

IMPORTANT: Non-official version

Only the German version of the Doctoral Supervision Standards (“Promotionsbetreuungsstandards”) is legally binding. The English translation is provided for persons who do not understand German.

Doctoral Supervision Standards of Fulda University of Applied Sciences of 30 June 2022

The Presidential Board adopted the following supervision standards as guidelines for doctoral degrees on 30 June 2022 after they were approved by the Senate on 15 June 2022:

Preamble

Fulda University of Applied Sciences considers the high-quality supervision of doctorates and other levels of educational attainment to be an important task. This responsibility towards doctoral candidates should ensure that high-quality doctoral degrees are successfully completed in an appropriate period of time.

The Doctoral Supervision Standards of Fulda University of Applied Sciences should provide guidance to supervising professors and also doctoral candidates. They create transparency about how high-quality and dedicated supervision can be organised for both parties.

Fulda University of Applied Sciences follows the Recommendations of the German Research Foundation (DFG) on the Drafting of Supervision Agreements from 2019. The Doctoral Supervision Standards of Fulda University supplement the doctoral degree regulations of its doctoral research centres, the supervision agreements between supervisors and doctoral candidates, Fulda University's Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice and its Statutes for the Ethics Committee. In the doctoral research centres, the doctoral regulations passed therein and the supervision agreements between supervisors and doctoral candidates shall apply.

The Doctoral Supervision Standards address milestones in the doctoral process and bring attention to the duties of supervisors and doctoral candidates in the respective phase.

Initiating a doctoral degree

When a supervisory relationship is initiated, there should already be clarity about the previous academic experience, motivation and commitment of the prospective doctoral candidate. A list of questions that help prepare decisions can be used for this purpose.

The doctoral candidates independently prepare a draft of an exposé. This is the basis upon which the supervision relationship is developed. The draft of an exposé helps the prospective doctoral candidate and supervisor assess the feasibility of the project.

If the doctoral applicant is rejected after introductory interviews have taken place, the requested supervisor must justify the rejection in writing. In the event of acceptance, the supervisor helps the doctoral candidate specify subjects, select theory and methodology, and develop a realistic timetable, work schedule and financial plan.

Capacities of supervisors

Supervisors should verify their own supervisory capacities and resources. They are called upon to supervise doctoral candidates responsibly and should allow enough time to offer

appropriate support. This affects the number of doctoral candidates each individual supervisor can take on.

Supervision Agreement

Supervisors and doctoral candidates conclude a Supervision Agreement. To do this, they use the templates of the doctoral research centres, departments or the partner university. This agreement clearly defines the relationship between the parties in terms of content and time. The Supervision Agreement is signed as soon as the supervisor declares the project is likely to succeed. In addition to the project's feasibility, the originality of the research question as well as the project's anticipated contribution to science are assessed.

Goals and work schedule

The doctoral candidate and supervisor define provisional goals and milestones for the doctoral period, which are set out in the Supervision Agreement or exposé. The doctoral candidate's personal and family circumstances should be taken into consideration. Regular meetings are scheduled at least once every semester to discuss research progress and possible difficulties in the research process. Changes in timing and content are made by mutual agreement and recorded in writing.

Supervisory meetings during the doctoral process

The purpose of the supervisor's academic advice and guidance is to encourage and support the doctoral candidates' academic independence and career plans at an early stage.

The supervisors undertake to offer the doctoral candidate academic advice with the aim of ensuring the quality of the doctoral thesis. Regular and in-depth talks take place about the research progress and outcomes of the doctoral project. If doctoral projects are supervised by two people, joint meetings should preferably take place between the two supervisors and the doctoral candidate.

The doctoral candidates undertake to prepare the doctoral project in a focused and independently scientific manner. Supervisory talks are based on a written interim report, individual chapters, an oral presentation or similar. The doctoral candidate should submit these ahead of the meeting.

The meeting may lead to the work schedule and timeplan being amended by mutual agreement. Changes to work schedule and timetable may be made as a result of the meeting by mutual agreement. The doctoral candidate writes a short report detailing the agreements reached in the meeting, which is countersigned by the supervisor.

Qualification of supervisors

To ensure the high quality of doctoral supervision, supervisors are called upon to seek dialogue with colleagues and share experiences. They can also participate in qualification programmes on doctoral supervision.

Qualification of doctoral candidates

Another important task of the supervisor is to integrate doctoral candidates in the scientific community and thus stimulate academic discourse on the subject of the doctoral project. This can be achieved, for example, by encouraging active participation in conferences and publications in relevant academic journals.

For their part, the doctoral candidates endeavour to actively participate in conferences,

publish work in relevant journals and take part in continuing university education.

The doctoral candidates obtain information about the qualification programmes offered by the doctoral research centres and departments, the central offers of Fulda University and, if applicable, external programmes. The supervisors help them select appropriate events.

The doctoral candidates take part in research colloquia and other courses offered by the doctoral research centres or departments. These events give doctoral candidates the opportunity to present the progress of their research to their supervisors and other doctoral candidates. This option should also be available to doctoral candidates in collaborative doctoral programmes.

Adherence to good scientific practice and ethical principles

The doctoral candidates are familiar with the basic principles of good scientific practice (Fulda University's Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice) and the ethical principles of the scientific community (Fulda University's Statutes of the Ethics Committee). They agree to comply and act in accordance with these rules within the framework of an open and constructive collaboration.

Regulations in the event of a dispute

In the event of a dispute, the parties concerned shall initially endeavour to resolve the issue amicably through negotiation. If this fails, the parties shall appoint an impartial third party, such as the Chair of the Doctoral Committee or an ombudsperson, who will act as a mediator between the parties.