

Rules and regulations on the doctoral oral thesis presentation (viva voce) and the final examination

1. Dates and deadlines

In order to facilitate the evaluation process, four specific dates with individual deadlines are set. These should be noted by all candidates. These dates, together with the requirements set at each date, are listed below.

1.1 Registration deadline – latest date for registration for examination

Doctoral theses have to be graded and circulated within the Department of Physics and Astronomy. For this reason, candidates must register at the administrative office for their oral thesis presentation and final examination at least three months before the actual examination date.

A list of possible examination dates and the associated registration deadlines is given in the accompanying document [Doctoral Examinations: Dates & Deadlines](#). By this date, the candidate must have clarified which examiners may hold the examination.

Candidates are required to propose the composition of their examination committee and to suggest possible dates and times for examination. Registration must be made for the examination latest by the associated registration date deadline using the [Final Exam Registration Form](#).

The composition of the thesis committee then has to be approved by the Dean and the date of examination agreed to by the administrative office.

Please note the following on selecting your examination committee:

As a guideline to choosing your examination committee, please refer to the list of advisors that you will find on the internal pages of the Graduate School website (see navigation point: [List of examiners](#) for the current version). According to the rules of the interdepartmental regulations for doctoral students (“Promotionsordnung”), you are required to be examined in three different fields, such as theoretical physics, applied physics, experimental physics, observational and theoretical astronomy, as is pertinent for your degree. Additional fields in the list in §10 of the “Promotionsordnung” may only be chosen if they are deemed to be in sensible combination with your specialization. Your choice of examiners must of course reflect the examination fields that you have chosen.

Further, in order to ensure that the standards of examination at the Department are upheld, the examination committee should be as broadly chosen as possible, for example, the two reviewers of your thesis may not be from the same research group. In addition, as a rule, not more than two examiners should be chosen from the same institute. The Dean will take the final decision on accepting your examination committee.

1.2 Deadline for delivering the thesis to the referees

After registration, a deadline is set for the time by which the thesis must be handed over to the first and second referee. This deadline is usually placed one month after the registration deadline. In accepting the deadlines, the candidate should have clarified with the referees that they are able to deliver the referees’ reports by the next deadline – that for the submission of all documents, including the referees’ reports to the administrative office. Candidates must ensure that copies of their thesis are given to the referees by the deadline for delivery of the thesis.

1.3 Deadline for submission of all documents to the administrative office

This deadline is the latest date at which all documents that are required for the examination must be delivered to the administrative office in order that the examination can in fact take place on the set date. The required documents are the referees’ reports, as well as the list of documents pertaining to the student listed below.

List of documents required in order to enable the doctoral examination to take place on the set date

The following documents are required and must be submitted latest by the submission date deadline, in so far as these are not already held by the administrative office.

- A completed application form requesting acceptance to the viva voce and the final examination ([Doctoral Exam JointFaculty Application en.pdf](#))
- Sworn affidavit ([Eidesstattliche Versicherung zweisprachig.pdf](#)) and Notification ([Sworn Affidavit Notification englisch.pdf](#))
- A signed curriculum vitae including nationality, sex, marital status, and an educational overview
- Certified copies of all schooling certificates, including
 - The secondary school certificate
 - The original Vordiplom or bachelor's degree certificate or equivalent plus grades and transcripts in German or English
 - The original Diplom or master's degree certificate or equivalent plus grade certificate, and transcripts in German or English.
- Tutorial, seminar and laboratory course certificates, where applicable, e.g. astronomy
- Signed course record documents, from which it is evident that the course requirements for the doctoral degree are fulfilled
- Certification of participation in teaching according to the institutional regulations, indicating that the teaching requirements have been met
- Current certificate confirming enrolment at Heidelberg University ("Stammdatenblatt")
- Non-EU citizens: a copy of the residence permit (visa)
- An electronic version of the thesis, in PDF format on CD-ROM
- 5 bound copies of the thesis (6 copies for candidates who are members of the "Physikalisches Institut")

Please note that the onus is on the doctoral student to ensure that the first and second referees' reports reach the administrative office by the appropriate date. The onus is also on the doctoral candidate to clarify whether the examiners require a hard copy of the thesis and to present them with this.

1.4 Examination date

The date of the final examination is set upon fulfillment of all requirements of the Department of Physics and Astronomy and/or the Heidelberg Graduate School of Fundamental Physics. The examination can take place in the morning (9:00am or 10:30am) or in the afternoon (2:00pm or 3:30pm).

2. Information regarding the formal appearance of the thesis

A standard cover page should be used at the beginning of the thesis. The form is given in the document [Doctoral Exam Thesis Cover Page.pdf](#)

3. General Information on the oral thesis presentation and the doctoral examination

The oral presentation of the thesis should be restricted to about 15 or 20 minutes. Only the most important points should be presented.

The doctoral degree is awarded on fulfillment of all the course and teaching criteria, as well as proof of research and knowledge in the subjects of physics and/or astronomy. Note that it is essential that the work performed in the course of the three year doctoral study be published. Proof of publication of research by the candidate must also be submitted to the administrative office before the doctoral degree certificate can be issued. This proof of publication must be made using the form [Proof of publication of doctoral thesis](#))

Further information with regard to publication of the doctoral thesis can be found on the website <http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/volltextserver/help/diss.html>

The title Dr. rer. nat. is awarded to the candidate on successful completion of the examination and when all requirements are fulfilled. Usage of the title is granted only once the certificate to this effect has been handed over to the examinee.