreements in connection with the doctoral agreement, the matter shall be resolved by the graduate school.

§ 17. ¹ The principal supervisor shall check that the doctoral agreement is still up to date at least once a year and that the specifications in it are being complied with.

Changes and
additions

² Where required, the doctoral agreement can be amended or added to at any time by mutual agreement.

§ 18. ¹ The doctoral agreement can be unilaterally terminated where there are compelling reasons to do so.

Termination

² Compelling reasons include, in particular:

- a. Discontinuation of the doctorate or withdrawal from the University
- b. Academic misconduct
- c. Impossibility of achieving the correct composition of the supervisory or doctoral committee
- d. Irreconcilable personal differences
- e. Breach of or non-compliance with the doctoral agreement.

³ The termination of the doctoral agreement leads to the candidate's withdrawal from the doctoral degree program.

Part 4: Doctorate

A. General Information

§ 19. The doctorate comprises:

Content
and
structure

- a. Authorship of a PhD thesis that shows the candidate's ability to conduct independent academic research
- b. The completion of curricular coursework
- c. The completion of the PhD defense.

Duration

§ 20. ¹ The maximum duration of the doctorate is six years. This also applies if the doctorate is done on a part-time basis.

² This period commences when the candidate is admitted to the doctoral program and ends when they are awarded the doctoral degree.

³ In response to a justified request, the graduate school shall decide whether or not the maximum duration of the doctorate can be extended.

⁴ If the doctoral candidate exceeds the maximum duration of the doctorate and no approved extension has been granted, the fees increase in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance Governing Tuition and Fees at the University of Zurich^{5,3}

Obligation to
inform

§ 21. ¹ All information relevant to the doctorate is communicated in a suitable form; such information is binding.

² Doctoral candidates must undertake to independently obtain information about all issues related to their doctorate, especially information concerning prevailing enactments and applicable deadlines.

§ 22. ¹ Academic misconduct is constituted by fraudulent or dishonest action. This includes in particular submitting a PhD thesis written by another person, falsifying data, and the use of texts from other authors without acknowledgment of the source (plagiarism). Academic misconduct, plagiarism

² PhD theses may be monitored for plagiarism using plagiarism detection software. Suitable service providers in Switzerland and abroad may be contracted for this purpose.

³ If academic misconduct is deemed to have occurred, the graduate school will declare the PhD thesis as failed. Any documents that have already been issued must be surrendered. If a doctoral degree has already been awarded, it will be retracted.

⁴ Disciplinary measures may also be taken against the candidate.

§ 23. ¹ Definitive exclusion from the doctorate does not result in a ban. Exclusion from studies and ban

² The candidate may begin a new doctorate on a new subject, provided that they meet the admission requirements.

B. PhD Thesis

§ 24. ¹ The PhD thesis should make an independent contribution to research. Content and form of the PhD thesis

² The PhD thesis shall consist of a monograph or a collection of works that have been published or submitted for publication, are related in terms of content, and are accompanied by an introduction and a closing discussion (cumulative PhD thesis).

³ Work that has already been submitted for the purpose of earning an academic degree at another higher education institution in Switzerland or abroad can no longer be accepted as a PhD thesis.

§ 25. ¹ PhD theses are graded on a scale of 1 to 6. The lowest grade is 1, and grades of 4 or higher are passing grades. The grade scale also includes half-grades. Grading scale

² The grade for the PhD thesis is calculated on the basis of all expert reports and the arithmetic mean is rounded to the nearest decimal.

C. Curricular Coursework

Type and scope	§ 26. As part of the doctorate, a total of 12 ECTS credits must be earned from coursework.
Eligible coursework	§ 27. ¹ Coursework for which ECTS credits are awarded or which is evidenced by means of a workload and which is defined in the doctoral agreement can be credited towards the doctorate. ² The coursework can be completed as part of specialist or interdisciplinary courses at the University of Zurich or at other higher education institutions in Switzerland and abroad.
Grading	§ 28. Curricular coursework is shown either as a pass or a fail or with a grade.

Part 5: Procedure for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree

A. Initiation of the Procedure for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree and the Doctoral Committee

Initiation of the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree	§ 29. ¹ If the candidate has completed a PhD thesis that is expected to be eligible for the conferral of a doctorate and has provided evidence that they have completed sufficient curricular coursework, the principal supervisor shall submit a request to the graduate school for the constitution of the doctoral committee and the initiation of the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree. ² The doctoral candidates have the right to propose members of the teaching staff who are willing to take on the role of expert/examiner. ³ At the request of the principal supervisor, the graduate school checks whether the proposed members of the teaching staff meet the criteria for the composition of the doctoral committee. It also appoints the chairperson and constitutes the doctoral committee. ⁴ In the event of disagreement over the PhD thesis's eligibility for the conferral of a doctorate or over the composition of the doctoral committee, the graduate school shall decide – at the request of the principal supervisor or the doctoral candidate – on the initiation of the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree.
Composition of the doctoral committee	§ 30. ¹ The doctoral committee is made up of two to five members performing the function of expert/examiner and one further member, who acts as the chairperson. ² Teaching staff as defined in § 10 and co-authors cannot be members of the doctoral committee. ³ The doctoral program regulation governs the details.

§ 31. ¹ The doctoral committee is responsible for carrying out the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree.

Responsibility of the doctoral committee

² This includes the evaluation and grading of the PhD thesis and the holding and grading of the PhD defense.

§ 32. ¹ With the exception of the chairperson, the members of the doctoral committee shall be responsible both for examining and grading the PhD thesis in the capacity of experts and for conducting and grading the PhD defense in the capacity of examiners.

Members with the function of expert/examiner

² The members performing the function of expert/examiner are the members of the supervisory committee, subject to § 30 para. 2.

³ They shall be joined by at least one additional person who has a faculty-internal or external right to confer a doctorate and was not already a member of the supervisory committee.

⁴ At least one of the members shall be a professor with a faculty-internal right to confer a doctorate and at least one of the members shall have an external right to confer a doctorate.

§ 33. ¹ The chairperson guarantees that the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree is followed correctly. They do not write an expert report and do not ask questions during the PhD defense.

Chairperson

² The role of chairperson is performed by a professor with a faculty-internal right to confer a doctorate who has not played any role in the doctorate up until this point.

B. Evaluation and Acceptance of the PhD Thesis

§ 34. ¹ The submitted version of the PhD thesis is the basis for grading.

² It is evaluated and graded in an expert report by every expert.

Expert report

³ It is not published.

§ 35. The PhD thesis is deemed to have been accepted if all expert reports award it a grade of 4 (adequate) or higher.

Acceptance of the PhD thesis

§ 36. ¹ Following the grading of the PhD thesis, the experts may ask the doctoral candidate to revise the PhD thesis in a timely fashion (revision requirements).

Revision of the accepted PhD thesis

² The revised version must be submitted to the experts for review. If the revision is deemed to be inadequate, the PhD thesis may be returned to the doctoral candidate for further revision.

³ The doctoral candidate shall submit the PhD thesis accepted in accordance with § 35 or the revised version of the PhD thesis approved by the experts digitally to the graduate school for publication, together with the required deposit copies.

⁴ The revision will not be graded and will have no impact either on the grade or the distinction.

PhD theses that are not accepted

§ 37. ¹ If an expert report grades the PhD thesis a fail, the PhD thesis shall be regarded as not having been accepted.

2 PhD theses that have not been accepted can be repeated once.

Repetition of the PhD thesis

§ 38. ¹ The repetition consists of the revision of the PhD thesis that was not accepted and the repeat evaluation by the experts.

² If the PhD thesis is rejected again after the revision, the doctoral candidate will be definitively excluded from the doctorate and withdrawn from the University.

C. PhD Defense

Invitation

§ 39. If the PhD thesis is accepted, the doctoral candidate will be invited to defend it by the graduate school.

Purpose and duration

§ 40. ¹ The PhD defense takes between 60 and 90 minutes. Its purpose is to enable the examiners to assess the doctoral candidate’s ability to give an oral presentation of the PhD thesis and defend it.

² In accordance with the provisions of the doctoral program regulation, it shall be open to the public.

Presence of the members of the doctoral committee

§ 41. ¹ The PhD defense is presided over by the chairperson and conducted by the examiners in the presence of all members of the doctoral committee. A co-examiner will also attend in order to keep a protocol.

² In justified cases, up to three of the examiners can be exempted from attending the PhD defense in person, provided that at least two examiners are present in person.

³ In such cases, the examiners who do not attend in person must do so via video link.

§ 42. ¹ The PhD defense is graded as a pass or a fail.

Grading

² If all examiners grade the PhD defense as adequate, the PhD defense is deemed to have been passed.

§ 43. ¹ Failed PhD defenses can be repeated once.

Repetition

² If the repetition is also graded a fail, the doctoral candidate will be definitively excluded from the doctorate and withdrawn from the University.

D. Publication of the PhD Thesis and Award of a Degree

§ 44. ¹ The overall grade shall be the grade calculated for the PhD thesis.

Calculation of the overall grade

² The grades earned through curricular coursework and the grade awarded for the PhD defense are not taken into account in the calculation of the overall grade.

§ 45. ¹ The distinction is determined on the basis of the overall grade.

Distinction

² The Faculty awards the following distinctions for the following overall grades:

6.0 summa cum laude

5.5 insigni cum laude

5.0 magna cum laude

4.5 cum laude

4.0 rite.

§ 46. ¹ Doctoral candidates are obligated to publish the version of the PhD thesis defined in § 36.

Publication

² The PhD thesis shall be published in the repository provided by the University of Zurich. The publication shall be deemed to have taken place as soon as the PhD thesis is accepted at the repository.

³ In addition, the printed deposit copies stipulated shall be delivered to Zentralbibliothek Zürich in all cases, even if an embargo applies.

⁴ In the event of the further utilization of the PhD thesis (e.g. for publication by a publisher), it is not permitted to add an imprint that identifies it as a PhD thesis from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

⁵ The doctoral program regulation implements the provisions on publication.

Embargo

§ 47. ¹ Upon request by a doctoral candidate, the graduate school may approve a partial or full embargo on the content of the publication copy in the digital infrastructure provided by the University of Zurich for a period of three years.

² The name of the doctoral candidate and the title of the PhD thesis cannot be embargoed.

³ In response to a justified request, the graduate school may extend the period once by an additional three years or approve an exceptional indefinite embargo, provided that the existence of a compelling reason can be proven.

⁴ Compelling reasons shall include, in particular, a ban on publication in the University of Zurich's digital infrastructure by a publisher.

Conferral of the doctoral degree

§ 48. ¹ After the publication, the Faculty awards the candidate a doctoral degree. The conferral of the degree is deemed complete upon issue of the signed Doctoral Degree Certificate.

² The use of the title "Dr. des." (Doctor designatus) until the conferral of the doctoral degree is not permitted.

E. Final Records

Handover of the final records

§ 49. The doctoral candidates receive the Doctoral Degree Certificate, the Diploma Supplement and the Academic Record.

Doctoral Degree Certificate

§ 50. ¹ The Doctoral Degree Certificate contains the title of the PhD thesis, the date of the PhD defense and the distinction for the candidate's achievement in the PhD.

² The Doctoral Degree Certificate bears the seal of the University and the Faculty, as well as the signatures of the President and the dean.

³ It is issued in German. An English translation is provided.

Academic Record

§ 51. ¹ The Academic Record proves that the PhD thesis has been accepted, the curricular coursework completed and the PhD defense passed.

² Curricular coursework completed outside the University of Zurich is designated accordingly.

³ The Academic Record is issued in German. An English translation is provided.

§ 52. ¹ The Diploma Supplement is a standardized description of the doctorate. Diploma Supplement

² It is issued in German and English.

Part 6: Honorary Doctorates

§ 53. ¹ The Faculty Assembly can award honorary doctorates in recognition of outstanding services. The title conferred is “Doctor honoris causa (Dr. h. c.).” Application

² The application for the award of an honorary doctorate, in writing and specifying the grounds, must be submitted by a member of the Faculty to the dean.

§ 54. ¹ The dean informs the members of the Faculty Assembly with voting rights of the application. Decision and conferral

² The decision on the application is taken by means of a confidential vote at a Faculty Assembly meeting.

³ The title is awarded if two-thirds of the members of the Faculty Assembly present vote in favor of the application.

Part 7: Legal Protection and Further Rights

§ 55. ¹ All curricular coursework newly listed on the transcript of records and all rulings issued on the basis of this Ordinance are subject to appeal to the responsible vice dean. Appeals

² The appeal, in writing and specifying the grounds, must be lodged with the responsible vice dean within 30 days of receipt. The decision on the appeal is subject to further appeal.

³ The Appeals Commission of the Higher Education Institutions of the Canton of Zurich is responsible for decisions on appeals.

§ 56. ¹ In principle, the copyright to a PhD thesis belongs to the doctoral candidates, provided that nothing else has been agreed. Copyright

² Upon submitting the PhD thesis, doctoral candidates relinquish the copyright to the University of Zurich to the extent necessary for administrative actions such as, in particular, plagiarism detection or archiving.

Rights
to research
results

§ 57. ¹ In principle, the rights to the research results achieved in the course of the doctorate belong to the doctoral candidates, provided that nothing else has been agreed.

² The doctoral candidates are free to reuse these research results, including for further publication, provided that no rights or agreements prevent this.

Rights to
data

§ 58. ¹ In principle, the rights to the data generated during the doctorate belong to the doctoral candidates, provided that nothing else has been agreed.

² The doctoral candidates are free to reuse these data, including for further publication, provided that no rights or agreements prevent this.

Part 8: Final Provisions

General
transitional
provisions

§ 59. ¹ Doctoral candidates who begin their doctorate in the 2019 Fall Semester or later will be subject to this PromVO.

² As part of its remit, the graduate school is responsible for supervising all doctoral candidates in accordance with the regulations for obtaining a doctoral degree of 29 May 2006 (PO 2006) or the ordinance on obtaining a doctoral degree of 8 July 2009 (PVO 2009).

³ All rulings issued in connection with a doctorate under PO 2006/PVO 2009 are subject to appeal to the responsible vice dean in accordance with § 55.

Transitional
provisions for
doctoral
candidates
pursuant to PO
2006

§ 60. ¹ Doctorates in accordance with PO 2006 will be closed with effect from Fall Semester 2019.

² For doctoral candidates who have not yet completed their doctorate by 31 July 2019, the dean may grant an extension to this period until Spring Semester 2023 at the latest in exceptional, justified cases. Further extensions are not possible.

³ If the request is rejected or the doctorate cannot be completed by the extended deadline, the doctorate will become subject to this Ordinance (PromVO).

⁴ In the event that the doctorate becomes subject to this PromVO, the graduate school shall constitute the supervisory or doctoral committee in consultation with the doctoral candidate. The conditions governing the completion of the doctorate and the coursework yet to be completed will be set down in the doctoral agreement.

§ 61. ¹ Doctorates in accordance with the ordinance on obtaining a doctoral degree of 8 July 2009 (PVO 2009) will be closed with effect from Spring Semester 2023.

Transitional provisions for doctoral candidates pursuant to PVO 2009

² Prior to the initiation of the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree defined in §§ 14 ff. PVO 2009, doctoral candidates can choose whether they would like to be transferred to a doctorate in accordance with this PromVO or complete their doctorate under the old regulations.

³ If the doctorate cannot be completed by Spring Semester 2023, the doctorate will become subject to this Ordinance (PromVO).

⁴ In the event of a switch or a transfer to a doctorate under this PromVO, the graduate school shall constitute the supervisory or doctoral committee in consultation with the doctoral candidate. The conditions governing the completion of the doctorate and the coursework yet to be completed will be set down in the doctoral agreement.

¹ [OS 73.557](#); for basis see [ABI 10/26/2018](#).

² Entry into force: 1 January 2019.

³ Not yet in force.

⁴ [LS 415.31](#).

⁵ [LS 415.321](#).

⁶ [LS 415.455.1](#).

⁷ [SR 414.20](#).

⁸ [SR 0.414.8](#).