

Joint-PhD Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin with King's College London: Questions & Answers for PhD-candidates

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The following document provides answers to general questions concerning the Joint-PhD programme between Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and King's College London. The programme was implemented at both universities in 2010 and has been continuously developed since then. The following answers are drawn from the official agreement between the universities and the best practice examples we have collected over the years, but should not be seen as legally binding. Please make sure that you refer to the latest edition of this document. In addition to consulting this FAQ, we encourage you to address more specific questions to the programme liaison at Humboldt-University:

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The information in this document will be helpful mostly for students who are considering an application for the Joint-PhD Programme through Humboldt-University, and for Joint-PhD students who have already chosen KCL as their home institution and are planning their one year stay at Humboldt-University.

Students who want to apply for the programme through King's College London can contact KCL at the following address: doctoralstudies@kcl.ac.uk.

General questions concerning the cooperation

What is the Joint-PhD?

The Joint-PhD Programme offers students the opportunity to pursue a binational PhD at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and King's College London. Students in the programme work with supervisors at both institutions and benefit from access to research resources at two universities. Although the major work on the PhD research or dissertation project takes place at the home institution, students also spend a significant period of time (at least one academic year) at the partner institution. The final examination takes place at the home university and leads to a jointly awarded degree (as opposed to awarding two individual degrees).

Why would I want to take part in the Joint-PhD?

Pursuing a Joint-PhD allows students to benefit from the access to research resources at two excellent universities with international renown. In addition, students will expand their own expertise with two academic research groups, either by working in complementary areas at HU and KCL, or through adding an interdisciplinary element to their research. Participating in a transnational academic exchange can also provide key qualifications for a career path in academia and elsewhere. Last but not least, students will have the opportunity to widen their professional and cultural horizons while living in two vibrant, European metropolises.

What departments are involved in the Joint-PhD programme?

At the moment, the following faculties and departments are involved in the Joint-PhD programme.

At King's College London:

- School of Arts and Humanities: the department of Cultural Media & Creative Industries (, and the departments of English, German and Philosophy Research
- School of Natural and Mathematical Sciences: Mathematics Research
- School of Social Science and Public Policy: Geography Research / Comparative Urbanism
- School of Law

At Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin:

- [Kultur-, Sozial- und Bildungswissenschaftliche Fakultät](#) (*Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences*)
- [Mathematisch- Naturwissenschaftliche Fakultät](#) (*Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences*)
- [Philosophische Fakultät](#) (*Faculty of Arts and Humanities*)
- [Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaftliche Fakultät](#) (*Faculty of Language, Literature and Humanities*)
- [Juristische Fakultät](#) (*Faculty of Law*)

For more information on HU faculties and their departments, see [here](#).

Can I apply with a Bachelor's degree?

Please note that for the Joint-PhD programme the universities have agreed to introduce only candidates with a Master's degree or equivalent. In some cases, candidates without a Master's degree or equivalent can take an assessment test in order to demonstrate that a candidate possesses sufficient degree-level knowledge of the doctorate subject and is qualified to pursue a PhD ("Eignungsfeststellungsprüfung"). Such an assessment may also be required of candidates whose experience in their chosen field of PhD research is not evident from previous studies (if, for example, students have a BA or MA in fields that are different from the field in which they want to pursue their Joint-PhD). In such a case, candidates at HU may be required to attend a MA seminar or module in their chosen research field during the PhD programme.

Can I apply even if I am not a student of either university?

Yes, but currently Humboldt-University only introduces candidates into the joint programme who are already accepted as PhD candidates at HU. As a result, applicants have to decide if they want to pursue a PhD at Humboldt-University and first register for that, even if they cannot yet be sure whether they will also be accepted into the Joint-PhD programme.

How long will I stay at the partner institution?

A minimum stay of at least one academic year at each university is mandatory for the awarding of the Joint-PhD. Candidates who apply for the Joint-PhD programme need to develop a travel plan after consulting with their two potential supervisors. Usually candidates will spend the first year of studies at their home institution and the second year at the partner institution, after which they return to their home university to complete their project. Other, more flexible schedules can be agreed upon, though the equivalent of one academic year should be reached toward the end of the project.

Are there any tuition fees?

At the moment, German public universities do not charge tuition fees and higher education remains completely funded by the state.

HU home students in the Joint-PhD programme do not pay tuition fees throughout the time of their studies (including their stay at KCL). They are, however, required to pay administrative fees once per semester. Currently, HU home students would need to pay the total sum of € 113,84 (summer semester 2023) for the following fees:

- Semester fees (*Semestergebühren*): € 50,00
- Contribution to the student body (*Studierendenschaftsbeitrag*): € 9,75
- Contribution to Student Services (*Studierendenwerksbeitrag*): € 54,09
- Plus, if applicable: Late fees: € 19.94

Please be advised that these fees are subject to change each semester.

KCL home students in the Joint-PhD programme are required to pay the usual tuition fees at KCL for the complete duration of their studies (including their stay at HU). During their stay in Berlin, KCL home students are exempt from paying semester fees **if they enrol via the [International Office](#)**, but they are required to pay the total sum of 63,84 € (summer semester 2023) for the following administrative fees :

- Contribution to the student body (*Studierendenschaftsbeitrag*): € 9,75
- Contribution to Student Services (*Studierendenwerksbeitrag*): € 54,09
- Plus, if applicable: Late fees: € 19.94

NB: When planning their stay at HU, KCL home students are advised to contact the [International Office](#) in order to organise their enrolment at HU. For further information on enrolling as a Joint-PhD candidate, please contact exchange-students@hu-berlin.de.

Please be advised that if KCL home students enrol via the Student Service Center, semester fees of € 50,00 will be added to their invoice.

Ticket for Public Transport

When paying the above listed fees, both HU and KCL home students have the option of buying a public transport ticket (*Semesterticket*), which allows students to use Berlin's public transport for one semester. Currently, the ticket can be purchased at a cost of € 201,80 (summer semester 2023).

For more information on HU administrative fees, go [here](#).

Is there any funding for the Joint-PhD Programme?

At the moment, there is no funding attached to the programme. HU home students can apply for fulltime scholarships offered by a variety of institutions, e.g. *Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes*, or they can apply for partial funding of research visits and mobility grants at the [DAAD](#) (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst*) and/or [ERASMUS](#).

For further information on funding opportunities at German universities, please see [here](#) or [here](#).

If students choose to apply through KCL as their home institution they may be eligible for funding advertised in the [KCL Postgraduate Funding Database](#). Alternatively, the London Arts & Humanities Partnership (LAHP) may provide scholarships that cover joint PhD programmes.

Can I get in touch with present candidates of the Joint-PhD Programme?

If you have further questions concerning the programme, we kindly ask you to contact the programme liaison listed above. They might also be able to get you in touch with present candidates or alumni of the programme.

Joint-PhD candidates are also connected through their faculties or other platforms depending on the initiative of subgroups of candidates.

Questions on the application process

How do I choose my 'home university'?

You can apply for admission to the Joint-PhD Programme through either university. Whichever one you choose will become your home university, where you will conduct the main part of your research. At KCL, the application is a centralised online procedure with specific deadlines (see also [How and where do I apply for the Joint-PhD?](#)). At HU, applications are handled individually and should be submitted at the relevant faculty or at the respective disciplinary or interdisciplinary graduate school.

For graduate schools at HU please see <https://u.hu-berlin.de/prom> or <http://humboldt-graduate-school.de>.

How and where do I apply for the Joint-PhD?

No matter whether you want to apply as a HU or KCL home student, the first step that precedes your application is to find two supervisors, one at HU and one at KCL. Next, you need to decide which university will be your home university.

Applications from HU home candidates:

At the moment, Humboldt-Universität only admits candidates into the Joint-PhD who are already accepted as doctoral candidates of HU. So if you intend to become a Humboldt home student within the Joint-PhD programme, you first need to matriculate as a regular Humboldt PhD student. Information about the necessary forms and qualifications can be found on the websites of the respective faculties (see also [What departments are involved in the Joint-PhD programme?](#)).

Once you've become a PhD student at Humboldt-Universität you can – in accordance with your supervisor – apply for becoming a Humboldt home student within the Joint-PhD programme. For such an application you need to follow these next two steps:

1. You need to send your application for the Joint-PhD to the programme's Joint Academic Committee (JAC) for approval. Applications usually include:

- an official form confirming your status as a PhD student at HU
- the confirmations of supervision by two professors (one from HU, one from KCL)
- a CV
- copies of your BA and MA certificates
- two recommendations or references from two university professors
- an exposé
- a travel plan

Applications for the JAC should be sent via the programme's liaison (see top of the FAQ document).

2. Should the JAC approve your application, you would then apply for the Joint-PhD Programme via the [KCL Admission's Portal](#), following the regular admission procedure. For more details, please visit the Postgraduate website of the respective PhD programme at KCL. **Please also note KCL's application deadlines** (see also [Is there a deadline for my application?](#)).

If KCL also accepts your application in this final step, you will receive an offer letter and can enter the programme at the assigned date. If KCL declines your application, you can still pursue your PhD as a regular Humboldt PhD student.

Applications from KCL home candidates:

Students who choose KCL as their home institution need to apply for the Joint-PhD Programme via [KCL's Admissions Portal](#). For further information, please consult the postgraduate studies websites of your chosen field of research, and/or contact the KCL Graduate School Administrator (doctoralstudies@kcl.ac.uk).

Once you have applied for the Joint-PhD Programme via the KCL Admission's Portal, the Joint Academic Committees (JACs) at both universities will review your application. If both JACs approve your application, you will get an offer letter from KCL. Once you have accepted the offer letter, you also need to apply and enrol as a PhD student at HU. For this, you first need to submit a formal application at the examinations office of your chosen HU faculty. This should be done immediately after KCL home students have accepted their offer letter. There is no deadline for applying as a PhD candidate at HU and applications can be sent in digital form to the HU faculties' examination offices. Information about the necessary forms and qualifications can be found on the websites of the respective faculties (see also [What departments are involved in the Joint-PhD programme?](#)).

Once you have been accepted as a PhD candidate at your HU faculty, you also need to enrol as a PhD student via the HU's International Office. We recommend that KCL home students enrol when they come to Berlin (it's not necessary to enrol right away after you have accepted your offer letter). For further information on the enrolment process, please see [Are there any tuition fees?](#)

What documents are needed for an application?

At HU, the formal application should be addressed to the PhD board (*Promotionsausschuss*) of the respective faculty. Applications usually include: an official form, the confirmation of supervision by a professor of one of the faculty's departments, as well as the confirmation of supervision by a professor at KCL, a CV, your BA and MA certificates, an exposé and a travel plan. As you will need the same documents at KCL, it is advisable to hand them in in English. Further information on the necessary documents and forms for downloading can be found at the websites of the faculties' examination offices (see also [What departments are involved in the Joint-PhD programme?](#)).

Once your application as a regular PhD student has been accepted, you would then start the process of transitioning into the Joint-PhD Programme. For this, you need to pass on your application along with recommendations or references from two university professors to the HU representatives of the programme's Joint Academic Committee (see also [How and where do I apply for the Joint-PhD?](#)). Applications to the committee can be sent via the programme's liaison (see top of the FAQ document).

Should the JAC approve your application, you would then apply for the Joint-PhD Programme via the [KCL Admission's Portal](#), following the regular admission procedure. Please note that students applying at KCL who are not native English speakers need to provide a language certificate. For further information, please visit the KCL website for [English Language Entry Requirements](#).

For further information on the forms and documents needed for an application via KCL's Admission Portal, please consult the postgraduate studies websites of your chosen field of research, and contact the KCL Graduate School Administrator (doctoralstudies@kcl.ac.uk).

What Language Requirements do I need to fulfil for an application?

All candidates who are not native English speakers and apply for the Joint-PhD need to provide a language certificate that meets the requirements specified by KCL.

For further information on KCL entry requirements and accepted language certificates, see [here](#).

Will a supervisor be assigned to my project by Humboldt-Universität?

No, prospective HU home students need to contact potential supervisors at HU and KCL individually and independently. Usually, professors will need your CV, your references, and an exposé of your PhD project in order to decide whether they will supervise you. When consulting with your potential supervisor, you should also tell them about your plans to join the Joint-PhD programme and ask whether they would be willing to collaborate with a colleague from KCL as co-supervisor. In some cases, HU supervisors may be able to recommend a potential supervisor on the KCL side.

In order to find professors that share your research interest, please consult the HU departments' staff pages. Department professors have their own profile pages and their publications and research interests are listed there.

Is there a deadline for my application?

At HU, there are no fixed deadlines for your application, and so applications are welcome at any point of the academic year. There are, however, deadlines for the centralised online applications at KCL. Usually, application periods at KCL are in Feb/March for the following academic year, i.e. the

upcoming winter semester. In order to meet these deadlines, HU home students should take care to matriculate as HU PhD students well ahead of the KCL application cycle. It is also recommended that you apply as a PhD candidate during the semester, as the PhD board meets more regularly during this time (see also [How and where do I apply for the Joint-PhD?](#)).

For further information on KCL application deadlines, please visit the postgraduate website of the relevant PhD programme.

Questions on registration and starting the programme

Do I need to enrol at both universities?

Yes, you need to matriculate or enrol at both universities for a full time PhD. At KCL, enrolment of PhD students is done automatically once they accept their offer letter. In addition, KCL organises induction weeks every semester where new students can pick up their student ID cards and get any information they need about the use of KCL resources. HU home students are encouraged to attend an induction week when they spend their year at KCL.

At HU, applying as a PhD candidate at one of the university's faculties and general enrolment are two separate processes. For prospective HU home students, the first step is to apply as PhD candidates at the faculty of their choice (see also [How and where do I apply for the Joint-PhD?](#)). Once their application has been accepted, they also need to enrol as a PhD student (*Promotionsstudent_in*).

HU home students need to register as PhD students via the Student Service Center; KCL home students should enrol via the International Office (see also [How and where do I apply for the Joint-PhD?](#)).

There are no deadlines for PhD registrations, but we recommend that PhD candidates enrol outside of the main registration periods in March/April or September/October to avoid longer waiting periods. In order to enrol as a student at HU, you also need to pay a certain amount of administrative fees. In addition, you can choose to buy a one-semester public transport ticket (*Semesterticket*) as you enrol (see also [Are there any tuition fees?](#))

After you have been enrolled as a PhD student, you will receive your student ID card and the public transport ticket (*Semesterticket*) (provided you have ticked that option on your registration and paid the required fee). With your student ID, you can acquire a library card which will give you access to HU's numerous libraries and you can also set up an email account at HU. This account in turn will allow you to use the electronic services of Humboldt-University.

For further information on the enrolment process, please consult the homepage of the [Student Service Centre](#).

Role of supervisors

Supervisors are candidates' partners in developing their PhD project and, by extension, their research skills. At Humboldt-Universität, setting up and signing an agreement about the specific expectations and responsibilities for the individual PhD project (*Betreuungsvereinbarung*) is recommended, though not compulsory. You can find further information on the role of PhD supervisors, as well as guidelines for supervisors and PhD students at HU's [PhD portal](#). In addition to following general

guidelines for conduct and supervision, however, supervision within the Joint-PhD project may require some adjustments of or additions to the usual supervision procedures.

One of the key differences for Joint-PhD supervisors at HU is the accommodation of KCL regulations during the examination process (see also [Questions concerning the Joint-PhD examination procedure \(Promotionsverfahren\)](#)). Usually at KCL, the supervisor of a PhD project does not review the PhD student's finished thesis, nor does he or she act as an examiner during the viva. At HU, however, the PhD supervisor also takes up the role of reviewer and examiner. In the context of their partnership, KCL and HU have agreed on the following regulations for the Joint-PhD Programme:

For KCL home students, none of their joint supervisors will be their examiners. Instead, external examiners will be appointed by KCL and HU. This means that HU supervisors of KCL home students supervise the student's research project, but they neither write reports nor are they involved in the final examination of the thesis and the viva.

For HU home students, their KCL supervisor won't be their examiner. Instead, an external examiner will be appointed by KCL and approved by HU. Their HU supervisor, however, will be an examiner during their disputation and they will write a report just like they would do for regular HU PhD students.

For further information on the examination process at HU and the disputation in particular, please consult the guidelines for the [Joint-PhD examination process at Humboldt-University](#).

Is there a compulsory curriculum at either university?

Some doctoral programmes require the successful completion of a certain curriculum. As the Joint-PhD programme is not restricted to a specific subject or department, however, a general and compulsory curriculum would not be practicable. Instead, candidates and supervisors can coordinate the candidates' individual participation in courses and workshops (or the organisation of either) to maximize the effect for the candidates' qualification and their specific research project.

What should I do when coming to London?

We highly recommend that HU home students attend KCL's 'induction week', where you can familiarise yourself with the wide array of infrastructure at KCL. Throughout your stay at KCL, [Student Service](#) can further assist you with questions concerning your everyday life in London, accommodation and more.

Do I have any obligation or chance to pursue teaching activities during my doctorate?

In the course of your PhD studies, you can teach if the opportunity arises, but you are under no obligation to do so. At Humboldt-Universität the position of the 'teaching assistant' does not exist. However, you can be involved in academic teaching by way of a teaching assignment (*Lehrauftrag*) or as a research fellow (*Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin/Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter*). Please note that certain scholarships by third-party institutions involve a limitation of teaching activities. During your stay in London you can try (with the help of your supervisor) to get involved in remunerated teaching. Please note, however, that KCL requires you to complete a course on teaching in advance. Such courses are offered both at KCL and at HU.

Several Joint-PhD candidates have been involved in various forms of teaching. For example, some have worked as part-time research fellows or held teaching assignments for a semester. Others have organised workshops or reading groups. For further information on teaching opportunities and experience reports, please contact the programme's liaison.

Do I need ethical approval for my research?

At Humboldt-University, there are no general regulations for the ethical approval of research projects, though some departments may have individual regulations for projects involving animals or humans in a laboratory setting. In contrast, any research project in the United Kingdom which involves human beings has to be approved by the Research Ethics Committee. There are no exceptions or limitations to medical science or psychology like there are in Germany. If your PhD project involves any kind of UK-based research that requires the approval of the Committee, you will need to submit your project exposé for review to the Committee at the **beginning of the dissertation project** (not at the beginning of your stay in the UK). Please note that the Committee only meets every other month and schedule your application accordingly.

Further information is available at KCL's [department for research ethics](#).

Do I have to pass the first year evaluation of the British system?

In the UK, all PhD candidates have to pass an evaluation after their first year of working on a PhD project. This evaluation includes an official meeting between supervisors and candidates, where candidates show proof of their work's progress (usually presenting a draft chapter of their thesis). After a successful evaluation, they are upgraded and switch from Master student's to PhD student's status. Within the Joint-PhD Programme, KCL home students have to pass this evaluation. Since HU home students usually start their stay in London after their first year, however, they are considered as having already passed this evaluation. Please indicate this to your KCL supervisor or the administration when needed.

Is there a deadline for the completion of my PhD studies?

In the UK, most PhD Programmes last for a maximum of 4 years (full time). Joint-PhD candidates should calculate their travel plan accordingly.

At HU, deadlines for PhD projects also exist in the form of a standard processing time (*Regelbearbeitungszeit*) of 3 years, as specified in § 59 (4) ZSP-HU (*Zentrale Studien- und Prüfungsordnung*). Please note, however, that some HU faculties appoint a different amount of years for the completion of your PhD. Information about the specific standard processing time can be found in the HU faculties' doctoral degree regulations (*Promotionsordnungen*). These regulations can be downloaded from the homepages of the faculties' examination offices (see also [What departments are involved in the Joint-PhD programme?](#)).

Should it look like work on their PhD project will exceed the timeframe specified in their offer letter and/or initial travel plan, Joint-PhD candidates need to apply for an extension. KCL home students apply for extensions directly at KCL. HU home students first need to apply for an extension at their home university, and then pass on the approved extension document to KCL. In some cases it might

be useful to change your PhD student status to part time, especially if other obligations make it likely that you exceed the usual time frame to a greater extent.

You can download the form for extending your PhD studies from the HU [Student Services webpage](#).

Questions concerning the Joint-PhD examination procedure (Promotionsverfahren)

NB: Further information on the Joint-PhD examination procedure is available through the programme's liaison upon request.

What do I need to consider when writing my dissertation?

The layout of the dissertation needs to adhere to the doctoral degree regulations of your faculty (*Promotionsordnung*). Any inclusion of works that have been previously published by the candidate (on their own or as a collaboration with others) needs to adhere to the respective university and faculty regulations. Candidates should also discuss the inclusion of previously published works with their supervisors, and, if necessary, get approval from their faculty's PhD examination board (*Promotionsausschuss*) before they submit the thesis.

Further information on dissertation standards and regulations can be found on the homepages of the faculties' examination offices (see also [What departments are involved in the Joint-PhD programme?](#)).

Will there be examinations at both universities?

No, there will be a single examination procedure and a single, oral examination at the respective home institution (i.e. viva at KCL, defense or *Disputation* at HU). The examination procedure and the results of the examination will be documented at both universities in accordance with their respective rules.

HU home students need to apply for their admission to the doctoral examination procedure at their faculty and submit the required documents as specified in the respective doctoral degree regulations (*Promotionsordnungen*). In addition, HU home students should inform KCL that they have submitted their thesis at HU and send an electronic copy of their thesis to the KCL Research Degree Office (researchdegrees@kcl.ac.uk).

Files that compile documentation of the examination procedure, reports, examination minutes and results will be set up at both HU and KCL. Both universities will share information about the candidates' progress so that at the end of the doctoral degree procedure, students will be awarded a Joint-PhD/Doctoral certificate.

Will supervision and evaluation of the dissertation be separated?

For KCL home students, the separation of supervision and evaluation of the thesis is mandatory. Thus, the joint supervisors of KCL home students will not write reports on the dissertation or act as examiners during the viva. Instead, KCL and HU will appoint three examiners who were not involved in the supervision of the thesis (usually two examiners from KCL or other universities in the UK, and one examiner from HU).

For HU home students, the supervision and evaluation of the dissertation is partly separated. That means that their HU supervisor will be an examiner during their defense (*Disputation*) and will write a report just like they would do for regular PhD students. HU home students' KCL supervisor, however, won't be their examiner. Instead, another examiner will be appointed by KCL and approved by HU. In general, examiners should be professors or hold an equivalent academic position. They evaluate the thesis according to the German grading system for candidates of both institutions.

Questions concerning the viva / defense (*Disputation*)

Will my dissertation and the reports be available to the members of my faculty before the defense (Vorveröffentlichung)?

For HU home students, access to the dissertation and the reports is granted in accordance with the doctoral degree regulations (*Promotionsordnung*) of their faculty. That means that the dissertation and the reports will be made available to the candidate and the members of their faculty. Usually, all documents should be made available for perusal for a period of two weeks before the defense (*Disputation*). Should the date of the defense fall into the semester break, this period is usually extended to four weeks.

What will be the character of my final exam?

Depending on your home institution the final exam will be a viva (King's College London) or a defense/*Disputation* (Humboldt-University). The viva will be conducted by three external examiners in London, one of which will be nominated by (and usually be a professor of) HU. If it cannot be organised differently, one of the examiners may participate by video conference (e.g. Skype). The HU supervisor can also be present at the student's request, but he or she cannot play an active role in the examination.

Any defense or *Disputation* for HU home students will be a public event. It will be conducted by an examination panel, which – in addition to the members specified by the respective doctoral degree regulations (*Promotionsordnung*) – has to include an external examiner nominated by KCL. Please note that the details of the examination process (including the question of who will cover possible expenses for external examiners) should be discussed in due time ahead of the actual exam and an agreement signed between the candidates, supervisors and the relevant HU faculty.

Is there an obligation to publish the dissertation?

Yes, after a successful examination all Joint-PhD candidates regardless of their home institution have to publish their thesis in accordance with the doctoral degree regulations (*Promotionsordnung*) of their HU faculty. There are various options for publishing a PhD thesis (print, electronic, commercial publisher, university open access platforms etc.). Usually, supervisors can counsel candidates before they choose their preferred form of publication. Please note that the Joint-PhD doctoral degree certificate is only awarded to the candidate after the publication of the thesis has been verified by the examination office at the relevant HU faculty and KCL's Examinations and Awards Office. Only then has the candidate earned his or her doctorate.

Will there be a single certification of both institutions?

Yes, as the degree is jointly awarded it is considered to be one single degree. The jointly awarded doctoral degree certificate will be produced in two parts, with each university responsible for producing one part of the certificate according to their own design. Both parts of the certificate will include a statement which specifies that the certificate will not be valid without the corresponding part of the certificate produced by the partner institution.

Will I at the end hold a doctor's degree or a PhD?

Once you have been awarded the Joint-PhD doctoral degree certificate, you are authorised to refer to yourself as PhD or Doktor (Dr.). And of course, you can add the institutions in brackets:

e.g. Mila Mustermann, PhD (King's College London, Humboldt-Universität)

e.g. Dr. Mila Mustermann (King's College London, Humboldt-Universität)

If you prefer, you can also use the relevant German suffix, for example 'Dr. phil.' or 'Dr. rer. nat.', depending on the type of your doctorate. However, common practice is to omit the suffix and merely go with Dr.