

Recommendations for the assessment and grading of doctoral theses at the Faculty of Health, Witten/Herdecke University

In the preparation of a written review, the following points should be addressed that may be used as criteria for the overall assessment of the thesis:

- Is the thesis of academic topicality and relevance with regard to advances in the subject-area by international standards?
- Does the thesis present new approaches with regard to research question, formulation of hypotheses, and methods?
- Is the thesis of high academic quality with regard to lines of reasoning, experimental design, mathematical-statistical processing of data, research of literature and references?
- Does the thesis point out potential applications of results for technological advances, product improvement, or in student education?
- Is the text correct as to language and style?
- Do the scope and form of presentation correspond to the content of the thesis?

The review must conclude with a recommendation either to accept or reject the doctoral thesis and a recommended grade, in adherence to the rules set out below:

summa cum laude – excellent

This grade should be reserved for outstanding theses which

- offer completely novel approaches of hypothesis formation, integration of previous findings, or methodological innovations that constitute significant advances in scientific knowledge or methodological approaches in the field compared to international standards,
- fully meet the above criteria to an exceptional degree, and
- have already resulted in at least two original publications accepted for publication by internationally recognized journals with peer review, or comparable academic achievements. The doctoral candidate should be at least a co-author of these publications and have contributed significant parts of the articles.

magna cum laude – very good

This grade should be reserved for theses of a high quality which

- offer novel approaches of hypothesis formation, integration of previous findings, or methodological innovations that constitute advances in scientific knowledge or methodological approaches in the field compared to international standards,
- fully meet the above criteria, and
- have already resulted in at least one original publication accepted for publication by an internationally recognized journal with peer review, or a comparable academic achievement. The doctoral candidate should be at least a co-author of the publication and have contributed significant parts of the article.

cum laude – good

This grade should be reserved for theses of a good quality which

- offer solid approaches of hypothesis formation, integration of previous findings or methodological innovations that constitute advances in scientific knowledge or methodological approaches in the field, and
- meet the above criteria.

rite – sufficient

This grade should be reserved for theses of reasonable quality which

- offer solid approaches of hypothesis formation, integration of previous findings or methodological innovations that constitute advances in scientific knowledge or methodological approaches in the field, and
- meet the above criteria in essential respects.

non sufficient – insufficient

This grade should be awarded for theses which

- offer approaches of hypothesis formation, integration of previous findings or methodological innovations that do not constitute advances in scientific knowledge or methodological approaches in the field, and/or
- do not meet the above criteria to a sufficient degree.