

Doctoral Degree Ordinance

Ordinance on the Conferral of the Degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Philosophy (DVM, PhD) from the Vetsuisse Faculty of the University of Zurich

(dated 17 May 2017)

Part 1: General Regulations

Scope of Application	§ 1	The present Doctoral Degree Ordinance governs the doctoral program at the Vetsuisse Faculty of the University of Zurich (UZH), which is run as part of the alliance with the Graduate School for Cellular and Biomedical Sciences at the University of Bern (referred to below as GCB).
Provisions on Implementation	§ 2	The UZH Vetsuisse Faculty enacts doctoral program regulations which, in particular, set out the requirements that must be fulfilled to gain a doctorate, the details of the related examinations and thesis, as well as the awarding of ECTS credits.
Objective	§ 3	The doctoral program ensures a high quality of training in the theory and practice of experimental research. As they progress through this doctoral program, doctoral candidates independently conduct their own research project, which is then summarized in a written thesis.
Title	§ 4	The UZH Vetsuisse Faculty awards the title of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Philosophy (DVM, PhD), referred to in German as <i>Doctor scientiarum medicarum veterinariarum (Dr. sc. med. vet.)</i> .

Part 2: Organization, Application Process, and Admission

Graduate School for Cellular and Biomedical Sciences	§ 5	The doctoral program is completed as part of the alliance between UZH and GCB. The Organizational Regulations of the Graduate School for Cellular and Biomedical Sciences of the University of Bern, dated 1 July 2011, apply to the organization, responsibilities, and duties of the GCB. The agreement between the University of Bern and the University of Zurich on participation in the GCB doctoral program also applies.
Application Process	§ 6	¹ Applications are to be submitted in English to the GCB office. These written applications must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A curriculum vitae; b. Certified copies of all higher education diplomas and intermediate diplomas; c. A letter of recommendation from the thesis supervisor (along with confirmation of employment, as well as salary, in accordance with SNSF guidelines); d. A description of the planned research project, drawn up by the candidate themselves; e. Confirmation that preliminary discussions about the research project have already been held; f. The completed application form.

² The co-advisor (§ 8) makes a written statement on the project.

³ The thesis supervisor and the applicant make a joint application to the GCB. The application must be submitted to the GCB no later than four months after the research project begins.

⁴ The Expert Committee submits its application for the applicant's admission to the GCB PhD Committee on the basis of the quality of the application and a personal interview, to be held in English. The application contains formal confirmation that the applicant meets the criteria in terms of quality and technical expertise. The Expert Committee appoints a mentor from among its number.

Admission	§ 7	<p>¹ Admission to the doctoral program is governed by the provisions of the Ordinance on Admission to Studies at the University of Zurich (<i>Verordnung über die Zulassung zum Studium an der Universität Zürich (VZS)</i>)³, and requires a Master's degree in veterinary medicine or equivalent university entrance qualification.</p> <p>² Applicants may only be admitted to the doctoral program if they are approved by the GCB PhD Committee in accordance with § 6 para. 4.</p> <p>³ Doctoral candidates matriculate at the UZH Vetsuisse Faculty. They must be matriculated at UZH for the entire duration of their PhD.</p> <p>⁴ There is no fundamental entitlement to admission.</p>
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Part 3: Supervision

Supervision in General	§ 8	<p>¹ The thesis committee shares responsibility with the doctoral candidate for the progress of the research work. It provides support in the form of supervision and advice, and ensures that the necessary infrastructure is available.</p> <p>² Academic support for the doctoral candidate is provided primarily by the thesis supervisor.</p> <p>³ The co-advisor discusses the research project with the doctoral candidate at least twice a year.</p> <p>⁴ The Expert Committee responsible must be consulted in the event of conflicts within the thesis committee or between the thesis committee and the doctoral candidate which cannot be resolved by the parties involved themselves. The persons concerned may be required at any time by the GCB PhD Committee to attend a face-to-face meeting.</p> <p>⁵ Doctoral candidates must keep a study record documenting progress with the thesis. This must be presented to the thesis committee on an annual basis and approved by the doctoral candidate's mentor.</p>
Thesis Committee	§ 9	<p>¹ Doctoral candidates are supervised by a thesis committee consisting, at minimum, of a thesis supervisor, a co-advisor, and a mentor.</p> <p>² Of the thesis committee members, at least the thesis supervisor or the co-advisor must have obtained habilitation and be a member of the teaching staff at</p>

the University of Zurich, the University of Bern, or the Vetsuisse Faculty, or hold an equivalent qualification.

³ Individuals who lead an independent research group, specifically teaching staff at the Vetsuisse Faculty, and at universities and faculties participating in the GCB, are authorized to supervise theses. The GCB PhD Committee may authorize other individuals upon application.

⁴ Co-advisors are experts in the research field to which the thesis relates, who work at a different department or clinic to the thesis supervisor. The co-advisor is proposed by the thesis supervisor and confirmed by the Expert Committee.

⁵ The mentor is a member of the relevant Expert Committee, and represents the GCB within the thesis committee. They determine the doctoral agreement in association with the doctoral candidate and the thesis supervisor. The mentor is also the person to contact in the event of conflict between the thesis supervisor and the doctoral candidate.

Doctoral Agreement	§ 10	<p>¹ A doctoral agreement is concluded between the thesis committee and the doctoral candidate upon acceptance to the doctoral program. This agreement sets out the number and nature of the courses that are to be attended, as well as further academic training, and any additional requirements. The latter may be set by the Expert Committee to ensure that the doctoral candidate achieves a balanced standard of education.</p> <p>² If necessary, the doctoral agreement may be amended to reflect a change in circumstances.</p>
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Part 4: Doctoral Program

Duration	§ 11	<p>The doctoral program generally lasts for three years. The Expert Committee may allow a doctoral program to be pursued on a part-time basis, with a corresponding extension to the thesis deadline.</p>
Content and Scope	§ 12	<p>¹ The doctoral program consists of the preparation of a thesis, as well as study program elements and a thesis defense.</p> <p>² Doctoral candidates gain further academic training in their research field by attending training and course lectures. The scope and content of the courses and the study program elements are determined on an individual basis in the doctoral agreement.</p> <p>³ A doctoral symposium for all program participants and thesis supervisors is held once a year. From the second year of study onwards, participants present their research projects in the form of posters or brief lectures.</p> <p>⁴ The doctoral candidate has the opportunity to present their findings at national and international conferences.</p>
Official Assessments	§ 13	<p>¹ The scope and nature of official assessments are laid down in the doctoral agreement.</p> <p>² If an assessment is failed, the candidate may retake it once within six months.</p>

		³ Official assessments are generally conducted in English.
Grading	§ 14	<p>¹ Assessments are either graded or marked "pass" or "fail".</p> <p>² Grades for assessments are given on a scale of 1 to 6. The highest grade is 6 and the lowest 1. As a general rule, the grade scale also includes half-grades, although quarter-grades are permitted.</p> <p>³ An assessment receiving a grade of 4 or higher is deemed passed.</p>
Mid-Term Evaluation	§ 15	<p>¹ During the second year following admission to the doctoral program, the doctoral candidate will present the data generated by the research work to date to the thesis committee in the form of a lecture or seminar.</p> <p>² The mid-term evaluation is held during the second year of study. It consists of a 45-minute public presentation of research work to date. The subsequent discussion is led by the mentor. It consists of a public and a non-public section, lasting a maximum of 60 minutes in total. It is graded by the thesis committee.</p>
Transcript of Records	§ 16	<p>¹ At the end of every semester, all passed and failed modules are registered in a transcript of records. Academic achievement completed outside UZH is designated accordingly.</p> <p>² The transcript of records is issued in German. An English translation is provided.</p>

Part 5: Thesis, Examination, and Evaluation

Doctoral Thesis	§ 17	<p>¹ A doctoral candidate must submit at least one scientific paper that they, as lead author, have had published, or which has been accepted for publication, in a peer-reviewed journal. Exceptions must be endorsed by the external co-referee and accepted by the Expert Committee concerned.</p> <p>² The thesis must be written in English.</p> <p>³ The thesis must be submitted no later than one year following conclusion of the research work. The GCB PhD Committee will rule on any exceptions to this requirement.</p> <p>⁴ Further details of the thesis are governed by the doctoral program regulation.</p>
Assessment	§ 18	<p>¹ The thesis supervisor will assess and grade the thesis in accordance with § 14 within five weeks of its receipt by the Expert Committee.</p> <p>² The co-referee will assess and grade the thesis in accordance with § 14 within five weeks of its receipt by the Expert Committee.</p> <p>³ Co-referees are researchers with an international track record in the research field covered by the thesis concerned. They will prepare an independent assessment of the work once the thesis has been submitted. Co-referees are proposed by the thesis committee no later than the end of the second year, and confirmed by the Expert Committee.</p> <p>⁴ If the thesis is given a failing grade, it may be revised once within six months.</p>

Admission to Thesis Defense	§ 19	<p>¹ Having approved the assessment and the grade, the Expert Committee will decide whether or not to accept the thesis and whether or not to permit it to go forward to the thesis defense.</p> <p>² If the thesis is rejected by the Expert Committee, it may be revised and resubmitted once within six months.</p> <p>³ The following conditions must be fulfilled for a thesis to go forward to the thesis defense:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Submission of the thesis and its acceptance by the Expert Committee; b. Submission of the completed application form; c. Evidence of fulfillment of the doctoral agreement; d. Favorable assessment from the thesis supervisor, and an independent favorable assessment from the co-referee; e. Evidence that the fees for the doctoral program have been paid.
Thesis Defense	§ 20	<p>¹ The thesis defense is held as a public event. A lecture of 40-45 minutes is followed by a discussion of 20-60 minutes. The examiners are the thesis supervisor, co-advisor and mentor, with the mentor chairing this examination board.</p> <p>² The thesis defense is graded by the examiners in accordance with § 14.</p> <p>³ Following a successful thesis defense, the GCB PhD Committee decides on the final acceptance of the thesis concerned.</p> <p>⁴ Candidates who fail the thesis defense may repeat it once within six months.</p>
Deposit Copies	§ 21	<p>The conferral of a doctorate becomes legally binding providing the deposit copies of the approved thesis are submitted to the <i>Zentralbibliothek Zürich</i> within two years of the decision to award the doctorate. The deposit copies must be submitted on a suitable data-carrier containing the necessary files, as well as in the form of three hard copies.</p>
Criteria for Passing the Doctoral Program	§ 22	<p>The doctoral program is deemed passed if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The doctoral agreement has been fulfilled; b. The thesis has been awarded a passing grade by the thesis supervisor and the co-referee; c. The thesis defense has been awarded a passing grade; d. Other requirements set out in the doctoral program regulation have been fulfilled.
Plagiarism Check	§ 23	<p>¹ In the event of fraud, specifically plagiarism, upon the corresponding application from the GCB PhD Committee, the UZH Vetsuisse Faculty will declare the thesis to have been rejected.</p> <p>² If a doctoral title has already been granted, it will be retracted on the basis of a decision by the UZH Vetsuisse Faculty, and any certificates that have already been issued must be surrendered.</p> <p>³ The UZH Vetsuisse Faculty will determine whether or not an application for disciplinary proceedings is to be made.</p>
Plagiarism Check	§ 24	<p>Papers written as part of a doctorate may be processed using appropriate software in order to check for plagiarism. Suitable service providers in Switzerland and abroad may be contracted for this purpose.</p>

Exclusion	§ 25	<p>¹ Doctoral candidates may not proceed with the doctoral program if, for a second time, they fail an official assessment, their revised thesis is failed, they fail a repeated thesis defense, or the thesis is rejected for a second time.</p> <p>² In the event of serious deficiencies in the execution of the research work, the thesis supervisor, co-advisor, or mentor may apply to the GCB PhD Committee for the doctoral candidate to be excluded.</p> <p>³ Having consulted with the thesis committee, the GCB PhD Committee will decide whether or not to approve the application for exclusion, and will forward that application to the UZH Vetsuisse Faculty Site Dean. The UZH Vetsuisse Faculty may order the doctoral candidate's exclusion.</p> <p>⁴ The doctoral candidate concerned will be given a hearing before the UZH Vetsuisse Faculty Site Dean before the decision on exclusion is made.</p>
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Part 6: Final Records

Documents	§ 26	Successful doctoral candidates will receive the following documents: the Doctoral Degree Certificate, the Diploma Supplement, and the Academic Record.
Doctoral Degree Certificate	§ 27	<p>¹ Successful candidates are appointed Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM, PhD / <i>Dr. sc. med. vet.</i>) upon award of the signed degree certificate.</p> <p>² This bears the seal of the University and the Faculty, as well as the signatures of the President and the Site Dean.</p> <p>³ The Doctoral Degree Certificate is issued in German. An English translation of the certificate is provided.</p> <p>⁴ Candidates may not use the DVM, PhD / <i>Dr. sc. med. vet.</i> title before they have received their degree certificate.</p>
Diploma Supplement	§ 28	The Diploma Supplement is a standardized description of the degree earned. It is issued in German and English.
Academic Record	§ 29	<p>¹ The Academic Record (final transcript of records) contains a list of all academic achievement counted toward the degree as well as academic achievement that has been recognized but not counted toward the degree, including the evaluation of the achievement; in addition, the grade and the title of the thesis are given. Academic achievement completed outside UZH is designated accordingly.</p> <p>² The Academic Record is issued in German. An English translation is provided.</p>
Legal Recourse	§ 30	¹ Newly entered academic achievement in the transcript of records, as described in § 16, which relates to the final semester, is subject to appeal to the [governing body, suggestion: Vice Dean for Studies]. The appeal, in writing and specifying the grounds, must be lodged with the (governing body of the Office of the Dean) within 30 days of receiving the transcript of records. This decision is subject to further appeal.

²Other legal orders issued on the basis of this framework ordinance are subject to appeal.

³The Appeals Commission of the Higher Education Institutions of the Canton of Zurich (*Rekurskommission der Zürcher Hochschulen*) is responsible for decisions on appeals.

Zurich, 1 August 2017