Handout for the Annual Supervisory Meeting on the Status of the Doctorate

General Information:

**Purpose of the Regular Supervisory Meetings**

The annual supervisory meetings between the doctoral candidate and the supervisory committee are intended to ensure a regular, targeted and systematic exchange between doctoral candidates and their supervisors about the dissertation project and other relevant aspects of the doctoral phase.

The purpose is to ensure that all those involved in a doctoral project (doctoral candidate and each member of the supervisory committee) are equally up to date on the status of the dissertation project as well as on other important aspects in the context of the respective doctoral phase, exchange suggestions, advice and feedback and can obtain and provide support where it is needed.

**Organisational Matters**

The meeting is conducted with all members of the supervisory committee at the same time.

If this should not be reasonable or organizationally possible in justified individual cases, the joint meeting can be replaced by a series of separate meetings; in this case, it must be ensured that the entire supervisory team (doctoral candidate and supervisors) is equally informed about essential contents.

A special case may also arise for university employees: they are generally also entitled to an annual Personnel Development Dialogue (PDD) with their superior (https://pe.uni-koeln.de/karriere/peg/index\_eng.html).  
It is therefore possible that, to a certain extent, similar elements are dealt with in the supervisory meetings and in the PDD. It is therefore possible to combine the supervisory meetings and the PDD by mutual agreement and to discuss aspects that do not belong in the context of the PDD separately in a different context.

Conversely, content-related aspects of the dissertation and its development may sometimes be discussed in great detail in other formats (e.g. research colloquia of the relevant department, joint conference visits with your supervisors), which is why a recapitulation in the context of the supervision meeting is currently unnecessary.

Nevertheless, please check with each other at least once a year which topics are currently relevant in the context of the dissertation project or the doctorate in the broader sense, and together ensure that these topics are also discussed in a targeted and systematic manner outside of everyday working meetings and, if necessary, outside of the PDD.

**Documentation of the Interview:**

You can keep minutes for yourself; however, these are only intended for the participants of the supervisory meetings, and remain with them.

Only the signed form (last page) is to be submitted to the Doctoral Office for the documentation of the interviews (§ 12 sect. 1 clause 10); specific contents of the interviews are NOT to be reproduced or checked by the Doctoral Office.

Possible Topics for Discussion:

In the following you will find examples of possible topics for supervisory meetings, which not only concern the development of your dissertation, but also other topics in connection with the doctoral phase that may become relevant. The examples serve as suggestions for a constructive discussion; not all of them can and must be dealt with in every discussion. Of course, other topics that currently have priority can also take the place of these suggestions.

Time and Work Schedule, **e. g.:**

* Current status of the doctoral project: What is going well? What has already been achieved?   
  (e.g. literature search, data collection, theory development, writing, publication process))
* Where are the challenges (in terms of content, methodology, organization)? What priorities should be set?
* Approaches to solutions, changes to plans, feedback
* Is the dissertation form still appropriate (cumulative, monographic, monograph-based with partial publications)?
* Planning and preparation of the oral examination (disputation)

Supervision and Collaboration**, e. g.:**

* Frequency and type of feedback
* Identification of good and improvable aspects of collaboration

Scientific Development**, e. g.:**

* Publications, conferences, other scientific activities
* Network building, support in establishing contacts within the scientific community (e.g. through recommendations or invitations)
* Skills development: Identification of further training needs (e.g. methodological or interdisciplinary skills) and corresponding measures

Career Planning**, e. g.:**

* Long-term prospects, career paths within or outside academia
* Funding opportunities: Advice on scholarships, third-party funding or other funding programs
* (International) mobility
* Mentoring and support: clarification of further support offers, such as mentoring programs or coaching

Organisational Aspects**, e. g.:**

* Resources: Ensuring sufficient work equipment, access to laboratories or other infrastructure, travel and publication funds if necessary
* Documentation of the meeting: recording the results and agreements for transparency and traceability.
* Next steps: Establish a clear plan for the coming months, including scheduling the next meeting
* Any planned interruptions to work on the doctorate, e.g. traineeship, family time, etc.

Personal Well-Being**, e. G.:**

* Workload: assessment of workload and identification of stress factors.
* Compatibility of work and private life
* Compatibility of doctorate and career
* Motivation and satisfaction

Potential for Conflict**, e. g.:**

* Identification of possible conflict potentials (possibly via moderation options through the graduate school)

Etc. …

Documentation Annual Supervisory Meeting on the Status of the Doctorate

(to be submitted to the Doctoral Office upon submission of the dissertation)

**Number of the Meeting / Period of Review**

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**Date of the Meeting:**

**Participants:**

(Name and signature doctoral candidate

(Names and signatures members of the supervision committee)