Decision CG/2018/07/36, of 24 October 2018, by the Governing Council, approving the Internal Regulations of the Doctoral School of the UPC

Office of the Vice-Rector for Science Policy

- A favourable report on this document was issued by the Governing Council’s Research Committee on 4 October 2018.
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Preamble

Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation has introduced a series of legislative changes designed to promote research, experimental development and innovation as foundations for sustainable economic development and social welfare. One of these changes is related to Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, on Universities, in the third final provision, in which doctoral schools are included as an integral part of the structure of public universities, along with schools, faculties, departments, university research institutes and other centres and structures that are necessary for the exercise of universities' functions.

The Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya is subject to the regulatory framework of Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, regulating official doctoral studies; the decision of the Board of the Interuniversity Council of Catalonia, of 6 October 2011, on doctoral studies and the procedure for creating doctoral schools; articles 34 and 35 of the UPC Statutes, which describe the nature and the functions of the Doctoral School; the Regulations on the Organisation and Functions of the Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya; and applicable university regulations.

In addition, Royal Decree 1791/2010, of 30 December, which approves the University Student Statute, establishes the rights and obligations of doctoral candidates, which, according to Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, must be outlined and regulated in the Internal Regulations of the Doctoral School.

Part I. General provisions

Article 1. The UPC's Doctoral School

The Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya is the academic unit that is responsible for organising, coordinating and supervising the teaching that leads to the awarding of a doctoral degree. Doctoral studies are divided into one or more branches of knowledge or they may be of an interdisciplinary nature.

Article 2. Functions

The functions of the Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya are described in Article 34 of the UPC Statutes and the report on the creation of the Doctoral School.

Article 3. Legal system

The Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya is governed by the university legislation in force, the UPC Statutes, its regulations on organisation and functions and these internal regulations.

Article 4. Members

The following are members of the Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya:

1. The directors of the Doctoral School.
2. The holders of doctoral degrees who are listed as professors in the doctoral programmes’ validation, monitoring, modification or accreditation reports and who are therefore considered Doctoral School professors.
3. The doctoral candidates enrolled in doctoral studies at the University.
4. The doctoral unit’s administrative staff who are attached to the Academic Management Service.

Professors who have supervised or are supervising a doctoral thesis and who are not Doctoral School professors may be considered to be Doctoral School collaborating professors, as established by the academic committees of the doctoral programmes.

All members of the Doctoral School must comply with the code of ethics and good practices of employees and students of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya.

Part II. Organisation and functions of the Doctoral School

Chapter 1. Governing and representative bodies

Section 1. General provisions

Article 5. Collegial bodies

The Doctoral School’s collegial bodies are the following:
1. The Doctoral School Board
2. The Standing Committee
3. The academic committees of the doctoral programmes
4. The Doctoral Student Council

Article 5. University officers

The Doctoral School’s university officers are the following:
1. The director
2. The assistant director
3. The secretary
4. The doctoral programme coordinators

Article 6. University officers’ commitment and conflicts of interest

No person can hold the post of director, assistant director or secretary of the Doctoral School and any of the following: rector, vice-rector, general secretary or general manager of the University or dean, director, vice-dean, assistant director or secretary of the academic units.

Section 2. The Board and the Standing Committee of the Doctoral School

Article 7. The Board

Section 2 of the Regulations on the Organisation and Functions of the Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya defines the composition and functions of the Doctoral School Board.
Article 8. The Standing Committee

Section 3 of the Regulations on the Organisation and Functions of the Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya defines the composition and functions of the Doctoral School’s Standing Committee.

Section 3. The academic committees of the doctoral programmes

Article 9. Nature

The academic committees are linked to each doctoral programme and are responsible for defining, updating and coordinating them and ensuring their quality. They are also responsible for fostering the progress of research and education and of authorising the deposit of doctoral theses by candidates on the doctoral programme.

Article 10. Appointment

The director of a basic unit that promotes a doctoral programme appoints and dismisses the members of the programme’s academic committee in accordance with its regulations on organisation and functions. These regulations on organisation and functions also specify the duration of committee membership.

If there is more than one promoting unit or the programme is an interuniversity programme there must be a signed agreement between the units or universities promoting the programme that specifies the particulars of electing committee members and how the committee is to function.

Article 11. Composition

The academic committees of the doctoral programmes are composed of the following:

1. The coordinator of the doctoral programme.
2. At least two professors from the Doctoral School who belong to the promoting unit.
3. A representative of the doctoral candidates enrolled in a doctoral programme, if this is established by the specific regulations for the doctoral programme.
4. Researchers with doctoral degrees from national or international public research bodies and R&D institutions.
5. In the case of doctoral programmes with more than one promoting unit or interuniversity programmes, there must be teaching and research staff members representing them, in accordance with what is established in the collaboration agreement that has been signed.
6. Each academic committee must have a person who acts as secretary. This person may be one of the members with a doctoral degree.

Article 12. Functions

The functions of the academic committees of the doctoral programmes are the following:

1. They organise, coordinate, define and update the doctoral programme.
2. They draw up the regulations on organisation and functions and amend them as appropriate.
3. They organise, design and coordinate the doctoral programme’s cross-disciplinary and research activities.
4. They promote the quality of the programme and establish appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and improvement.
5. They participate in the validation, monitoring, modification or accreditation processes for the doctoral programme and promote these processes internally.
6. They draw up the monitoring and accreditation reports of the doctoral programme.
7. They establish requirements and additional criteria for selecting and admitting applicants to a doctoral programme and approve their admission.
8. They assign a thesis tutor to doctoral candidates who have been admitted to the doctoral programme.
9. They assign a thesis supervisor to doctoral candidates within a maximum of six months from enrolment. The thesis supervisor may or may not be the same person as the thesis tutor.
10. They authorise the co-supervision of a doctoral thesis in response to such requests from doctoral candidates and thesis supervisors.
11. They change the thesis supervisor assigned to a doctoral candidate in response to such requests from doctoral candidates and thesis supervisors.
12. They arbitrate and guarantee the right to intellectual property of the doctoral candidate and the thesis supervisor in the case of conflict or a change in the supervision of the thesis.
13. They authorise doctoral candidates to change doctoral programme in response to such requests.
14. They authorise doctoral candidates to write their theses on a part-time basis in response to such requests from doctoral candidates, who must have received the thesis supervisor's approval.
15. They authorise a one- or two-year extension of the deadline for defending a thesis in response to such requests from doctoral candidates, who must have received the thesis supervisor's approval.
16. They authorise doctoral candidates to withdraw temporarily for a maximum period of one year, which can be extended by another year, in response to such requests from doctoral candidates, who must have received the thesis supervisor's approval.
17. They ensure that the activity report in which the activities that are relevant to the educational development of the student is reviewed and assessed by the tutor and the supervisor every year.
18. They assess the research plan and doctoral student activity report, which includes the reports of the supervisor and tutor, every year.
19. They propose the signing of co-tutoring agreements.
20. They choose, where appropriate, the external experts who report on the quality of the thesis.
21. They authorise or reject the registration and defence of doctoral theses.
22. They establish the criteria for the submission of article-based theses and authorise the submissions.
23. They propose the examination committees for doctoral theses and appoint, from among the committees’ members, the president and the secretary.
24. They assess and decide whether the participation in the examination committee of a member who is the co-author of publications stemming from the doctoral thesis is justified.
25. They arbitrate conflicts between students and/or thesis supervisors.
26. They approve the regulations governing the internal operation of the academic committee of the doctoral programme.
27. They fulfil any other function that current legislation, doctoral regulations or the Doctoral School directors assign or delegate to them.

Article 13. Functioning

As a general rule, each academic committee holds an ordinary meeting at least once every academic year and an extraordinary meeting if the coordinator of the doctoral programme calls one.
Remaining issues related to the functioning of the committees are governed by the provisions of articles 28, 29 and 30 of the Regulations on the Organisation and Functions of the Doctoral School.

Section 4. The Doctoral Student Council

Article 14. The Doctoral Student Council

The Doctoral Student Council Regulations of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya define the composition and functions of the Doctoral Student Council.

Section 5. The director, the assistant director and the secretary

Article 15. The director

Section 6 of the Regulations on the Organisation and Functions of the Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya defines the nature, functions, selection and appointment of the director of the Doctoral School.

Article 16. The assistant director

Section 7 of the Regulations on the Organisation and Functions of the Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya defines the nature, functions, selection and appointment of the assistant director of the Doctoral School.

Article 17. The secretary

Section 8 of the Regulations on the Organisation and Functions of the Doctoral School of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya defines the nature, functions, selection and appointment of the secretary of the Doctoral School.

Section 6. The doctoral programme coordinators

Article 18. The doctoral programme coordinators

The coordinator of each doctoral programme is the person responsible for directing and managing the everyday functioning of the doctoral programme, and he or she chairs the academic committee.

Article 19. Appointment

The doctoral programme coordinator is named and appointed by the rector at the proposal of the unit or units that promote the doctoral programme. The post must be filled by a suitable researcher who can prove that he or she fulfils the following conditions: he or she must have supervised at least two doctoral theses and must have at least two research premiums recognised in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 1086/1989, of 28 August, on the remuneration of university teaching staff. If, because of the post he or she occupies, these conditions do not apply to the researcher, he or she must be able to prove merits equivalent to those mentioned.
Article 20. Term of office

The doctoral programme coordinator’s term of office is four years, which can be renewed for another single successive period from the date of the appointment resolution or the approval of the regulations by the Board on 27 May 2015 in case of haven’t an appointment resolution.

Article 21. Functions

The functions of the doctoral programme coordinators are the following:
1. They chair the academic committee of the doctoral programme.
2. They direct and coordinate the academic activity for the programme so as to ensure it meets standards for quality and academic excellence.
3. They ensure information and regulations for the doctoral programme are up to date.
4. They represent the doctoral programme to the directors of the Doctoral School and ensure that the agreements taken at the Doctoral School in relation to the doctoral programme are fulfilled.
5. They promote the drawing up of the internal regulations of the academic committee of the doctoral programme in accordance with the guidelines set by the Doctoral School and the unit or units promoting the doctoral programme.
6. They promote the dissemination of academic and management information among all teaching and research staff who hold doctoral degrees and are linked to the doctoral programme.
7. They fulfil any other functions that may be assigned to them in the University's regulations and prevailing legislation.

Article 22. Rights of coordinators

1. The coordinators have the right to be part of the Doctoral School, in accordance with the rules established in these regulations and in the University's Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies.
2. Equally, they have the right to the academic recognition of their management activities within the University.
3. They also have any rights that are recognised in the prevailing legislation and the University's Statutes and regulations.

Chapter 2. The Doctoral School’s teaching and research staff and doctoral candidates

Section 7. General provisions

Article 23. The Doctoral School’s teaching and research staff

The Doctoral School’s teaching and research staff consists of the following:
1. Tutors
2. The University’s thesis supervisor
3. The Doctoral School’s doctoral candidates
4. Other teaching and research staff linked to the doctoral programme
Section 8. Tutors

Article 24. Tutors

1. Tutors are appointed by the academic committee of the doctoral programme.
2. Tutors are Doctoral School professors or Doctoral School collaborating professors who are linked to the promoting unit that organises the programme and who can prove their research experience by meeting one or more of the following conditions:
   a. They have supervised a doctoral thesis that has been defended in the last five years.
   b. They have an active research premium obtained in the last seven years. If the researcher holds a post in which research premiums are not applicable, he or she must be able to prove equivalent merits.
   c. They are acting or have acted as principal investigator in a project funded by an external public institution, awarded in a competitive call, in the last five years.
3. The academic committee, having given an audience to the doctoral candidate, may assign a new tutor to him or her at any time during the doctoral degree period, provided the cause is justified.

Article 25. Obligations of tutors

1. They must sign the commitment agreement that establishes the supervisory functions of tutors in the manner established by the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya.
2. Tutors are obliged to assist and advise doctoral candidates in the initial stages of their involvement with the doctoral programme.
3. They must regularly review, with the supervisor if he or she is a different person, the doctoral student activity report and periodically issue the corresponding reports.
4. They must assist doctoral candidates with special needs in accordance with the guidelines established by the University.
5. They must act as internal examiners and ensure compliance with the doctoral regulations when the thesis supervisor is external to the University.
6. They must fulfil any functions that may be assigned to them in the prevailing legislation and the University’s Statutes and regulations.
7. They must commit to the code of good practices adopted by the University.

Article 26. Rights of tutors

Tutors have the following rights:
1. They have the right to be members of the Doctoral School, in accordance with the rules established in these regulations and in the University’s Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies.
2. They have the right to the academic recognition of their tutoring activities within the University.
3. They have any rights that are recognised in the prevailing legislation and the University’s Statutes and regulations.

Section 9. Thesis supervisors

Article 27. Thesis supervisors

1. Thesis supervisors supervise the research carried out by doctoral candidates.
2. Thesis supervisors are holders of doctoral degrees who have proven research experience, regardless of the university, school or institution to which they provide their services. They must be able to prove their research experience by meeting one of the following conditions:
   a. They have supervised a doctoral thesis that has been defended in the last five years.
   b. They have an active research premium obtained in the last seven years. If the researcher holds a post in which research premiums are not applicable, he or she must be able to prove equivalent merits.
   c. They are acting or have acted as principal investigator in a project funded by an external public institution, awarded in a competitive call, in the last five years.

3. When the thesis supervisor is a member of the University’s teaching and research staff, he or she may also act as the tutor of the doctoral candidate he or she supervises.

4. If the thesis supervisor is a researcher who is external to the University, the tutor must be a member of the University's teaching and research staff.

5. If there are justifiable academic reasons for it and the programme's academic committee authorises it, there may be more than one supervisor, such as in the following cases:
   a. The supervisor does not have proven research experience but is accompanied by a supervisor who has.
   b. The thesis is an interdisciplinary thesis.
   c. Collaboration programmes.
   d. International programmes.
   e. A research staff member who has taken on management tasks.
   f. A research staff member who is on sick leave or has requested temporary leave of absence.
   g. Other particular cases, which will have to be reviewed.

6. All doctoral thesis supervisors have the same rights and obligations and are named as supervisors or co-supervisors, without distinction. In any event, the maximum number of supervisors of a doctoral thesis is that established in the doctoral regulations.

Article 28. Obligations of supervisors

The obligations of the supervisors are the following:
1. They must ensure the consistency and suitability of doctoral candidates’ training in research and transferable skills.
2. They must sign the commitment agreement that establishes the supervisory functions of thesis supervisors in the manner established by the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya.
3. They must inform the academic committee of the doctoral programme about the doctoral candidate’s research plan.
4. They must inform the academic committee of the doctoral programme of any incidents that might affect the doctoral thesis’s progress.
5. They must provide access to the resources and media that the doctoral candidate needs to carry out the thesis.
6. They must regularly monitor the activities recorded in the doctoral student activity report.
7. They must facilitate doctoral candidates’ attendance at cross-disciplinary training courses organised by the Doctoral School and any specific training courses within the same programme and on other programmes.
8. They must ensure that doctoral candidates comply with safe working practices in accordance with the law.
9. They must ensure that doctoral candidates follow the necessary steps to comply with legal requirements regarding confidentiality and data protection.
10. They must foster and endorse doctoral candidates’ placements at other schools both national and international.
11. They must assist doctoral candidates with special needs in accordance with the guidelines established by the University.
12. They must encourage doctoral candidates’ research activities to be disseminated to the general public.
13. They must commit to the code of good practices adopted by the University.
Article 29. Rights of supervisors

The rights of the supervisors are the following:

1. They have the right to be members of the Doctoral School, in accordance with the rules established in these regulations and in the University’s Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies.
2. They have the right to use appropriate and accessible academic facilities and the material means they need to act as thesis supervisors.
3. They have the right to academic recognition in accordance with the procedures for supervisory activities established by the University, including any supervision undertaken at another university.
4. They have the right to accept or reject the assignment of a doctoral candidate and may withdraw their supervision by submitting a duly justified request.
5. They have the right to participate in any training activities for thesis supervisors offered by the Doctoral School, so that they can fulfil their supervisory functions responsibly.
6. They have any rights that are recognised in the prevailing legislation and the University’s Statutes and regulations.

Section 10. Doctoral candidates

Article 30. Consideration of doctoral candidates

Trainee researchers who are enrolled in a doctoral programme are considered to be doctoral candidates of the University’s Doctoral School.

Article 31. Rights of doctoral candidates

The rights of the Doctoral School’s doctoral candidates are outlined in Article 10 of Royal Decree 1791/2010, of 30 December, which approves the University Student Statute. More specifically, they have the right to the following:

1. They have the right to receive research training of a high standard that promotes scientific excellence and social responsibility.
2. They have the right to a tutor who will guide them in their learning process and a supervisor with proven research experience who will oversee the preparation of the doctoral thesis.
3. They have the right to request the appointment of a co-supervisor for the thesis.
4. They have the right to submit a duly justified request to change supervisor and/or doctoral programme.
5. They have the right to receive information on research careers beyond the University.
6. They have the right to have the intellectual property rights related to the results of the thesis and previous pieces of research recognised and protected in accordance with prevailing legislation on this issue.
7. They have the right to be able to use adequate facilities to carry out their work and to study.
8. They have the right to participate in specific training activities organised in the doctoral programme or by research groups.
9. They have the right to participate in cross-disciplinary training activities organised by the Doctoral School in collaboration with other services and entities.
10. They have the right to request the mediation of the doctoral programme’s academic committee in the case of academic conflict, particularly involving the thesis supervisor.
Article 32. Obligations of doctoral candidates and trainee researchers

The obligations of the Doctoral School’s doctoral candidates and trainee researchers are outlined in the provisions of Article 10 of Royal Decree 1791/2010, of 30 December, which approves the University Student Statute. More specifically:

1. They are obliged to keep up satisfactory academic performance following the guidelines established by the academic committee of the doctoral programme.
2. They are obliged to enrol, every academic year, within the deadlines established in the regulations and the academic calendar for doctoral studies at the University.
3. They are obliged to submit the research plan within the corresponding deadline.
4. They are obliged to follow and participate actively in the compulsory specific training activities for the doctoral programme.
5. They are obliged to attend the cross-disciplinary training activities organised by the Doctoral School in which he or she has enrolled.
6. They are obliged to maintain a working relationship with the thesis supervisors or co-supervisors and tutors of the thesis.
7. They are obliged to avoid plagiarism and respect the principles of intellectual property.
8. They are obliged to commit to the code of good practices adopted by the University.
9. They are obliged to pay the academic, administrative, defence and degree certificate fees.
10. They are obliged to meet all of the obligations outlined in the University Student Statute and other current regulations.

Part III. Amendment of the Internal Regulations of the Doctoral School

Article 33. Initiative

These regulations may be modified on the initiative of the Doctoral School’s director or by a petition of a minimum of 25 percent of the members of the Standing Committee or the Board of the Doctoral School.

The proposal for amendment of these regulations must be in writing and it must include a statement of the justification and the amended text that is proposed.

Article 34. Approval

The approval of the proposed amendment of the regulations requires a participation quorum of half of the board members plus one member and at least half plus one votes in favour of the valid votes cast.

Once the proposal is approved, the record is sent to the Governing Council for approval, if applicable.

Single temporary provision

Term of office of the doctoral programme coordinators

The duration in years of the doctoral programme coordinators’ mandate shall begin to be counted the day after the entry into force of these regulations, regardless of the number of years during which they have previously held the post.
Single final provision

These regulations shall enter into force the day after the date on which they are approved by the Governing Council.