

***Geschäftsordnung* (Regulations) of the Graduate Academy at the University of Rostock of 27 July 2026**

Preamble

Having originated as an informal group of doctoral candidates and experienced supervisors, the Graduate Academy is today an established and indispensable instrument that provides support to doctoral candidates and postdocs, and falls under the responsibility of the Office for Talent Development and Diversity. It is the central service point and coordination office for early-career researchers.

§ 1

Organisation and Objectives

- (1) The Graduate Academy is a service point belonging to the Office of Talent Development and Diversity, which reports to a Pro-Rector—currently the Pro-Rector for Research, Talent Development, and Equal Opportunities. It is managed by a Coordinator.
- (2) The Graduate Academy is advised by the Graduate Council and an Advisory Board.
- (3) The Graduate Academy helps the Office of Talent Development and Diversity to pursue the goal of further developing the interfaculty structures and measures to support doctoral candidates and postdocs. In particular, the Graduate Academy coordinates the central portal for doctoral candidates and postdocs (DOCATA). The portal is used to register the doctoral candidates and postdocs and organise the annual election of the Graduate Council for Doctoral Candidates and Postdocs. The registration of the doctoral candidates is mandatory pursuant to the *Hochschulstatistikgesetz* - HStatG (University Statistics Act). The registration of postdocs is voluntary, but recommended. Personal data is processed in accordance with the data protection regulations.
- (4) In collaboration with further areas of responsibility within and outside the Office of Talent Development and Diversity, the Graduate Academy continues the development of advisory, qualification, and support offers for doctoral candidates and postdocs, and helps with the management of the Graduate Council.
- (5) The Graduate Academy's qualification programme and networking offers are open to all of the registered doctoral candidates and postdocs at the University of Rostock. The Graduate Academy's various funding opportunities are subject to the corresponding funding conditions.

- (6) Doctoral candidates' registration ends with termination of the doctoral procedure (completion or cancellation); postdocs are deregistered automatically six years after completion of their doctorate or on expiration of the employment contract at the University of Rostock or University Medicine Rostock, depending on whichever occurs first. Due to childcare responsibilities during the postdoc phase, registration can be extended by two years per child born during the membership of the Academy; this applies irrespective of whether the postdoc has taken a period of parental leave or not.

§ 2

Graduate Council

- (1) The Graduate Council is an advisory body of the Graduate Academy. It represents the interests of the doctoral candidates and postdocs and contributes to the strategic development of the framework conditions for early-career researchers.
- (2) The Graduate Council has the following tasks:
 - a) Gathering and representing the doctoral candidates' and postdocs' interests in dealings with the university bodies, the university's organisational units, and the Rectorate;
 - b) Issuing statements and recommendations for the strategic development projects in the field of academic staff development, as well as recommendations for organising the qualification phases for doctoral candidates and postdocs;
 - c) Providing advice to doctoral candidates and postdocs on questions regarding the qualification phase; and
 - d) Subject-specific and interfaculty networking among doctoral candidates and postdocs, as well as networking with other representative bodies for doctoral candidates and postdocs.
- (3) The Graduate Council meets regularly, but at least twice a year. The sessions are called and chaired by the Spokesperson of the Graduate Council. Minutes summarising the results are prepared for every session. An anonymised version of the minutes is published via the Graduate Academy.
- (4) Representative bodies for doctoral candidates and postdocs at the University of Rostock (e.g. within existing Collaborative Research Centres and Research Training Groups) are entitled to attend the sessions of the Graduate Council and are invited to the sessions.
- (5) All doctoral candidates and postdocs may address questions and submit proposals to the Graduate Council in writing.
- (6) The Graduate Council has a quorum if the session was duly convened and more than half of its elected members are present. Unless regulated otherwise, decisions are passed if the number of

Yes votes exceeds the number of No votes. Abstentions, invalid votes, and votes not cast are not counted.

- (7) The Graduate Council may issue its own regulations. Until regulations have been passed, § 9(2) to (4) of the University of Rostock's *Grundordnung* (Basic Regulations) apply accordingly.

§ 3

Composition of the Graduate Council, Term of Office, and Role of Spokesperson

- (1) The Graduate Council comprises 13 members and should represent all of the doctoral candidates and postdocs from all of the University of Rostock's faculties. It is composed of:
- one representative of the doctoral candidates from each of the faculties;
 - one representative of the postdocs from the life sciences pursuant to the DFG's subject area structure;
 - one representative of the postdocs from the humanities and social sciences pursuant to the DFG's subject area structure;
 - one representative of the postdocs from the natural sciences pursuant to the DFG's subject area structure;
 - one representative of the postdocs from the engineering sciences pursuant to the DFG's subject area structure.
- (2) The term of office for members of the Graduate Council lasts for one year and starts every year on 1 April. Re-election is possible.
- (3) The Graduate Council elects a Spokesperson and Deputy Spokesperson from its midst. The person who wins the majority of votes from the members present is elected. If such a majority is not achieved, the Graduate Council decides whether and how the election procedure is to be continued.
- (4) The Spokesperson's tasks include, in particular:
- a) Coordination of the tasks of the Graduate Council;
 - b) Contact person for representatives from other bodies and organisational units at the University of Rostock;
 - c) Advisory role in the sessions of the Academic Senate, the Senate's Research, Scientific Transfer and Early Career Researchers Committee, the University Council's DENKWERK-STATT (brainstorming sessions), the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Committee, as well as the taskforces and working groups for the further development of academic staff development, as permitted by the respective bodies;
 - d) Participation in sessions of the Graduate Academy's Advisory Board;
 - e) Preparation and follow-up work for the sessions of the Graduate Council.

- (5) The Spokesperson may be removed from office until the end of their term through the election of a successor who attains the majority of the votes of the members of the Graduate Council (constructive vote of no confidence).
- (6) The Spokesperson can step down due to an important reason at any time. This decision must be announced in writing with signature to the responsible Pro-Rector. A new election must be held immediately for the remaining term of office.
- (7) The respective representative of the doctoral candidates from each of the faculties pursuant to Sub-Section (1) Sentence 2 is charged, in particular, with the task of attending the sessions of the Faculty Council as the representative of the Graduate Council, if relevant topics are to be discussed.
- (8) Membership in the Graduate Council ends with the end of the term of office, if the term of office is terminated or renounced, or with the termination of registration in the Graduate Academy pursuant to § 1(6).

§ 4

Election of the Graduate Council

- (1) The Office of Talent Development and Diversity is responsible for organising the election for the Graduate Council. It oversees the election. An Election Committee is formed, chaired by the Coordinator and comprising two further members of staff at the Office of Talent Development and Diversity. The Election Committee makes the required preparations for the election of the Graduate Council, decides which election procedure to use, oversees the actual election, and determines the election result. It also decides on any requests to review the election results.
- (2) The elections are direct, free, fair and secret. Elections can be held using postal voting or as an internet-based electronic election (online voting).
- (3) All doctoral candidates and postdocs who are registered at the Graduate Academy pursuant to § 1(5) on the qualifying date shall be able to vote and stand for election. The voting register is based on the doctoral candidates and postdocs who are registered pursuant to § 1(3) on the cut-off date that is the 1 December of the year preceding the election.
- (4) Every person who is entitled to vote has the same number of votes as the number of members being elected pursuant to § 3(1). The votes can be cast for any of the candidates; no more than one vote may be cast per candidate.
- (5) The seats on the Council are allocated per faculty for the doctoral candidates and per scientific discipline for the postdocs, each in the order of the number of votes received.

- (6) The candidates who have received the most votes for their area of representation are elected. If there is a tie of votes, the order is determined by the drawing of lots by the Chair of the Election Committee. Candidates who have not received a seat on the Council are made substitute members according to the order of the highest number of votes.
- (7) If a candidate does not wish to accept their election, their term of office is terminated, or an elected member resigns or steps down, they are replaced by a substitute member in accordance with Sub-Section (5). The substitute member is to be informed about their succession in writing by the Coordinator as determined in § 1(1) Sentence 2. The election to the Council is deemed accepted if the Coordinator has not received a written rejection of the vote due to a well-founded reason within 10 days. If there are no further substitute members on the list, the position will remain vacant. If a member of the Council decides to step down, they must inform the Coordinator in writing.
- (8) If a member of the Graduate Council is unable to attend a session, they are represented by the next named representative from their area of representation.
- (9) If less than four positions have been filled or if, following the succession procedure, the number of members of the Graduate Council falls below four during a term of office, the Coordinator of the Graduate Academy shall schedule a new election for the Graduate Council.
- (10) If these Regulations do not provide otherwise, the provisions of §§ 15 to 32 of the University of Rostock's *Wahlordnung* (Electoral Regulations) shall also apply *mutatis mutandis*.
- (11) The inaugural meeting of the newly elected Graduate Council is convened by the responsible Pro-Rector directly after the election results are announced.

§ 5

Advisory Board of the Graduate Academy

- (1) The Advisory Board, which is composed of external members, is an advisory body to the Graduate Academy. It comprises at least three persons from the fields of science, commerce, or politics who have proven expertise in the areas of academic talent development and career advancement. The Advisory Board accompanies the strategic further development of the Graduate Academy. Its tasks include, in particular, giving advice to the Office of Talent Development and Diversity, providing recommendations and statements on fundamental and strategic issues in the field of talent development and career advancement.
- (2) The Rectorate appoints the members of the board based on recommendations from the responsible Pro-Rector. The members' term of office is three years. Re-appointment is possible.

- (3) The Advisory Board meets once a year. The responsible Pro-Rector, representatives from the Office of Talent Development and Diversity, and the Spokesperson of the Graduate Council attend the sessions.

§ 6

Entry into Force

These Regulations enter into force on the day after their publication in the University of Rostock's Official Bulletin. On entry into force, the *Richtlinie der Prorektorin für Forschung und Forschungsausbildung zur Einrichtung einer Graduiertenakademie an der Universität Rostock* (Guidelines of the Pro-Rector for Research and Research Education for Establishing a Graduate Academy at the University of Rostock) of 30 June 2011 ceases to apply.

Drawn up following the decision passed by the Rectorate on 27 July 2026

The Rector
of the University of Rostock
University Professor Dr. Elizabeth Prommer