

November 10, 2015

The following statements were agreed at the meeting of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics on November 17, 2015 and from the Senate approved on December 01, 2015.

Cumulative PhD thesis: requirements

§ 10 (2) of regulations on doctoral procedures issued by the Faculty of Management and Economics provides for the possibility of a Cumulative PhD thesis in the form of a collection of qualified *peer-reviewed working papers and/or publishable papers and/or published papers*¹.

An “*ad-hoc PhD committee*” will assess that the submitted Cumulative PhD thesis meets all formal requirements. The “*ad-hoc PhD committee*” should be composed by:

- The chairperson (or another member) of the Faculty PhD Committee
- The first supervisor/reviewer
- The second supervisor/reviewer

Once the “*ad-hoc PhD committee*” is in place its main tasks will be to determine whether the cumulative PhD thesis has all requirements to be accepted for evaluation through the review process and subsequently perform the final evaluation.

¹ **Working papers** are papers which have been completed, submitted, accepted, and presented to national/international conferences/PhD Workshop (which base the acceptance on a peer-review process).

Publishable papers are papers which have been submitted to a national/international peer-reviewed journal and that have passed at least one round of the review process (at least Revise & Resubmit).

Published papers are papers which have already been accepted for publication in a national/international peer-reviewed journal.

The “*ad-hoc PhD committee*” will check if the submitted Cumulative PhD thesis meets the following formal requirements:

1. **Minimum amount of papers/articles**. The Cumulative PhD thesis has to have a minimum of three working-papers/publishable papers/published papers.
2. **Co-authorship**. Number of co-authors and order of authors shown on the working papers/publishable papers/published papers are not relevant. It is the main task of the “*ad-hoc PhD committee*” to check that the PhD Candidate has properly contributed to the submitted papers in accordance to nationally and/or internationally academic practices and standards. In case there are reasons to believe that the contribution of the PhD Candidate to the submitted papers is not enough, the “*ad-hoc PhD committee*” can, however, decide to ask for a co-authorship declaration for each of the submitted papers.
3. **Language**. The articles/papers can be written in English and German language. Final Cumulative PhD thesis can also consist of a mix of German and English working-papers/publishable papers/published papers.
4. **Final presentation of the Cumulative PhD thesis**. There is no specific need for direct connections and interrelations among the working papers/publishable papers/published papers. The PhD Candidate is asked to prepare a separate treatise (final presentation) containing:
 - Overall title for the PhD thesis;
 - Core research questions (clearly outlined);
 - Short introduction about the different methods which are used;
 - Possible connections/interrelations among the different papers/articles;
 - Main findings and contribution to theory and practice (clearly presented)²;
 - For working papers and publishable papers reviewers comments and response letters should be also attached.

This “final presentation” in combination with the submitted working papers/publishable papers/published papers constitute the Cumulative PhD thesis which must be submitted to the “*ad-hoc PhD committee*” in a bound copy.

² In case of *working papers* and *publishable papers* the reviewers comments need also to be included.

5. **Assessment of working papers/publishable papers/published papers.** One working paper/publishable paper should be submitted to an “A-Journal”³ (ranked as A at the time of submission to the journal) and feedback (from at least one completed round of review) received before the dissertation is submitted for final evaluation. A positive feedback from the A-Journal will positively influence the evaluation of the Cumulative PhD thesis. A negative feedback will be discussed within the “*ad-hoc PhD committee*” which will decide whether it will influence or not the final evaluation of the Cumulative PhD thesis.

Overall, PhD students are encouraged to publish their research in scientific journals that can be clearly recognized and assessed through accredited and widely recognized journals ranking systems. To this aim, hereafter, some general and not mandatory guidelines are provided for the “*ad-hoc PhD committee*”:

5.1 *Journals Rankings.* In accordance to the specificities of the different research fields, it is recommended to use rankings which are able to scientifically classify and rank journals. For example, it is suggested to use the VHB Journal Ranking and its updates (<http://vhbonline.org/service/jourqual/vhb-jourqual-3/>). In case papers/articles are submitted/published in journals which are not listed in the VHB ranking, the assessment can be done using the JQL ranking (<http://www.harzing.com/jql.htm>).

5.2 *Time-frame for assessment.* The classification of papers/articles through those lists refers to the time-frame in which the cumulative PhD thesis is submitted for final evaluation.

6. **Time-frame.** The period within which the working papers/publishable papers/published papers must have been published (resp. submitted) is limited to the last four years prior to the application to open doctoral procedures. The doctoral committee may extend this period in the event of important reasons (such as pregnancy, child rearing periods, military or civilian service) upon a candidate’s request.
7. **Different Cumulative PhD thesis.** Working papers/publishable papers/published papers already submitted by the PhD Candidate in the context of a different Cumulative PhD thesis will not be taken into account.

³ The “*ad-hoc PhD committee*” will control and confirm, based on widely accepted national and/or international journal rankings in the specific research fields, that the ranking position of the Journal to which the PhD Candidate has submitted the working paper/publishable paper is “A”.