

## BINATIONAL DOCTORATE OR COTUTELLE DE THÈSE

### WHAT IS COTUTELLE DE THÈSE?

In the course of a binational doctorate procedure you can acquire a joint doctoral degree based on your research at two universities. A binational doctorate, also known as Cotutelle de thèse, must be conducted at two universities from different countries. A longer research stay (> 6 months) at the partner university is required. The individual binational procedure is based on a legal agreement between the universities and must be approved by the Dean's office. The dissertation will be submitted at both universities and completed with a joint exam. The doctoral



degree is documented with a joint certificate or separated ones, but only jointly valid. You do not acquire two degrees, but one doctoral degree will be co-awarded by the two universities. Due to the French initiative binational doctorate procedures are mostly called Cotutelle de thèse.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COTUTELLE DE THÈSE FOR DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS?

- Additional qualification due to experience within different research cultures and scientific communities as well as international networks at both universities (and countries)
- Qualification for working in binational areas
- The dissertation focusses on the country of the partner university or on both countries

If you plan a longer research stay abroad, you do not necessarily need to do a Cotutelle de thèse. Before arranging a binational doctorate procedure please consult with your doctoral supervisor and the Ph.D. program at your faculty, to evaluate the pros and cons of a Cotutelle de thèse.

[Research School PLUS](#) offers funding opportunities for international research activities.

### WHAT ARE THE PREREQUISITES FOR A COTUTELLE DE THÈSE?

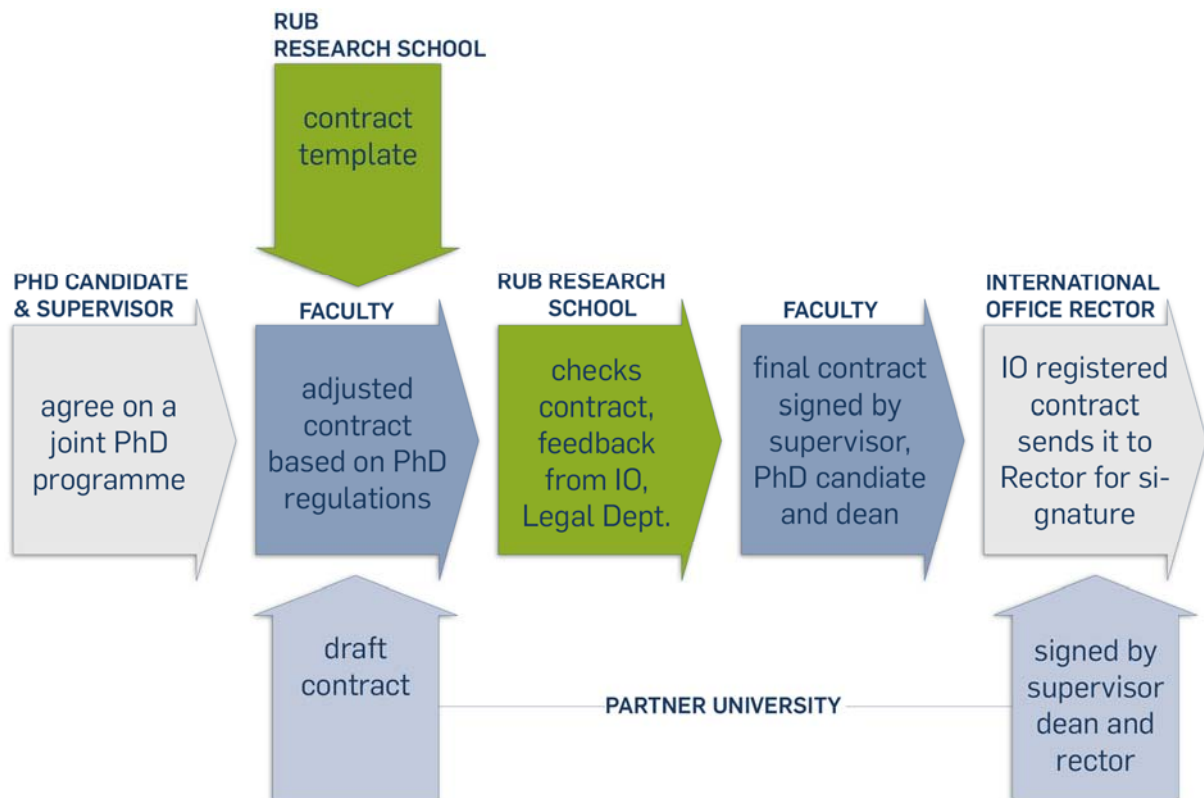
- Usually you agree about a binational doctorate before you enroll as doctoral researcher (Dean's office agreement is required). However, it is only in exceptional cases, in which changing your doctorate into a binational one is possible within the first year.
- For a Cotutelle de thèse you need to fulfill the requirements of admission for a Ph.D. at both universities to be found within the regulations.
- One supervisor of each of the two universities share the supervision of your Ph.D.
- At least one longer research stay (> 6 months) at the partner university is desirable. Both research institutions should provide the necessary research equipment.

### WHICH ARE THE STEPS OF A COTUTELLE DE THÈSE?

1. Both supervisors together with the doctoral candidate agree on the binational doctorate procedure
2. Individual agreement on the binational doctorate between the two universities
3. Ph.D. candidate does research at both universities. The dissertation will be handed in at both universities.
4. Joint exam commission and joint doctoral degree certificate

### HOW TO SET UP THE INDIVIDUAL COTUTELLE AGREEMENT

Various institutions within the Ruhr-Universität are involved in drafting an individual agreement on a binational doctorate.



A binational Ph.D. can be initiated by the doctoral candidate as well as the supervisor. They address the Dean's office of the faculty with their concern.

Either the faculty can provide a draft agreement (from an existing contract) or the partner university provides one. A draft agreement is also available on the homepage of RUB Research School, which needs to be adjusted according to the doctorate regulations of the faculty and the partner university.

The faculty sends an adapted version the draft agreement at RUB Research School, which will be adjusted in compliance with the regulations of the International Office (IO), Legal Department and if necessary with the Student Secretariat. The adjusted draft will be send back to the faculty.

The agreement must be signed by the supervisor, doctoral candidate as well as dean of the faculty at RUB. The Dean's office forwards the agreement to the IO and it will be signed by the rector as well. The supervisor, dean (or equivalent) and rector of the partner university needs to sign the agreement as well.

### WHICH POINTS NEED TO BE ADRESSED BY A COTUTELLE AGREEMENT?

Ideally a general cooperation agreement already exists between the partner university and Ruhr-Universität with established standards on joint binational doctorate procedures. In any case an individual agreement for each binational doctorate procedure is necessary.

This agreement should include the following points to prevent any inconsistencies:

- Name of both universities and faculties involved, specify the "home university"
- Name, birth date and place of doctoral candidate
- Title and short description of dissertation project
- Legal regulations for awarding doctoral degree for both countries (doctorate regulations should be available from both universities)
- Name and faculty of supervisors, supervision should comply with German standards
- Regulations on travel costs (supervisors, exam committee, doctoral researcher)
- Regulations on enrollment at both universities, usually the doctoral researcher only needs to pay fees at one of the universities at a time. (At least for one semesters doctoral researchers need to be enrolled at RUB.)
- Rights and obligations of doctoral candidate
- Study program during the doctorate
- Agreement on language of dissertation and exam,
- Submission of the dissertation at both universities
- Agreement on grading system of the exam and dissertation
- Arrangement of exam committee, place and process of exam
- Joint or separated certificate
- Protection of dissertation topic and results as well as publishing regulations according to the laws of both countries
- Regulations on amendments or dispute resolution
- Signatures of: rector, dean, supervisor (from both universities) and doctoral candidate
- The agreement is mainly formed by the Dean's office.

Information on the regulations of doctorate of your faculty can be found [here](#).

Additional information on Cotutelle de thèse:

- [General information on Cotutelle by the German Rectors' Conference](#)
- [Informationen der Deutsch-Französischen Hochschule insbesondere zu Cotutelle-Verfahren zwischen den beiden Ländern](#) (in German and French)