

Bi-national Joint Doctorate (*Cotutelle de Thèse*) at Goethe University - Guidelines for Examination Procedures -

A Cotutelle includes a joint examination procedure endorsed by both universities. While preparing and executing the examination, supervisors and PhD candidates must consider and respect examination regulations and usages in both universities. Good knowledge of regulations and extensive negotiations with several parties will be necessary. Only then will the examination committee, the evaluators' reports, the grading etc. be acceptable for both sides so that the final certificate may be issued without complications.

Regarding requirements for doctoral examinations at Goethe University: You can find them in the doctoral regulations of the university and the respective faculties. Advice is available at the responsible dean's office and Promotionsbüro. Additional regulations may be found in the individual Cotutelle contract. Regardless of details, the following formal steps are generally critical and indispensable for a successful conclusion of examination procedures at Goethe University:

- 1. Application for examinations:** The candidate has to formally apply for the start of the examination process at Goethe University. An application solely at the partner university is not sufficient. An application requires submitting the dissertation and additional documentation to the dean's office or Promotionsbüro in charge.
- 2. Temporary display of dissertation and reports:** The dissertation and the evaluators' reports must be accessible for review within the relevant faculties ahead of the final examination. Thus, candidates and supervisors have to make them available to the dean's office / Promotionsbüro in a timely manner.
- 3. Examination committee:** The composition of the examination committee has to be approved by the body in charge (doctoral committee) at Goethe University before a date for the defense is set. Again, early contact with the dean's office / Promotionsbüro is required to ensure that the relevant guidelines and deadlines are respected.

- 4. Defense:** There has to be a thesis defense. Minutes of the defense must indicate the topics discussed and be signed by all members of the examination committee.
- 5. Grades:** The examiners' reports and the oral examination have to be graded according to the German grading system. In cases where grading requirements in both countries differ, grades have to be given according to an equivalence scheme like the following one:

Goethe University	Universities with no grade
summa cum laude/with distinction (0)	passed
magna cum laude/very good (1)	
cum laude/good (2)	
rite/satisfactory (3)	not passed
non rite/insufficient (4)	

- 6. Publication of the dissertation:** The dissertation has to be published in a version approved by the faculty. Only after the dissertation has been made public in an acceptable way can the doctoral candidate be presented with the doctorate certificate.

These steps are no mere formalities. They are necessary for quality assurance of examinations in the faculties / at Goethe University. They are also necessary to make an examination legally valid (e. g. examinations without minutes have repeatedly been judged invalid by German courts). Observance is thus highly recommended.

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