



^b
**UNIVERSITÄT
BERN**

Study Plan for the Doctoral program at the Health Sciences Graduate School. University of Bern

dated 16 November 2022 / 10 October 2022 / 19 September 2022

The Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Human Sciences, and Vetsuisse Faculty of the University of Bern,

based on the Statute (Statut) of the University of Bern, Article 44, dated 7 June 2011 (University Statute, UniSt) and the Doctoral Regulations of the Health Sciences Graduate School, University of Bern, dated 16 November 2022 / 10 October 2022 / 19 September 2022 (PromR GHS 22),

issue the following Study Plan:

I. General

SCOPE

Art. 1 This Study Plan regulates the Doctoral Program of the Graduate School for Health Sciences (GHS).

DOCTORAL PROGRAM AND
SUBJECT AREA

Art. 2¹ The Graduate School for Health Sciences offers the Health Sciences Doctoral Program (Doctoral Program).

² The following subject areas can be chosen:

- a* Medicine,
- b* Dentistry,
- c* Pharmacy,
- d* Applied Health Sciences,
- e* Epidemiology and Biostatistics,
- f* Public Health Sciences,
- g* Medical Education,
- h* Psychology,
- i* Sport and Exercise Science,
- j* Neurosciences,
- k* Clinical Sciences,
- l* Patient-oriented research,
- m* Veterinary Medicine,
- n* Biomedical Engineering.

³ The subject area is specified on the doctoral degree certificate.

This document is a translation that is provided for information purposes only. It is not legally binding. In the event of a dispute about the interpretation of an article, the text of the original German version will therefore always prevail.

DURATION OF THE DOCTORAL DEGREE (DOKTORATSSTUFE)

Art. 3 ¹ The doctoral degree lasts three to four years; in the area of Clinical Sciences it requires four to six years.

² An extension of maximally two years is possible in exceptional circumstances. The responsible Expert Committee decides on the extension. This does not automatically imply an extension of a possible employment.

II. Doctoral program

OBJECTIVES

Art. 4 ¹ The Doctoral Program offers internationally competitive interdisciplinary training in the theory and practice of Health Sciences. The GHS research projects and training program focus on individuals in their social and physical environment.

² Upon completion of the doctoral program, graduates will

- a have acquired in-depth specialist knowledge in their chosen subject area.
- b be capable of independent academic work.
- c be able to assume scientific responsibility and represent their subject area on scientific panels and at conferences.

ADDITIONAL DEMANDS (AUFLAGEN)

Art. 5 ¹ Knowledge and skills, which have not been acquired in the completed Master's degree may be required for completion of the doctoral degree. The Expert Committee will establish any such additional demands on an individual basis and, at their request, these will be mandated by the responsible Dean.

² Specific courses or existing modules from suitable Master's study programs can be specified as additional demands. Alternatively, the missing skills may be acquired through self-study, which the Expert Committee will check via performance assessments.

³ The additional knowledge and skills required by applicants with a Master's degree from a University of Applied Sciences or a University of Teacher Education must be gained from coursework corresponding to between 30 and 60 ECTS credits, i.e. a workload of 750-900 and 1500-1800 hours, respectively.

ADMISSION

Art. 6 The admission procedure is specified in Article 7 PromR GHS 22.

This document is a translation that is provided for information purposes only. It is not legally binding. In the event of a dispute about the interpretation of an article, the text of the original German version will therefore always prevail.

REQUIREMENTS

Art. 7 ¹The Doctoral Program includes compulsory and elective courses totalling at least 18 ECTS credits:

a Compulsory requirements (at least 3 ECTS credits):

- Participation twice in the annual Doctoral Symposium (1 ECTS credit per participation)
- Basics of Ethics in Health Sciences Research (1 ECTS credit)
- Annual progress report

b Electives (at least 15 ECTS credits):

- Training courses
- Active participation in congresses
- Visits to symposia

² The required electives are specified in the Doctoral Agreement. They are selected jointly by the doctoral students and the Thesis Committee.

³ A Doctoral Symposium is held once a year for all doctoral students, thesis advisors, and mentors. From their second year, doctoral students present their research projects via a poster or short presentation. Doctoral students present their project at least twice at the Symposium.

⁴ The doctoral students are obliged to submit an annual progress report to the Coordination Office, which captures all their activities (e.g. achievements in the research project, training courses, meetings with the co-referee, conference attendance, publications). The progress report is evaluated by the Expert Committee.

⁵ Doctoral students are given the opportunity to present their results at national and international conferences.

ECTS CREDITS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Art. 8 The number of ECTS credits, as well as the performance assessments and learning outcomes for the individual courses, are defined in the electronic course guide, in the GHS course catalog as well as the Doctoral Agreement.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

Art. 9 The course lecturers announce the objectives, content, schedule and types of performance assessment before the course begins.

FIRST YEAR EXAMINATION

Art. 10 ¹ The first-year examination takes place at the end of the first year.

² The first-year examination is a two-hour written exam on the question and methodology of the research project. It forms the basis for a critical examination of the potential and limitations of the chosen approach in the dissertation. The Thesis Advisor or, if appropriate, the Co-thesis Advisor formulates the task.

This document is a translation that is provided for information purposes only. It is not legally binding. In the event of a dispute about the interpretation of an article, the text of the original German version will therefore always prevail.

³ The first-year examination is assessed with two grades:

- a from the Thesis Advisor and, if appropriate, the Co-Thesis Advisor and
- b from the Co-referee

⁴ The examiners of the first-year examination each determine a grade in accordance with Article 15 Paragraph 1 and 2 PromR GHS 22. The two grades are averaged and rounded in accordance with Article 15 Paragraph 4 PromR GHS 22.

SECOND YEAR EXAMINATION

Art. 11 ¹ The second-year examination takes place at the end of the second year.

² The second-year examination consists of a 30-40-minute public scientific presentation followed by a discussion about the research conducted in the presence of the Thesis Committee. The presentation and discussion should include a perspective regarding the final phase of work.

³ The second-year examination is assessed with three grades:

- a from the Thesis Advisor and, if applicable, the Co-thesis Advisor,
- b from the Co-referee and
- c from the independent subject matter expert according to Article 19, Paragraph 4 and 5, PromR GHS 22.

⁴ Immediately after the examination, the examiners determine the grade in accordance with Article 15, Paragraphs 1 and 2 PromR GHS 22. The three grades are averaged and rounded in accordance with Article 15, Paragraph 4, PromR GHS 22.

III. Completion of the doctoral degree

1. Dissertation [or PhD Thesis]

DISSERTATION [OR PHD THESIS]

Art. 12 ¹ The doctoral student provides evidence through the Dissertation (or PhD thesis) that they are capable of independent academic research.

² A dissertation comprises at least three academic papers. Suitable work includes studies with original data, systematic reviews, meta-analyses and narrative reviews, but not, for example, study protocols or "Letters to the Editors". Where there is ambiguity, the Expert Committee will decide.

SUBMISSION OF THE DISSERTATION, EXPERT ASSESSMENT

Art. 13 Doctoral students submit the dissertation together with the documents described in Article 21, Paragraph 2, Items a to g PromR GHS 22, to the GHS secretariat.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE DISSERTATION

Art. 14 Doctoral students will be informed by the Coordination Office of the final decision regarding admission to the thesis defense. Negative decisions, which may be appealed, are made by the body of the Faculty (Organ derjenigen Fakultät) to which the Thesis Advisor is affiliated.

This document is a translation that is provided for information purposes only. It is not legally binding. In the event of a dispute about the interpretation of an article, the text of the original German version will therefore always prevail.

2. Thesis Defense

Art. 15 The thesis defense is regulated according to Articles 21 to 26 PromR GHS 22.

3. Completion

COMPLETION

Art. 16 The completion is regulated in Articles 27 - 33 of the PromR GHS 22.

MANDATORY COPIES

Art. 17 ¹ The Steering Board determines the format, number and labelling of the mandatory copies and where to submit the required documents. The Steering Board may permit publication of an equivalent electronic version.

² The mandatory copies must be submitted within two weeks after the thesis defense.

IV. Administration of Justice

Art. 18 The provisions of PromR GHS 22 apply.

V. Transitional and Final Provisions

CHANGES TO THE STUDY PLAN

Art. 19 Changes to the Study Plan are subject to approval by the University Board of Directors.

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Art. 20 ¹ Doctoral students who begin their degree after 1 February 2023 are subject to this Study Plan.

² Doctoral students who started their degree according to the Study Plan for the PhD program of the Graduate School for Health Sciences, University of Bern, dated 31 May 2010 and 7 July 2010 will complete the doctoral degree according to the 2010 document.

³ Doctoral students may apply to transfer to the current Study Plan in accordance with Paragraph 2.

This document is a translation that is provided for information purposes only. It is not legally binding. In the event of a dispute about the interpretation of an article, the text of the original German version will therefore always prevail.

EFFECTIVE DATE **Art. 21** This Study Plan replaces the Study Plan for the PhD program of the Graduate School for Health Sciences, University of Bern, dated 31 May 2010 and 7 July 2010, and comes into force on 1 February 2023.

Bern, 16 November 2022 On behalf of the Faculty of Medicine
The Dean:

Prof. Dr. Claudio L. Bassetti

Bern, 10 October 2022 On behalf of the Faculty of Human Sciences
The Dean:

Prof. Dr. Stefan Troche

Bern, 19 September 2022 On behalf of the Vetsuisse Faculty
The Dean:

Prof. Dr. David Spreng

Approved by the University Board of Directors:

Bern, 6 December 2022 The Rector:

Prof. Dr. Christian Leumann