

Information on the Research Committee for Scientific Ethical Questions (RCSEQ) for doctoral students at UNITI TIROL

In the winter semester 2018/2019, the new cooperation contract for RCSEQ between UNITI TIROL and the University of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschule Gesundheit - fhg) entered into force, as well as the new RCSEQ Rules of Procedure. The RCSEQ Rules of Procedure were published on the RCSEQ Homepage (www.uniti-tirol.at/rcseq - „Zuständigkeit/Competence“). Thus, RCSEQ consists of the RCSEQ Office and the RCSEQ Committee.

The **RCSEQ Office** advises on scientific/ethical questions as well as on submissions, it accepts RCSEQ submissions and can enforce shortened procedures together with the RCSEQ chair (Rules of Procedure RCSEQ §4(7)) - **Contact:** Mag. Simone Fiegl, Isolde Enz MSc. – rcseq@uniti-tirol.at.

The **RCSEQ Committee** consists of nine members and meets on a regular basis. The dates for these meetings are published on the RCSEQ Homepage (www.uniti-tirol.at/rcseq - „Sitzungstermine/Meeting dates“). In these meetings, planned research projects will be examined in accordance with scientific-ethical criteria prior to their beginning.

The RCSEQ Committee is **responsible** if a research project

- **is under no legal obligation to be submitted to a statutory ethics committee and**
- **involves particularly vulnerable groups of people and/or**
- **involves particular categories of personal data** (Rules of Procedure RCSEQ §1(2)).

For doctoral theses which started prior to 30.09.2018, the former RCSEQ Rules of Procedure shall apply (date: 10.10.2012). Pursuant to these rules, doctoral theses had to be reported to RCSEQ (RCSEQ notification obligation) or had to be submitted to RCSEQ by means of an application.

For doctoral theses, which started in the WS 2018/2019 (from 01.10.2018 onwards) at UNITI TIROL (Dr.phil. + Dr.techn.), the following shall apply:

All doctoral thesis projects have to be submitted to a statutory **ethics committee** (e.g.: the Medical University of Innsbruck) **or** another **board for ethical/scientific questions** (e.g.: RCSEQ, Ethics-Board of the University of Innsbruck) - which is generally organized by/at one/several institution(s) - for examination and a statement (Rules of Procedure RCSEQ §4 (5)).

This submission must take place **prior to the beginning of the dissertation project** (in any case prior to the start of an empirical data collection), i.e. in case of Dr.phil. studies typically after the successful passing of the research concept examination (Doctoral Regulations Dr.phil. §2(5)) and in case of Dr.techn. studies typically after the submission of the exposé.

The doctoral candidate shall decide together with the supervisor to which ethics committee or board for ethical/scientific questions he/she shall submit his/her doctoral thesis:

- Depending on the research project, the involvement of certain **ethic committees** may be **legally required** (e.g.: analyses of hospital patient data or for studies related to medicinal products or medical devices). In this case, the supervisor together with the doctoral candidate have to ensure that the research project is submitted to the responsible ethics committee.
- Otherwise, the project can be submitted to **RCSEQ** or **another board for ethical/scientific questions**. However, it must be considered that a project – if applicable – shall be submitted preferably to the institution where the research project will be conducted or the institution where the supervisor works (e.g.: a survey among UNITI TIROL students which is supervised by a UNITI TIROL professor should be submitted to RCSEQ).

Upon **application for admission to the doctoral examination procedure**, a positive statement by a statutory ethics commission or a board for ethical/scientific questions must be submitted to the competent Doctoral Affairs Committee. Only then, the doctoral examination procedure can begin.

In case of unresolved questions or uncertainties, please contact the RCSEQ Office (rcseq@uniti-tirol.at) for advice.