

Information about the Research Committee for Scientific Ethical Questions (RCSEQ) for doctoral students at UMIT TIROL

All dissertation projects at UMIT TIROL must be submitted for examination or statement to a **statutory ethics committee** (e.g., Ethics Committee of the Medical University of Innsbruck) or a **voluntary ethics committee / ethical-scientific board** (e.g., RCSEQ, Ethics Board of the University of Innsbruck) (RCSEQ Rules of Procedure §4(5)). This submission must take place **before the start of the dissertation project** (at least before the start of empirical data collection), typically after successfully completing the research concept examination in the Dr. phil. program (Doctor of Philosophy Regulations §2(5)), and typically after submitting the exposé in the Dr. techn. program.

When applying for the opening of the doctoral procedure, a positive opinion from a statutory ethics committee, a voluntary ethics committee, or an ethical-scientific board must be presented to the responsible doctoral committee. Only then can the doctoral procedure be initiated. Therefore, the doctoral candidate, together with the supervisor, must decide early on which ethics committee / ethical-scientific board the submission will be made to:

- Depending on the research project, certain **ethics committees may be legally mandatory** (e.g., for the analysis of patient data in a medical institution or for drug or medical device studies). In this case, the supervisor, together with the doctoral candidate, must ensure that the research project is submitted to the relevant ethics committee.
- Otherwise, submission can be made to **the RCSEQ or another ethical-scientific board**. It should be considered that when submitting, preference should always be given to the board of the institution where the research project is conducted or where the supervisor is active (e.g., a survey of UMIT TIROL students supervised by a UMIT TIROL professor should be submitted to the RCSEQ).

The RCSEQ committee is generally **responsible** if:

- there is **no** (legally mandated) **obligation** to submit to a statutory ethics committee and
- **particularly vulnerable groups of people** and/or
- **special categories of personal data** are involved (RCSEQ Rules of Procedure §1(2)).

The RCSEQ operates as a voluntary ethics committee based on the rules of procedure adopted by UMIT TIROL and fh gesundheit. The RCSEQ Rules of Procedure are published on the RCSEQ website (see Competences/ ‚Zuständigkeit‘ www.umat-tirol.at/rcseq). Accordingly, the RCSEQ consists of the RCSEQ office and the RCSEQ committee.

The **RCSEQ office** provides advice on scientific-ethical questions and submissions of research projects. Together with the RCSEQ chair, it is decided, according to the RCSEQ Rules of Procedure, whether an expedited procedure is applicable (RCSEQ Rules of Procedure §4(7)) or if the research project needs to be considered by the RCSEQ committee. The RCSEQ checklist (see Submission/ „Einreichung“ at www.umat-tirol.at/rcseq) facilitates reflection on ethical procedures for the planned research project for those submitting. For inquiries, Mag. Simone Fiegl and Isolde Enz MSc (RCSEQ office) are available: rcseq@umat-tirol.at.

The RCSEQ committee consists of nine members (see: Team, Members/ „Mitglieder“ at www.umat-tirol.at/rcseq) and holds regular meetings. The meeting dates are published on the RCSEQ website (see Meeting Dates/ Sitzungstermine at www.umat-tirol.at/rcseq). In these meetings, planned research projects are examined according to scientific-ethical criteria before implementation.

In case of unresolved questions or uncertainties, please contact the RCSEQ Office (rcseq@umat-tirol.at) for advice.