On 03.09.2014 the Presidential Committee of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover approved the following doctoral degree regulations in accordance with § 37 para 1 Nr. 5. b) NHG. (Official Notices of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover 08.09.2014)

Doctoral Degree Regulations

Faculty of Mechanical Engineering
Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover
§ 1 Degrees Awarded

(1) For a successfully completed doctorate, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover awards through the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering the degrees of "Doktor-Ingenieurin" or "Doktor-Ingenieur"; "Dr.-Ing." for short.

(2) As a rare distinction it awards through the above-mentioned faculty the honorary degree of "Doktor-Ingenieur Ehren halber" or "Doktor-Ingenieur Ehren halber"; "Dr.-Ing. E. h." for short.

(3) The degree "Dr.-Ing." may be awarded to a candidate only once in the field of mechanical engineering.

§ 2 Joint Doctorate with Other Universities

(1) Joint doctoral procedures with one or several other universities that are entitled to confer doctorates in Germany or abroad are conducted on the basis of an agreement between the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and the university or universities concerned.

(2) Agreements on joint doctoral procedures concluded between the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and other universities that are entitled to confer doctorates may differ from §§ 1 – 17.

§ 3 Doctoral Degree Examination Requirements

(1) The doctoral degree examination requirements are the doctoral thesis, a scientific lecture and the oral examination.

(2) The doctoral thesis is a scientific treatise written independently by the candidate, presenting progress in scientific knowledge and demonstrating the ability of the candidate to conduct independent advanced scientific work. It must be published in a form accessible to the scientific community.

(3) The doctoral thesis should be written in German or English.

(4) Several scientific papers may be recognised together as a doctoral thesis, if they are closely related and as one unit satisfy the requirements set out in (2). This close relationship is to be specifically described in the abstract.

(5) A scientific paper written jointly by several (normally not more than two) people may be recognised as a doctoral thesis if the topic is suitable. The requirement for this is that the contributions to be taken into account for the doctorate of one of the authors may be attributed without doubt to this candidate and that they satisfy the requirements set out in (2). The contributions of the individual authors are to be fully defined and described in the declaration according to § 5 (5). A cumulative thesis according to § 4 is excluded in this case.

The suitability of a topic for joint work is to be formally determined by the faculty on the application and hearing of the candidates and the supervisors; this should occur where possible before work on the thesis begins. If several doctoral procedures are to be conducted on the basis of joint work, a joint examination board and joint referees are to be appointed. Each individual contribution is to be assessed separately. The oral examinations take place on different days.

(6) In the 45-minute scientific lecture held in German on the topic of the doctoral thesis, the candidate should demonstrate the ability to lecture in a comprehensible form on a scientific topic.

(7) In the oral examination lasting at least 45 minutes the candidate should demonstrate that she / he possesses a sufficient breadth of knowledge also in related fields and that she / he has a command of the specialised field in appropriate breadth and depth.

§ 4 Admission to the Doctorate

(1) Admission to the doctoral degree of Dr.-Ing. presumes that the candidate is worthy of the degree in the sense of the law on bearing academic titles, and that she / he also meets the requirements listed below:

Successful completion of a regular course of study offered at a university leading to the award of a master's or fully equivalent degree.
(2) With the cooperation of the relevant competent institutions, the candidate is first of all to produce evidence of the equivalence of her/his studies with the contents of degree courses offered in mechanical engineering, civil engineering, and/or electrical engineering. If this equivalence is not immediately recognisable, the procedure described in (3) is initiated.

(3) According to (2), evidence of equivalence, the examination committee may require assessment tests on the contents of typical courses from a bachelor’s or master’s degree in Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, and/or Electrical Engineering. Evidence of passing these tests must be produced at the latest when the doctoral thesis is submitted. If the candidate has failed an assessment test it may be repeated once.

(4) On the basis of the university certificates and - as far as is necessary according to (3) – an overview of any assessment tests to be taken, the Dean’s Office decides on admission. Admission as a doctoral candidate is at the beginning of the doctoral phase. The status is granted by the Dean’s Office on the proposal of the supervisor, first provisionally and at the latest after one year for the entire duration of the doctorate. The Faculty Council is to be informed of the decision.

(5) A doctoral agreement is signed at the beginning of the doctoral phase.

§ 5 Examining Body and Examination Board

(1) The Examining Body is made up of the full-time or retired or emeritus professors, titular professors, lecturers, and adjunct professors at the Faculties of Mechanical Engineering, and Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.

(2) Heads of junior research groups who have been selected through an external evaluation procedure to receive research funding, in particular through such organisations as the Emmy Noether Programme of the German Research Council (DFG), the VW Foundation, the ERC or comparable organisations, are treated on an equal footing with the junior professors at Leibniz Universität Hannover regarding the right to supervise doctoral candidates.

(3) The oral examination is assessed by an Examination Board. This consists of the referees and of members of the Examining Body. The Dean’s Office of the Faculty decides on its composition. A referee from another university with the right to confer doctorates who belongs to a group corresponding to that described in (1) may be a member of the Examination Board. On application, lecturers from universities without the right to confer doctorates who have doctorates and are identified as scientifically close may be admitted as members of the Examination Board by the Dean’s Office of the Faculty.

(4) The Examination Board decides under the presidency of the Dean or of a deputy appointed by the faculty on the acceptance or rejection of the doctoral thesis and on the assessment of the oral contribution, the final grade and potential conditions concerning the publication of the thesis.

(5) The Examination Board is properly formed when the following three rules are fulfilled:

1. All referees are members of the Examination Board. The Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering may accept justified exceptions to this.
2. Among the members including the President of the Board there are at least three full-time or retired or emeritus professors, at least two of whom are from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering.
3. The full-time professors from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering including those who are retired or emeritus have a majority in the Examination Board.

§ 6 Applications for the Awarding of a Doctoral Degree

(1) Applications for the awarding of the Dr.-Ing. degree are to be made in writing to the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering.
(2) The following documents are to be enclosed:

1. The doctoral thesis in three identical copies, one of which remains in the possession of the Faculty. The thesis must contain an abstract in both English and German of about one page in length, including the English translation of the title. The candidate is to provide further copies of the thesis for the referees who are to be nominated;
2. A résumé in tabular form of the candidate’s scientific career, which must also be included in the copies of the thesis;
3. The master’s or equivalent degree certificate (certified copy or copy plus original for comparison) and if required written evidence of admission to the doctorate according to § 4 (3) or (5) and if required evidence of passing the assessment tests;
4. An official certificate of good conduct (amtliches Führungszeugnis), which is not more than 6 months old;
5. A declaration stating that the candidate has written the thesis independently, that any aids are listed in full, that the thesis has not been used as a master’s or other examination thesis and where the candidate has previously published all or part of the thesis. In addition, the declaration must state if, where and how often the candidate has previously submitted theses are to be supplied.

(3) Documents submitted with the application according to paragraph 2 nos. 2 to 5 remain in the possession of the Faculty.

§ 7 Opening the Doctoral Procedure

(1) After checking that the requirements have been met, the Dean’s Office decides on the opening of the doctoral procedure and informs the Faculty Council in the next meeting.

(2) One copy of the thesis remains in the Faculty Office for members of the Examining Body to consult during the entire doctoral procedure.

(3) At the beginning of the doctoral procedure, the Dean’s Office nominates a minimum of two referees for the thesis. The Dean’s Office normally follows the proposal of a member of the Examining Body who represents the scientific field of the thesis. Here, the Dean’s Office draws upon the highest possible expertise, ensuring at the same time that the assessment is comparable to that used in other doctorates in the respective faculty. In particular, the following rules are to be observed:

1. All referees receive the status of members of the Examining Body according to § 5 (1), if they work at a research university with the right to confer doctorates.
2. At least two referees are full-time or retired or emeritus professors of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover. In exceptional cases, a full-time or retired or emeritus professor from another research university with the right to confer doctorates in Germany or abroad may replace the second professor from Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover.
3. At least one referee is a full-time professor at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering.
4. The first named referee is normally the thesis advisor or supervisor of the work.

(4) Experts may be nominated for reports on parts of the thesis. They do not acquire the same rights as the referees through this function.

(5) In addition to the three copies to be submitted according to § 6 (2) no. 1, the candidate is to provide a copy of the thesis for each referee.

§ 8 Assessment of the Doctoral Thesis

(1) The referees produce written reports and, taking into account any expert opinions where
applicable, propose that thesis be accepted, revised or rejected. In the first case they award the grades

"genügend" (satisfactory)
"gut" (good)
"sehr gut" (very good)

In exceptional cases, the grade
"ausgezeichnet" (excellent)
may be awarded for outstanding work.

(2) Experts express an opinion on the contents only.

(3) Each member of the Examining Body may submit an opinion on their own initiative and in time for the Examination Board to take it into consideration when deciding whether to accept the thesis.

(4) When the reports have been received, the members of the Examining Body are notified of all the reports and expert opinions pertinent to the thesis. The reports and expert opinions are made available for confidential inspection. At the same time, the thesis is put into circulation among the professors of the Faculty. Objections to the assessments may be raised within a period of two calendar weeks from the date of notification. The beginning and end of the objection period is set by the Dean’s Office in consultation with the president of the Examining Board, and all professors of the Faculty are notified.

(5) If all referees and expert opinions are in favour of accepting the thesis and if no objections are raised, the thesis is submitted to the Examining Board for acceptance.

(6) If at least two referees are against accepting the thesis and if there are no objections to this vote the Examining Board does not accept the thesis.

(7) If only one referee is against accepting the thesis, or if there is an objection, the Examining Board decides, if appropriate after hearing the objector and in case of doubt after obtaining further expert opinions, whether to accept or reject the thesis.

(8) If the thesis is not accepted, the doctoral procedure is over. In exceptional cases, the Dean's Office, in consultation with the referees, may allow a revised version of the thesis to be submitted within a reasonable period of time. The candidate is to be notified of the conditions for the revision of the thesis.

§ 9 Scientific Lecture and Oral Examination (Thesis Defence)

(1) On accepting the thesis, the Dean’s Office, in consultation with the Examining Board, sets a date for the public scientific lecture and the immediately following oral examination. No other doctoral lectures may take place at the same time.

(2) The Dean sends out invitations to the lecture and oral examination at least three working days before the date.

(3) With the agreement of the President of the Examining Board, all members of the Examining Body are admitted to the oral examination. Those who are not members of the Examining Board are not present when the decision is taken on the grade to be awarded.

The scientific lecture and the oral examination may take place only if the Examining Board is complete.

§ 10 Assessment of the Oral Component of the Doctorate

(1) Immediately after the oral examination, the Examining Board decides whether the scientific lecture and the oral examination meet a sufficient standard; if this is the case they award the grades

"genügend" (satisfactory)
"gut" (good)
"sehr gut" (very good)

In exceptional cases, the grade
"ausgezeichnet" (excellent)
may be awarded.

(2) If one of the two oral components is not seen as sufficient, the candidate is to be informed of this immediately. On application by the candidate within a period of two months, the Examining Board may determine which
part of the doctorate is to be repeated; the Dean’s Office then sets a new date. Otherwise, the doctoral procedure is ended.

§ 11 Grade and Conditions of the Doctorate

(1) After a positive assessment of the scientific lecture and the oral examination, the Examining Board awards the final grade based on the grades of the thesis and the oral component. The grade is calculated with a weighting of 50 per cent for the average for the thesis and 25 per cent for each of the grades for the two oral components. The Examining Board may additionally decide to set the final grade one step higher or lower if this better reflects the overall impression.

(2) The final grade of the doctorate can be:

"bestanden" (pass)
"gut bestanden " (good pass)
"sehr gut bestanden " (very good pass)

In exceptional cases, the grade
"mit Auszeichnung bestanden " (excellent pass)
may be awarded.

(3) The candidate is informed of the result by the President of the Examining Board on the day of the oral examination. The doctorate is not, however, complete at this stage.

(4) The Examining Board may set the candidate conditions for the final version of the thesis prior to publication. The setting of such conditions is to be documented.


(1) Within one year of the last assessment, the candidate must submit the final version of thesis in the required form and quantity to the Faculty for publication. Regulations on publication and the number of copies are laid down by the Faculty Council in accordance with the General Guidelines issued by the Senate of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover. At the request of the thesis advisor, three printed copies are to be made available to the Institute.

(2) The thesis must contain an abstract in both English and German of about one page in length, as well as a résumé in tabular form of the candidate’s scientific career.

(3) A copy of the final version of the thesis remains in the permanent possession of the Faculty.

(4) If the candidate fails to observe the date of submission through their own fault, the rights acquired in the course of the doctoral procedure elapse. In special cases the Faculty Council can exceptionally prolong the deadline for submission. In such cases the candidate must make a reasoned application at least two months before the deadline.

§ 13 Doctoral Degree Certificate and Completion of Doctorate

(1) The doctoral degree certificate is signed in person by the President of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität and the Dean of the Faculty. It is dated with the day of the oral examination, but is handed out only when the candidate has fulfilled the conditions set out in § 12.

(2) The doctoral degree certificate is additionally produced in English. For this the candidate supplies the English title of the thesis.

(3) The doctorate is completed with the handing over or delivery of the doctoral degree certificate. Only after this does the candidate have the right to bear the title of Doctor.

§ 14 Ending the Doctoral Procedure without Completion of the Doctorate

(1) If the doctoral procedure is ended because the thesis has not been accepted or because the scientific lecture and / or the oral examination has not met a sufficient standard, the candidate is to be notified in writing, with a statement of reasons and legal rights of appeal. All research universities with Engineering Faculties in the Federal Republic of Germany are then to be informed in confidence of this unsuccessful attempt to gain a doctorate.
(2) A second attempt may be made only once and not before one year has elapsed. This is also valid for unsuccessful attempts to gain a doctorate at other universities. In no case may a rejected thesis be resubmitted.

§ 15 Appeal against Decisions taken during the Doctoral Procedure

(1) The candidate is to be informed of decisions on admission to the doctoral procedure, the acceptance or rejection of the thesis and on the oral examination. Each negative decision by the Dean’s Office and/or the Examining Board or by another competent authority is to be accompanied by a statement of reasons and legal rights of appeal.

(2) The person affected may appeal against the decision within one month of this being made known. This appeal must be addressed in writing to the Dean of the Faculty or another authority provided for in the doctoral degree regulations.

§ 16 Withdrawal of Application for the Awarding of a Doctoral Degree

(1) The application for the awarding of a doctoral degree may be withdrawn as long as no report has been made available to the Faculty.

§ 17 Renewal of Doctoral Degree Certificate

The doctoral degree certificate may be renewed after 50 years, if the Faculty so decides and finds appropriate due to outstanding scientific merit or particularly close ties between the university and the person to be honoured.

§ 18 Honorary Doctorates

(1) The distinction of an honorary doctorate (Dr.-Ing. E. h.) may be awarded through the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in recognition of outstanding achievements for science and industry in the field of engineering.

(2) This award is on the proposal of at least three full-time professors from the Faculty and the members of the Honouring Committee. This committee is made up of at least three professors, normally one former dean of the Faculty and further representatives as stipulated by the Dean’s Office. At least two references must be obtained, one of which must be by an external referee who is not a member of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover.

(3) The person to be honoured must not be a member of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover.

(4) An honorary doctorate requires a resolution to be passed by a majority of at least four fifths of the members of the Faculty Council with the right to vote.

(5) The honorary doctorate is completed with the handing over of a certificate signed in person by the President of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität and the Dean of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in which the merits of the honorary doctor are highlighted.

(6) The Ministry for Science and Culture in Lower Saxony, as well as all research universities in the Federal Republic of Germany are notified of the honorary doctorate.

§ 19 Invalidity of the Doctoral Degree

If before the handing over of the degree certificate the candidate is discovered to be guilty of deceit in the doctorate or if essential conditions for admission to the procedure have been falsely believed to have been met, the Faculty may declare the degree to be invalid.

§ 20 Revocation of the Doctoral Degree

(1) Revocation of the doctoral degree is based on the legal requirements.

(2) The revocation procedure is in accordance with the legal requirements instituted for this purpose.

(3) The requirements of paragraphs 1 and 2 are correspondingly valid for honorary doctorates.

§ 21 Commencement of the Doctoral Degree Regulations

(1) These doctoral degree regulations come into effect after the approval of the Presidential
Committee of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover on the day after their publication in the Official Notices of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universität Hannover.

(2) If a candidate has already been admitted to a doctorate before these regulations come into effect she / he may on application take a doctoral degree according to the old regulations.