

## Implementation Rules for the Doctoral Regulations

### „Dr. phil.“

The following Implementation Rules specify the various provisions laid down in the Doctoral Regulations Dr. phil. at the University for Health Sciences, Medical Informatics and Technology (UMIT). These Implementation Rules are based on the decisions taken by the Doctoral Affairs Committee Dr. phil. as well as on further discussions and decisions by the Senate and other Senate committees.

The following Implementation Rules are intended as guidance for doctoral students, supervisors, reviewers as well as the Doctoral Affairs Committee.

The Implementation Rules for the Doctoral Regulations Dr. phil. will be adapted continuously. For the newest version please refer to our Homepage – Study Management (<https://www.umat.at/page.cfm?vpath=studien/studienmanagement/promotionsordnungen>).

Further relevant information for doctoral students at UMIT can be found on the Moodle website (<http://moodle.umat.at>, Doctoral Studies -> Dr. phil.).

#### Table of contents for the annexes:

- Annex 1: Basic requirements for a doctorate at UMIT
- Annex 2: Basic information on the research concept examination
- Annex 3: Instructions for writing a monograph thesis
- Annex 4: Instructions for writing a cumulative doctoral thesis
- Annex 5: Key issues for writing expert opinions
- Annex 6: Assessment of the doctoral thesis and the defence of the doctoral thesis
- Annex 7: Sample for a doctoral thesis agreement
- Annex 8: RCSEQ-Information sheet on doctoral theses

## § 2 (1) Doctoral achievements / Duration of the doctoral studies

In addition to the required minimum standards, the supervisor may claim further quality standards and requirements for the doctoral thesis (e.g. number of papers required). Usually, the details will be determined in the doctoral thesis agreement (see Annex 7).

## § 2 (2) Doctoral achievements / study performance

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to determine, in agreement with the doctoral candidate, which doctoral seminars are required and how else to acquire the curricular part (ECTS credits) of the doctoral programme.

Basically, the doctoral student has to acquire the ECTS credits necessary for completion of the doctoral programme at UMIT. Exceptions are only possible in well-justified cases.

UMIT accepts an equivalent of up to 15 ECTS credits for doctoral programme lectures or seminars attended at other universities, which were acquired prior to the admission to the doctoral programme (Dr. phil.) at UMIT. Prerequisite for the acceptance is a clear relation to the planned doctoral thesis regarding content or method, as well as the approval of the supervisor. These ECTS points will be credited to the curricular part, the freely selectable 20 ECTS credits shall not be affected.

Many courses do not only require the attendance of the students, but also preparation and post-processing. Depending on the performance, ECTS credits will thus be awarded fully or only partly. In order to ensure transparency concerning this matter, the course lecturer shall determine in advance the detailed requirements of the course. It is herewith recommended that ECTS credits will be awarded proportionately in case of attendance and preparation. Only if post-processing has been successfully completed, the full number of ECTS credits will be awarded.

The persons in charge of the study programmes are responsible for offering sufficient and adequate lectures and seminars (curricular part) according to the Module Manual. For the newest version of the Module Manual, please refer to our Homepage – Study Management

(<https://www.umat.at/page.cfm?vpath=studien/studienmanagement/promotionsordnungen>), as well as the Moodle website (<http://moodle.umat.at>, Doctoral Studies -> Dr. phil.).

## **§ 2 (5) Research concept examination**

See Annex 2: Basic information on the research concept examination

## **§ 2 (5) Research Committee for Scientific and Ethical Questions – RCSEQ**

See Annex 8: RCSEQ information sheet on doctoral theses

## **§ 2 (6) Subject-specific relevance**

„Published with subject-specific relevance” means that articles shall be published in subject-specific publication organs for the professional public also outside of UMIT, either on national or international level. The publication does not have to be indexed in subject-specific literature databases.

In particular, the following publications (Note: according to UMIT’s scoring system for publications, categories A – C) can be classified as subject-specific:

- Articles in peer-reviewed or non-peer-reviewed specialist journals.
- Articles in edited volumes or specialist books.
- Contributions to peer-reviewed or non-peer-reviewed conferences or workshops (in particular lecture, poster, or abstract).

## **§ 4 (1) Admission requirements**

Only candidates with a Master, Magister or Diploma from a regular study programme will be accepted. Candidates from post-graduate Master study programmes will not be accepted as those programmes usually do not require a Bachelor degree as a prerequisite and candidates therefore fail to achieve the required standards and /or the study period is too short.

Prior to signing the doctoral agreement, the Doctoral Affairs Committee verifies if the formal admission requirements have been fulfilled for the new doctoral candidates as well as the subject-specific relevance of their study performance so far (see § 4 (2) of the Doctoral Regulations) and requests – if necessary – additional qualifications. Furthermore, the Committee evaluates the subject-specific relevance.

## **§ 6 (1) Acceptance as doctoral candidate / application documents**

UMIT’s GTCs must be signed by the applicant otherwise the supervisor has to withdraw his/her affirmation.

Supervisors can be: internal habilitated academics or for a maximum of 25% of the doctoral thesis external habilitated academics or professors with „Venia docendi“ or „Venia legendi“ at a renowned university in Austria or abroad or a post-secondary educational institution in Austria or abroad with relevant experience regarding content and/ or method of the doctoral thesis, as well as current research experience.

External supervisors shall be approved topic-specifically by the Doctoral Affairs Committee in each individual case taking into consideration the student-tutor-relationship and an updated curriculum vitae as well as a current list of publications. The Senate shall be informed accordingly. Generally, in case of an external supervisor, additionally an in-house co-supervisor will be appointed who also has to fulfil the above mentioned criteria.

Students shall be informed about the role and duties of the supervisor i.a. through the doctoral thesis agreement (see Annex 7).

The topic of the doctoral thesis chosen at the date of application shall be the working title until the date of submission. Any change of the working title is at the supervisor's discretion and is his/her responsibility. This concerns all minor modifications. A complete change still needs to be examined by the Doctoral Affairs Committee.

## **§ 7 (1) Doctoral thesis**

See Annex 1: Basic requirements for a doctorate at UMIT

## **§ 7 (3) Final papers**

Final papers include, in particular, Bachelor, Master, Diploma or Doctoral theses.

## **§ 7 (5) Doctoral thesis / form**

According to the Doctoral Regulations, doctoral theses may only be cumulative theses or monographs. Special forms or mixed forms are no longer permitted.

See Annex 3: „Instructions for writing a monograph thesis“

See Annex 4. „Instructions for writing a cumulative doctoral thesis“

See „Leaflet on the requirements of cumulative doctoral theses, in particular on publication quality“ by the Research Evaluation Working Group (AGFE) (see Moodle: <http://moodle.umat.at>, Doctoral Studies -> Dr. phil.)

## **§ 7 (6) Doctoral thesis / cumulative doctoral thesis**

Requirements for cumulative doctoral theses are regulated in detail in the „Leaflet on the requirements of cumulative doctoral theses, in particular on publication quality“ by the Research Evaluation Working Group (AGFE) (see Moodle: <http://moodle.umit.at>, Doctoral Studies -> Dr. phil.). The scheme for the classification of journals for cumulative doctoral theses is also available on this page.

Extended abstracts – also peer-reviewed – which have been published in a conference transcript will not be accepted as publications for a cumulative doctoral thesis.

After approval by the chairperson of the Doctoral Affairs Committee, the AGFE votes will be forwarded to the supervisor and the respective student by the Doctoral Affairs Committee (through Study Management), however not to the reviewers as they shall evaluate the quality of the doctoral thesis unbiased.

## **§ 9 (1) Assessment of the doctoral thesis / reviewer**

With the request for the initiation of the doctoral procedure the doctoral candidate and the supervisor shall also submit three recommendations for reviewers including their contact data.

## **§ 9 (2) Assessment of the doctoral thesis / expert opinion and grade**

See Annex 5: Key issues for writing expert opinions

See Annex 6: Assessment of the doctoral thesis and defence of the doctoral thesis

## **§ 13 Publication**

UMIT forwards the completed theses to the Austrian National Library on a regular basis, i.e. at least once a semester.

## **Annexes:**

## **Annex 1: Basic requirements for a doctorate at UMIT**

„The doctoral thesis must meet the scientific standards, must be an independent work of the doctoral candidate and must contribute to progress in research.“

(§7 Doctoral Regulations Dr. phil., UMIT)

„ [A] doctoral degree will be awarded to students who

- have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field;
- have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;
- have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work;
- are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;
- can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;
- are able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge-based society.“

(Shared 'Dublin' Descriptors for the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral awards;  
Report from an informal group of the Joint Quality Initiative, 23.3.2004, Dublin.  
[http://www.fibaa.org/uploads/media/CompletesetDublinDescriptors\\_03.pdf](http://www.fibaa.org/uploads/media/CompletesetDublinDescriptors_03.pdf))

## Annex 2: Basic information on the „research concept examination“

In order to improve the quality of a doctoral thesis and to be able to implement as early as possible various perspectives, an examination on the research concept was introduced as a mandatory requirement (see § 2 sect. 5 of the Doctoral Regulations).

**Registration for the examination:** The registration has to be submitted in writing (via Email) to [doktorat@umit.at](mailto:doktorat@umit.at) by the supervisor.

**Duration of the examination:** max. 60 minutes (20 minutes oral presentation)

**Date:** within 3 semesters after being accepted as a doctoral candidate

**Examination dates:** At least 2 examination dates shall be offered per semester. No more than 4 candidates shall be accepted for each examination date.

**Examination board:** The examination board consists of the supervisor of the doctoral thesis plus 2 other examiners with Venia docendi. The examination board shall include a member of the Doctoral Affairs Committee and this person shall thus be the chair of the examination board.

If the supervisor is unable to attend the examination on short notice, he/ she shall subsequently receive detailed information on the examination process by the chairperson of the examination board.

**Examination process:** First, the candidate has to provide a scientifically-oriented oral presentation. This is followed by an oral discussion before a commission. At the end of this discussion – if applicable – the recommendations of the examination board will be summarised and communicated orally (for notes).

**Assessment:** „successfully completed“ or „not successfully completed“

**ECTS credits:** 5 (only if „successfully completed“)

**Possible repetitions:** If a candidate is assessed with „not successfully completed“ the examination may be repeated **once** (within a time frame of 3 – 6 months, at the latest up to the 4<sup>th</sup> Semester).

**Written research concept:** One week prior to the examination, the research concept with a maximum length of 20 pages (incl. bibliography and any other annexes) shall be submitted to Study Management ([doktorat@umit.at](mailto:doktorat@umit.at)) in digital form (see outline proposal below).

## Research concept outline proposal

The following table may serve as outline proposal for writing the research concept for the examination. Depending on the topic and the methodical approach, also other relevant criteria may be added.

	<b>Examples for contents</b>
<b>Title of the doctoral thesis</b>	<i>No more than 140 characters – should be as precise as possible.</i>
<b>Doctoral studies and supervisor</b>	<i>Details on the doctoral studies and the supervisor</i>
<b>Definition of the problem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Research gap: What is the research problem that shall be solved in this work?</i></li> <li>• <i>Relevance of the work: Why is it important to solve this problem?</i></li> <li>• <i>This work can help in solving (a part of) the research problem in which scientific field?</i></li> </ul>
<b>Current research status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What is the current research status with regard to the research problem?</i></li> <li>• <i>How does the research question fall into line with the current state of research?</i></li> </ul>
<b>Aim of the research/ hypothesis and/or research questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Primary research objective(s) resp. research question(s)</i></li> <li>• <i>Operationalisation of the research question and/or</i></li> <li>• <i>Specification of the preliminary primary hypothesis</i></li> </ul>
<b>Methodical approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Type of study: type of quantitative and/or qualitative research, e.g. intervention study, observational study, secondary data analysis (like e.g. systematic review, meta-analysis, modelling etc.)</i></li> <li>• <i>Justification of the chosen study design with reference to the research question</i></li> <li>• <i>Target figures: e.g. which clinical parameters, structural parameters, etc.</i></li> <li>• <i>Target population: A statement/ a generalisation of the results shall be made for which population?</i></li> <li>• <i>Setting: The research project can be implemented in which setting? How is the recruiting of the volunteers or other observational units handled?</i></li> <li>• <i>Type of data (e.g. secondary data, primary data), patient surveys and their specifications</i></li> <li>• <i>Intended collection of data (for each research question): How and by whom are the data to be collected?</i></li> <li>• <i>Details on sampling and sample size (approximate data)</i></li> <li>• <i>Description of the survey instrument, the validity and quality of data collection instruments</i></li> <li>• <i>Intended analysis strategy and data evaluation meth-</i></li> </ul>

	<p><i>od (for each research question)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ethical considerations</i></li> </ul>
<b>Novelty value/ „So what-Question“</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Novelty value expected for this work?</i></li> <li>• <i>What is the use of the research results and to whom?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are they of any further use?</i></li> <li>• <i>Which decision can be supported by the results of this work?</i></li> </ul>
<b>RCSEQ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is there already a RCSEQ vote, or when will RCSEQ be informed?</i></li> </ul>
<b>Key literature sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Which are the key literature sources of this work?</i></li> </ul>
<b>Schedule</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Intended milestones for the implementation of the empirical survey</i></li> <li>• <i>Intended milestones for writing publications/unifying text/monograph</i></li> </ul>
<b>Structure of the thesis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provisional structure of the thesis</i></li> </ul>

## Annex 3: Instructions for writing a monograph thesis

A monograph thesis presents and documents the problem, research process and the results of the scientific work in the form of a scientific “book”.

Generally, a monograph thesis includes the following:

- **Cover page** (Observe specifications!)
- **Table of contents**
  
- **Abstract:** (in German and English)  
(Max. 1 page with background, aims and research questions, used methods, most important results as well as conclusions and implications on science and practice)
- **Presentation of the problem and aim**  
Introduction to the topic (background, prevalence, motivation), detailed presentation of the current state of research, the theoretical and a literature overview, identification of gaps in research and classification of ones work. The aim of the work, hypotheses or/and research questions are derived thereof.
  
- **Methods**  
In this part, the research method which will be used to answer the research question will be described and justified. Furthermore, the student has to discuss in detail the study design, measuring instruments, target population, samples, ethical aspects, evaluation strategies, etc.
- **Results**  
The research results will be presented by means of text, tables and illustrations. Tables and illustrations must be commented, although they should be self-explanatory. Comparisons are reasonable and feasible, however without interpretation and personal judgement in this part of the work. The presentation of the results shall be clearly aligned with the research questions.
- **Discussion**  
In this central part of the work the results will be presented, research questions will be answered and conclusions for science (development of a theory) and practice will be drawn, or the hypotheses will either be confirmed or rejected. Limitations of the evaluation and further research will be discussed as well. If there is more than one research question, an overall discussion should be added to the discussion of the results of the single questions.
- **Bibliography:**  
All sources shall be cited fully and verifiably. Details thereto are regulated in UMIT’s Plagiarism Guideline.

➤ **Annex**

Measuring instruments, data, special types of evaluation, transcripts as well as further material which would affect the reading flow of the monograph can be added in annexes. If necessary, the author has to refer to this material in the running text. Additional material may also be included in digital form.

➤ **Author's declaration:**

At the end of the work there shall be a declaration by the author stating that the thesis is the result of his/ her own work. The declaration has to be signed by hand. In order to do this, the "author's declaration sample" shall be used.

The above list comprises the necessary contents of the doctoral thesis. The specific structure, as well as layout and names of chapters may differ, depending on research questions, evaluation and results. Hereby, the specific conventions of the respective disciplines shall be taken into account.

Additionally, supplementary guidelines specific to the respective Dr. phil. study programmes or given by the respective supervisors shall be considered.

## Annex 4: Instructions for writing a cumulative doctoral thesis

A cumulative doctoral thesis represents the results of scientific work as a collection of peer-reviewed, stand-alone publications that have already been published or have been accepted for publishing under a shared topic (professional context). The connection between the individual papers shall be explained in a unifying text (summary).

The cumulative doctoral thesis as a whole shall be equivalent to a monograph thesis regarding its scientific contribution.

The cumulative doctoral thesis consists of (see § 7 sect. 5 of the Doctoral Regulations)

- at least **two subject-specific, scientific publications with** the doctoral candidate **as first author** or
- at least **three** subject-specific, scientific publications with the doctoral candidate **as first author in one** of them and **as co-author in the other two**
- in renowned, **peer-reviewed**, national and international scientific journals.

It is mandatory that the manuscripts have already been published or have been accepted for publishing. As for the acceptance of the journals, the Research Evaluation Working Group (**AGFE**) makes recommendations. After the submission of the doctoral thesis, the Working Group assesses the subject-specific relevance, quality and coherence of the publications to one another and with regard to the doctoral thesis topic (see also the Research Evaluation Working Group's „Leaflet on requirements for cumulative doctoral theses, in particular on publication quality“)

### **Unifying text:**

It is the aim and purpose of the unifying text to (a) explain the subject-specific scientific context between the publications and to present their overall relevance and (b) to allow for an illustration of all aspects which cannot be discussed in detail in scientific journals due to limitation in space.

## Layout of the cumulative doctoral thesis:

The cumulative doctoral thesis shall be submitted in bound paper form and shall consist of the following parts:

- **Cover page** (Observe specifications!)
- **Table of content**
  
- **On a separate page: list of all references of the published/ accepted publications which are included in the thesis**
  
- **Abstract:** (in German and English)  
(Max. 1 page incl. background, aims and research questions, used methods, most important results as well as conclusions and implications on science and practice)
- **Presentation of the problem and aim**  
Introduction to the topic (background, prevalence, motivation), detailed presentation of the current state of research, the theoretical basis and a literature overview, identification of gaps in research and classification of ones work. The aim of the work, hypotheses or/and research questions are derived thereof.
- **Categorisation of the publications**  
A short presentation on how the publications fall into line with the subordinate field of research and which aims and research questions will be answered therein. This part, in particular, provides the reviewers with an overview of the relation between the publications and the overall thesis.
- **Methods:**  
This chapter includes an overall presentation and explanation of the research approach and the methods. The presentation may be short and may refer to more detailed presentations in the respective publications. But it can also describe aspects which cannot be discussed in detail in scientific journals due to limitation in space. In any case, the presentation as such shall be internally consistent and clearly understandable without prior reading of the publications.
- **Results:**  
This chapter comprises a summary of the results of the publications or additional results and their classification in the overall context. The presentation may be short and may refer to more detailed presentations in the respective publications. But it can also describe aspects which cannot be discussed in detail in scientific journals due to limitation in space. In any case, the presentation as such shall be internally consistent and clearly understandable without prior reading of the publications. If results (tables, illustrations) are taken from publications they shall be cited correctly (see UMIT's Plagiarism Guideline).

➤ **Discussion:**

In this central part of the work the results will be presented, research questions will be answered and conclusions for science (development of a theory) and practice will be drawn, or the hypotheses will either be confirmed or rejected. Limitations of the evaluation and further research will be discussed as well. The overall discussion refers to the results of the publications in their entirety and shall refer to all papers and shall thus go beyond the discussion in the individual publications.

➤ **Bibliography:**

All sources included in the unifying text shall be cited according to the rules of good scientific practice. Details thereto are regulated in UMIT's Plagiarism Guideline.

➤ **Annex 1**

Measuring instruments, data, special types of evaluation, transcripts as well as further material can be added in annexes. If necessary, the author has to refer to this material in the running text. Additional material may also be included in digital form.

➤ **Annex 2**

The published resp. accepted publications shall be printed in full in the annex of the unifying text. For copyright reasons, perhaps the printed versions of the published articles cannot be attached. In this case, the last publisher-accepted PDF version shall be attached.

➤ **Author's declaration**

At the end of the work there shall be a declaration by the author stating that the thesis is the result of his/ her own work. The declaration has to be signed by hand. In order to do this, the "author's declaration sample" shall be used.

The above list comprises the necessary contents of the doctoral thesis. The specific structure, as well as layout and names of chapters may differ, depending on research questions, evaluation and results. Hereby, the specific conventions of the respective disciplines shall be taken into account.

Additionally, supplementary guidelines specific to the respective Dr. phil. study programmes or given by the respective supervisors shall be considered.

It is recommended that the supervisor contacts the Research Evaluation Working Group (AGFE) already in the planning stage of the cumulative doctoral thesis for an assessment of the chosen journals in case they are not classified in the Working Group's list of journals.

## Annex 5: Key issues for writing expert opinions

### Key issues for writing expert opinions for doctoral theses in the Dr. phil. study programmes at UMIT

#### Aim

The aim of this document is,

- to clarify the review criteria and review process to the reviewers and the doctoral candidates;
- to ensure the quality of the theses reviews;
- to increase the transparency of the procedure;
  
- to regulate the procedure in case there are major discrepancies between the reviews;
- to ensure the possibility to raise objections against the expert opinions in case of conflicts.

#### Requirements for a doctorate

The doctoral degree verifies the candidate's ability to conduct profound scientific work independently. The doctoral thesis must meet scientific standards, be an independent piece of scientific work written by the doctoral candidate and must contribute to the progress of science (pursuant to §1 sect. 2 of UMIT's Doctoral Regulations Dr. phil.).

**The scientific quality of theses is very important to UMIT.  
The usual scientific requirements for theses also apply at UMIT.**

#### Timeframe

In order to bring the process to a timely conclusion, we ask you to return your expert opinion within six weeks, at the latest eight weeks, after receipt of the thesis.

## Contents of the expert opinion:

Please address the following issues in your expert opinion:

### 1. Basis of the expert opinion:

Short description of the thesis (monograph, cumulative doctoral thesis, topic, author, number of pages, submission date, in case of cumulative thesis: title of the papers, journal).

### 2. Aim of the work and relevance of the topic:

Short description of the purpose of the thesis and how to classify the relevance of the work. Statement on the subject-specific relevance of the topic.

### 3. Summary of the contents:

Short description of the most important contents (methods, results). This summary may differ from the structure of the thesis.

### 4. Assessment of the thesis:

#### 4.1. Classification:

Clear reference to the topic, clearly defined hypotheses resp. research questions on doctoral level, presentation of the research gap, structural conclusiveness from the presentation of the problem via the generation of hypotheses resp. research questions and the selection of the research method up to the presentation of the results and the conclusions, appropriate outline of the different chapters, successful integration into the overall context.

#### 4.2. Quality of the contents:

Originality of the scientific problem, actuality of the scientific problem, applicability to theory and practice, in-depth analysis of current scientific literature, sophistication and analytical depth of the presentation, scientific relevance of the results, reflexivity of the discussion.

#### 4.3. Quality of the research methods:

Transparency and appropriateness of the selection of the method, quality of the application of the method, plausible presentation of the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the information (literature, empiricism), reproducibility of the results based on the described methods, traceability of the statements through the available (empirical) data, critical reflexion of the methods.

#### 4.4. Formal quality:

Clear language, exact definitions, precise argumentation, comprehensibility of the presentation, no typing errors, adequate formal layout of the text, tables

and illustrations, additional visualisations, uniform and correct citing system, correct indices.

#### **4.5. Scientific personal contribution**

Adequate extent of personal scientific contribution to the doctoral thesis (see „author’s declaration“ informing about his/ her personal contribution to the thesis); no plagiarism or citing errors.

#### **5. Overall assessment of the doctoral thesis:**

Brief justification showing the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis, as well as an application to the Doctoral Affairs Committee for acceptance (indicating the grade - see grade scale below), rejection („non sufficit“) or revision of the thesis (in this case clear recommendations for revision must be included).

### **Process-related criteria**

Reviewers shall receive the following documents from Study Management:

- the **doctoral thesis**;
- a **curriculum vitae** of the candidate;
- a **list of publications** of the candidate;
- the **author’s declaration**;
- the **key issues for writing expert opinions**.

Upon request, the documents may be sent to the reviewers in paper format.

The date of submission of the documents and the time period for the review has to be documented in the student record.

If the reviewer is unsure about his/ her decision, he/ she may ask professional colleagues for advice. Upon request, the Doctoral Affairs Committee may support him/ her in doing so.

#### **Grade scale:**

for an outstanding performance – summa cum laude

for a very good performance – magna cum laude

for a good performance – cum laude

for a sufficient performance – rite

for a non-sufficient performance – non sufficit



**Summa cum laude** shall only be awarded if the topic is outstanding and contributes significantly to the advancement of the scientific discipline, the theoretical foundation and location based on the international research status is very well defined and all aspects are presented in excellent quality.

Works graded with **non sufficit** lack sufficient theoretical foundations, literature research and processing is incomplete or was conducted unsystematically, the selection and presentation of methods is incomprehensible or the presentation and discussion of the results is inadequate and insufficient.

If only parts of the work are insufficient (not more than 25 % of the doctoral thesis) a **revision** may be recommended by the reviewer. In this case, clear recommendations for the revision have to be given.

## **Annex 6: Assessment of the doctoral thesis and the defence of the doctoral thesis**

When accepting the doctoral thesis, the reviewer will assess the work individually according to the grading scale stated in § 11 (4) of the Doctoral Regulations. Based on the two grades, the Doctoral Affairs Committee determines the overall grade for the written work according to the following scheme:

Assessment by reviewer 1	Assessment by reviewer 2	Grade for the written work
summa cum laude	summa cum laude	<b>summa cum laude</b>
summa cum laude	magna cum laude	<b>magna cum laude</b>
summa cum laude	cum laude	<b>magna cum laude</b>
summa cum laude	rite	<b>cum laude</b>
magna cum laude	magna cum laude	<b>magna cum laude</b>
magna cum laude	cum laude	<b>cum laude</b>
magna cum laude	rite	<b>cum laude</b>
cum laude	cum laude	<b>cum laude</b>
cum laude	rite	<b>rite</b>
Rite	rite	<b>rite</b>

The grade for the defence of the doctoral thesis shall be determined by the examination board according to § 11 (4) of the Doctoral Regulations. The overall grade for the doctoral achievements results from the grade awarded for the written work (it is of higher significance) and the grade given for the defence of the doctoral thesis. The following table serves as a **recommendation** for assessing the final overall grade. Deviations thereof have to be justified in the examination protocol:

Grade - written work	Grade - defence of the doctoral thesis	Final overall grade
summa cum laude	summa cum laude	<b>summa cum laude</b>
summa cum laude	magna cum laude	<b>magna cum laude</b>
summa cum laude	cum laude	<b>magna cum laude</b>
summa cum laude	rite	<b>magna cum laude</b>
magna cum laude	summa cum laude	<b>magna cum laude</b>
magna cum laude	magna cum laude	<b>magna cum laude</b>
magna cum laude	cum laude	<b>magna cum laude</b>
magna cum laude	rite	<b>cum laude</b>
cum laude	summa cum laude	<b>magna cum laude</b>
cum laude	magna cum laude	<b>cum laude</b>
cum laude	cum laude	<b>cum laude</b>
cum laude	rite	<b>cum laude</b>
rite	summa cum laude	<b>cum laude</b>
rite	magna cum laude	<b>cum laude</b>
rite	cum laude	<b>rite</b>
rite	rite	<b>rite</b>

Deviations from this grading recommendation are permitted, but have to be justified in the examination protocol.

**Note:** if the defence of the doctoral thesis is graded „non sufficit“, a final overall grade is not required.

The overall grade „summa cum laude“ is only possible, if all three partial performances are „summa cum laude“.

## Annex 7: Sample for a doctoral thesis agreement

### Doctoral thesis agreement

#### Doctoral candidate

Surname, First name:

Tel.:

E-Mail:

#### Supervisor

Surname, First name:

University:

Tel.:

E-Mail:

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> supervisor (if any)

Surname, First name:

University:

Tel.:

E-Mail:

Chosen subject area:

- Nursing Science       Health Technology Assessment       Public Health  
 Management and Economics in Health Care       Psychology  
 Technical Sciences       Health Information Systems  
 Sports Medicine, Health Tourism & Leisure Sciences

Preliminary working title of the doctoral thesis:

Short description of the planned doctoral thesis (1 paragraph):

## Agreement between doctoral candidate and supervisor

### Doctoral thesis agreement – supervisor’s confirmation

Between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor, in the framework of the implementation of the above mentioned doctoral project and taking into account the scientific principles of UMIT’s Senate, the following shall be agreed:

1. The existence of a signed doctoral thesis agreement is the prerequisite for the acceptance as a doctoral candidate and shall be on hand for the whole duration of the doctorate (see also pt. 16 „unilateral termination“). The implementation of the doctoral project is based on the **time and work plan** agreed upon by the supervisor and the doctoral candidate. It shall be developed separately and shall be considered a supplement to this agreement (Remark: it is an ongoing process which requires continuous updating).

2. The doctoral thesis shall be written in  German /  English language. Any other languages must be approved by the Doctoral Affairs Committee. In any case, the doctoral thesis must include an abstract in German and in English.

3. It is the primary task of the „Research Committee for Scientific and Ethical Questions (RCSEQ)“ to assess if the intended studies can be started directly or if they have to be forwarded to the Ethics Committee. It is also RCSEQ’s responsibility to evaluate the scientific quality of submitted studies involving particularly vulnerable groups of people or sensitive data. Details thereto are regulated in the RCSEQ guidelines. Please note that only after approval by RCSEQ the research project may be started (see: <http://www.umat.at/page.cfm?vpath=studien/studienmanagement/formulareinfos#DIS>).

**Additionally for „Dr. phil.“ studies:** Immediately after the successful completion of the „research concept examination“ the documents must be forwarded to RCSEQ for approval.

4. Periodic or at least annual informal **reports** document the progress and the development of the doctoral project. The doctoral candidate has to forward these reports, without being asked, to the supervisor.

5. The supervisors will **continuously accompany** the progress of the doctoral project and will comment on inquiries or draft proposals within a reasonable period of time.

6. **Feedback meetings:** The progress of the doctoral thesis will be discussed regularly, usually at least  once a month  every two months  in each quarter (if need be on telephone). The student will draw up a protocol upon the results of these meetings and will forward it to the supervisor in due time.

**7. The following applies only for „Dr. phil.“ studies:**

In agreement with the supervisor, the doctoral candidate shall attend courses equivalent to 50 ECTS credits according to the **curriculum** for the doctoral programme.

<i>Tentatively planned courses</i>	<i>ECTS cr.</i>	<i>Intended semester of participation</i>
Introduction to Dr. phil. studies	1	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester (participation is strongly recommended)

8. The participation in scientific subject-specific events, the supervision of students, the active participation in courses etc. **is desirable** and can be determined in agreement with the supervisor.

**Additionally for „Dr. phil.“ studies:**

**A maximum of 20 ECTS credits** may be acquired e.g. by means of active teaching activity at UMIT, supervising final theses, active participation in scientific events, participation in academic training activities, assistance in academic committees, participation in university projects different from one’s own doctoral studies, private tutorials etc. The Doctoral Affairs Committee will decide on the recognition of ECTS credits case by case.

9. **The following applies only for „Dr. phil.“ studies:** Within the first three semesters, the doctoral candidate has to pass an oral **examination on the research concept**. If the candidate plans to initiate the doctoral procedure in \_\_\_\_\_ (month/year), the examination needs to take place at the latest in (month/year): \_\_\_\_\_.

10. **The following applies only for „Dr. phil.“ studies:** Prior to the initiation of the doctoral procedure, results and partial results of the doctoral thesis have to be published in a scientific subject-specific publication organ or shall at least have been accepted for publication. The candidate seeks **to publish** (e.g. lecture or poster for a specific conference, contribution to a specialist journal): \_\_\_\_\_ (if already known).

11. The candidate will write a:  monograph thesis  cumulative doctoral thesis. In case of a cumulative thesis, the guidelines drawn up by UMIT’s Research Evaluation Working Group (AGFE) shall apply, in particular with regard to the classification of journals.

12. The doctoral candidate confirms that he/she has not submitted a request for acceptance as a doctoral candidate or for admission to the doctoral procedure at any other institution.

13. The doctoral candidate shall comply with the principles of good scientific practice, UMIT’s **Plagiarism Guideline** and shall observe the **Doctoral Regulations including the Implementation Rules**.

14. In the event of uncertainties and problems (especially with respect to the candidate-supervisor-relationship) the respective **Doctoral Affairs Committee** shall act as mediator.

15. Any individual Dr. phil.-study programme-specific **guidelines** shall be observed.
16. This agreement can be **terminated unilaterally at all times (in writing)**.

**This is to clarify that these declarations have no legal effect whatsoever.**

Date:

Signature doctoral candidate:

Date:

Signature supervisor:

## **Explanatory notes:**

**1** The conclusion of the doctoral thesis agreement – the formal prerequisite for being accepted as a doctoral candidate – serves the specific organisation of the doctoral procedure and will be concluded between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor. The doctoral thesis agreement does not impose a binding obligation on the university or the supervisor(s) to actually award a doctoral degree. Likewise, the doctoral candidate is under no obligation to actually submit a doctoral thesis; however, the obligation to submit a doctoral thesis may be part of a performance agreement in the framework of employment at UMIT.

**2** It is the aim of the doctoral thesis agreement to organise the doctoral study programme and the required examinations and study achievements individually and to tailor them to the doctoral candidates' needs, their career plans and the requirements of their doctoral projects. By means of periodical, at least annual reports on the progress of the doctoral studies the doctoral thesis agreement will be supplemented by annexes and adjusted to the research progress.

**3** The doctorate shall be achieved within an appropriate period of time. The time and work plan shall include realistic work steps and shall take into consideration any other obligations of the doctoral candidate (occupation outside the university, teaching and research at the university, etc.).

**4** Feedback meetings should take place in agreement with the work plan at least once every three months and shall be recorded accordingly. Especially at the beginning, a higher frequency of feedback meetings is recommended. If a doctoral project is supervised by more than one supervisor, the frequency of feedback meetings shall be specified with the individual supervisors. Those meetings are not private lectures as set out in the Doctoral Regulations.

**5** The selection of courses from the curriculum shall be done in a manner that supports the doctoral achievements and the further career of the doctoral candidate best possible.

**6** The participation in conferences, in university and non-university events etc. shall be agreed upon with the supervisor. It is recommended to consider the future career plans of the doctoral candidate.

## Annex 8: RCSEQ-INFORMATION SHEET ON DOCTORAL THESES

Please note that each final paper – and therefore also each doctoral thesis – shall be reported to RCSEQ (Research Committee for Scientific and Ethical Questions).

**For research projects THAT DO NOT INVOLVE particularly vulnerable groups of people a notification must be submitted**

**For research projects THAT INVOLVE particularly vulnerable groups of people a request has to be filed.**

For detailed information as well as the respective forms please refer to the following link on RCSEQ's Homepage:

<http://www.umat.at/page.cfm?vpath=universitaet/organisation/rcseq/einreichungen>

It is the primary task of RCSEQ to assess if the intended studies can be started directly or if they have to be forwarded to the Ethics Committee.

Please note that only after an approval by RCSEQ the research project may be started

Students of the **doctoral programmes „Dr. phil.“** shall forward the research project to RCSEQ for a statement immediately after successfully passing the „research concept examination“.

Students of the **doctoral programme Technical Sciences** shall forward the research project to RCSEQ for a statement immediately after the preparation of an exposé (incl. approval by the supervisor).